



BBC UPDATE

“Mystery, Babylon the Great”

Dr. Thomas Strouse



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“Mystery, Babylon the Great” Rev. 17:5, 9

Excerpt from *To the Seven Churches:*
A Commentary on the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ

Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

Chronologically, Chapter Nineteen follows Chapter Sixteen, but Scripture gives the lengthy interlude describing Babylon (cf. Rev. 17:5) and her fall in Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen. The Lord had already announced the fall of Babylon (cf. Rev. 14:8) and then confirmed the culmination of her destruction (cf. Rev. 16:19). Because of the six thousand year history of the system of Babylonianism manifesting in the ancient and future city of Babylon, the Lord God allocated a lengthy description¹ of the nature, location, and destruction of Babylon. The vision that the Apostle John received harked back to the beginning of the Tribulation, and gave the chronology of the rise and fall of Satan’s religious-political-economic system during the Tribulation. This false system based on the Old Serpent’s pantheistic Gnosticism proffered and accepted in the Garden (cf. notes on Rev. 13), will flourish during the first half of the Tribulation as an attempt to re-enact the world-wide religious rebellion with the tower of Babylon (cf. Gen. 11:1-9).² Shortly after the Rapture, Satan will usher in his religious ecumenical movement³ as the peace-making rider on the white horse (cf. Rev. 6:1-2). By the time of the mid-point of the Tribulation, the kings following the Antichrist will dump ecumenical Babylonianism and will worship the Beast directly and promote his economic Babylonianism (Rev. 17:16-18:24).

Isaiah predicted the fall of Babylon centuries before, saying, “*Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground*” (Isa. 21:9). Jeremiah further elaborated on the fall of Babylon in his lengthy description (110 verses in Jer. 50-51), saying, “*The word that the LORD spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet*” (Jer. 50:1). Mixed in the system of Babylonianism is the ecumenical religion which has ensnared the kings of the earth with the promise of economic prosperity. Worldly politicians

1 Some 42 verses described Satan’s wicked movement, as God seemingly gave an expanded footnote on this abomination.

2 All throughout the local church age wickedness will progressively increase and finally find ecumenical favor in the Tribulation. Paul listed these evils, saying, “*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away*” (II Tim. 3:1-5). The quintessential embodiment of this apostasy will have the number 666.

3 Although it is tempting to identify the Harlot exclusively with the Roman Catholic Church, Babylonianism is far broader and older than the Romish embodiment of Babylonianism

(Continued on Page 2...)

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT

have used ecumenical religion for financial gain through the centuries, but when Satan will change ecumenical worship to Antichrist worship, the kings will abandon ecumenicalism and worship the Beast's commercialism, and thus proving the Lord Jesus' teaching. The Saviour said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt. 6:24).

Babylon is both a system and a city. As a system it is characterized as a harlot (cf. Rev. 17:5), and as a city it has its location "in the land of Shinar" (cf. Zech. 5:11). References to "city" and "Babylon" occur six times in the Scripture, namely, Isa. 14:4; Jer. 51:31; Rev. 14:8; 18:10[2x]; and 18:21. Since the Scripture iterates the expression "is fallen" twice (cf. Isa. 21:9),⁴ this suggests the fall of both the system and the city. The angel revealed to John the vision of Babylon (Rev. 17:1-6) and its interpretation (Rev. 17:7-18).

Revelation 17:5

One of the unique characteristics of the *Apocalypse* is the deliberate effort to identify various protagonists. The Lord used the noun *metopon* ("foreheads")⁵ to distinguish "sides" during the Tribulation and following. The sides are drawn depending upon whose name is in whose forehead! For instance, the servants of God will have His name in their foreheads, as the followers of the Beast will have in their foreheads his mark, name, or number (cf. Rev. 7:3; 14:1; 20:4; 22:4; and 9:4; 13:16; and 14:9,

4 The *KJV* employed the expression "is fallen, is fallen" two other times, namely in Rev. 14:8 and 18:2.

5 The noun *metopon* ("forehead") occurs in the singular or plural exclusively in *Revelation* 8x.

respectively). In this current passage, the Lord God clearly identified the woman's nature, history and character by what was "upon her forehead." First, the "name" (*onoma*)⁶ "written" (*gegrammenon*)⁷ upon her forehead indicated her nature. In Scripture, "Babylon" may refer to the city Babel (cf. Gen. 11:9; Rev. 18:10, 21), the kingdom of Babylonia (cf. Gen. 10:10; Dan. 4:29), or the religious/political/commercial system of Babylonianism (Rev. 17:5). This Babylonian system, first enunciated in the Garden, and specifically manifested after the flood at the Tower of Babel, has been a "MYSTERY" (*Musterion*).⁸ The *Apocalypse* has unveiled this religious/political/commercial system by which Satan has deceived the world since Adam (*vide* II Cor. 4:4; 11:3-4; Eph. 2:2; I Jn. 5:19; Rev. 12:9; 13:14).⁹ Because it appeals to the old nature, its tenets have flourished for six thousand years, albeit re-packaged under different names and labels. Some of its names would include the religions of Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Hinduism, Roman Catholic Church, New Age Movement, and the present and future ecumenical movement. The incarnate persona of "the mystery of iniquity" will be the antichrist (II Thess. 2:7). The nature of Babylonianism then is a counterfeit substitute, which has subverted and replaced true spirituality with a commercial religion beholden and embraced by the leaders and kings of the world. It has taken man's spiritual allegiance to and worship of the LORD God, and placed them upon Satan—the archenemy of God and man. It is spiritual harlotry.

Her nature is inextricably linked with her history; the harlot is "BABYLON THE GREAT" (*babulon he megale*).¹⁰ Reference to *babel* occurs in all three divisions of the *Tanak* for a total of

6 Cf. v. 3.

7 The perfect passive participle from *grapho* denotes the permanent and continuing name of this whore.

8 See notes on Rev. 1:20. In this case, *Musterion* is in apposition to Babylon as a name.

9 The Devil's method of deception has been and still is under the guise of secrecy and the realm of darkness.

10 Cf. note on Rev. 16:19.

262 occasions in the Hebrew text, ranging from Gen. 10:10 to II Chr. 36:20. It was the mighty hunter Nimrod who built Babylon, the rebel city. Presumably Nimrod was wicked, and certainly his city was the place of rebellion and the symbol of ecumenical pride (cf. Gen. 10:10 and 11:9). Babylonia moved into its ascendancy by 605 BC under Nebuchadnezzar and Babylonianism influenced the other prophesied nations including Media-Persia, Greece, Rome and the Revived Roman Empire (cf. I Chr. 9:1; Dan. 1:1; 2:28 ff.). Nebuchadnezzar's palace was in Babylon where Daniel ministered (cf. Dan. 1:3-21). The angel will reveal more of the nature and history of Babylon he asserted (vv. 7 ff.)

Her character is linked to her history as well, since the Scripture declared the woman as *"THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS"* (*he meter¹¹ ton pornon*). She was the progenitor of all harlots, denoting both her antiquity and immorality. This woman has been and still is in a "spiritual federation or alliance" with all the false theological systems of human history including the ancient religions, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, cults, paganism, and scientific evolution. All religious systems giving ultimate allegiance in worship to anything or anyone other than Jehovah God the Creator have perverted the intimate relationship with God into an adulterous union committing spiritual harlotry. The Lord used this theological imagery with the prophet Hosea and his unfaithful wife Gomer.¹² Israel's idolatry and immorality received characterization in Hosea's marriage, as Jehovah instructed him, saying, *"Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD"* (Hos. 1:2). Although Gomer was the *"wife of whoredoms"* with *"children of whoredoms,"* Scripture has revealed who was *the mother of all whoredoms,*

"BABYLON THE GREAT."

Not only is the woman the ultimate ancestor of all counterfeit religions, but she is *"THE MOTHER OF ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"*¹³ (*he meter ton bdelugmaton tes ges*). The expression *"abominations of the earth"* covers a wide range of sins.¹⁴ The Bible gives detail to the breadth and depth of the *"knowledge of evil"* (cf. Gen. 2:17 and 3:5) into which Adam plunged the world. These multitudinous taboos are that which

¹³ The genitive construction allows for the noun *meter* to be described by *ton bdelugmaton tes ges*.

¹⁴ Unclean things (Lev. 7:21); Customs of pagans (Lev. 18:30); Idols (2 Chr. 15:8; 1 Pet. 4:3); Sins of men (Ps. 14:1; 53:1); Cheating (Mic. 6:10); Lost souls (Rev. 21:8); A froward man (perverse; one who turns aside (Pro. 3:32; 11:20); A proud look (Pro. 6:16-17); A lying tongue (Pro. 6:17; 12:22); Hands that shed innocent blood (Pro. 6:17); A wicked scheming heart (Pro. 6:18); Feet that are quick to sin (Pro. 6:18); A false witness that speaks lies (Pro. 6:19); A sower of discord (Pro. 6:19); Wickedness (Pro. 8:7); A false balance or scale (Pro. 11:1); Sacrifices of the wicked (Pro. 15:8; 21:27); The way of the wicked (Pro. 15:9); The thoughts of the wicked (Pro. 15:26); The proud of heart (Pro. 16:5); Justifying the wicked (Pro. 17:15); Condemning the just (Pro. 17:15); Divers, dishonest weights (Pro. 20:10, 23); Divers, dishonest measures (Pro. 20:10); Refusing to hear the law (Pro. 28:9); Prayers of the rebel (Pro. 28:9); Eating flesh of peace offerings on the 3rd day (Lev. 7:18); Sodomy (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Dt. 23:18); Taking ornaments from idols when being destroyed (Dt. 7:25-26); Any idolatrous practice (Dt. 12:31; 13:14; 17:4; 18:9; 20:18; 29:17); Offering an imperfect animal to God as a sacrifice (Dt. 17:1); Any traffic with demons (Dt. 18:7-12); Transvestitism (Dt. 22:5); Bringing the hire of a harlot or sodomite into God's house (Dt. 23:18); Re-marriage of former companions (Dt. 24:1-4); Cheating others (Dt. 25:13-16); Making images/idols (Dt. 27:15); Idols of Ammon (1 Ki. 11:5); Idols of Moab (1 Ki. 11:7; 2 Ki. 11:13); Idols of Zidon (2 Ki. 23:13); Incense offered by hypocrites (Isa. 1:13); Eating unclean things (Isa. 66:17); Offering human sacrifices (Jer. 32:35); Robbery (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Murder (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Adultery (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Oppression of others, particularly the poor or vulnerable (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Violence (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Breaking vows (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Lending with interest to a brother (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Lying with a menstruous woman (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Hardness of heart (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Injustice (Ezek. 18: 6-13); Worship of anti-Christ (Dan. 11:31; 12:11; Mt. 24:15; 2 Th. 2:4); Incest (Lev. 19: 6-30); Things highly esteemed by man (Lk. 16:15); and many other sins of the nations (Lev. 18: 26-29; Dt. 18: 9-12; 20:18; 29:17; 1 Ki. 14:24; 21:2, 11; 23:24; 2 Chr. 28:3; 33:2; 34:33; 36:14; Ezek. 7: 3-20; 8: 6-17; 16: 2-58; 20: 4-30; Rev. 17: 4-5).

¹¹ This is the only reference to *he meter* in Revelation.

¹² Presumably, Gomer proleptically became a harlot after Hosea's marriage to her. This interpretation fits the history of the Lord's relationship with Israel (cf. Ezk. 16:3-15).

ARTICLE

Babylonianism has projected as religiously acceptable, when in fact they are forbidden by the Holy LORD God and His revelatory truth. The woman's character then, represents all that is opposed to God, and is therefore in the spirit of antichrist. Paul astutely observed that the movement of "another gospel" (Gal. 1:6), the biblical term for Babylonianism, promoted the works of the flesh, stating, *"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God"* (Gal. 5:19-21).

Revelation 17:9

Now that the angel had given John a preliminary statement about the identity of the Beast [Antichrist]...Historically, many exegetes have attempted to identify the mountains with "the Seven Hills of Rome," namely, Palatine, Aventine, Caelian, Esquiline, Viminal, Quirinal, and Capitoline.¹⁵ This interpretation is flawed for several reasons found in verses nine, ten and eleven. First, the mountains are not physical rock and stone but "kings" (*basileis*). Second, the heads/mountains are part of the Beast and not the woman. Third, the next verse (v. 10) states literally that "they are" (*eisin* = imbedded third person plural pronoun ["they"] in the Greek "to be" verb [*eimi*]) seven kings. Fourth, the angelic revelatory emphasis is on

¹⁵ "No reasonable doubt can be entertained as to the meaning of these words. The Seven hills of Rome were a commonplace with the Latin poets." *Henry Barclay Swete, The Apocalypse of St. John* (London: Macmillan, 1907), p. 220.

temporality and not locality, since "five are fallen." Fifth, the seventh head/mountain is personalized as "he" (*auton/autos*). The angel has not identified the Harlot as the Roman Catholic Church and the seven mountains as "the Seven Hills of Rome."

Conclusion

The Harlot will be Babylonianism, embraced by the Roman Catholic Church as well as all other false religious systems, and the seven mountains will be the kings of the seven kingdoms of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the Revived Roman Empire.



MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM VASSAR

On December 28, 2015, Mr. and Mrs. William Vassar will celebrate their seventy-fifth wedding anniversary. In honor of this godly couple who have been members of Bible Baptist Church since her founding in 2009, the members will meet with the Vassars in their assisted living home for the 1:30 PM service on December 27, 2015. Prayers, testimonies, songs and a brief Bible challenge will be followed by a wedding cake and a time of celebration. Their godly marital testimony rebukes this wicked society of covenant breakers, and demonstrates the truth in Scripture: *"Marriage is honourable in all"* (Heb. 13:4).

GREETINGS FROM ILOILO

Dear Dr. Strouse,

Greetings from Tigbauan Bible Baptist Church Iloilo Philippines

We thank God for adding souls to the church.

Recently my wife won to Christ the Guidance Councillor of a Maritime College in our town.

She was baptized and became a member of our church. With her help, my son, who is a student of that school started a Campus ministry conducting a Bible Study once a week. They started with 6 students and all accepted Christ. Four of them attended the Church service last Sunday. We are praying that they'll be baptized soon. Yesterday they held another Bible Study with 15 in attendance.

Please pray for this ministry and for financial needs so that my son can continue his studies, he is in his second year.

Additional prayer requests:

- Good health
- funds for Church elevation
- we are praying for a multi media projector

Attached are some pictures of the ministry here in Tigbauan
Bro. Alejandro Cadusale Jr.



GOD'S GREAT LOVE

ARTICLE

Dr. Cas Reeves



Pastor Cas Reeves

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

This is the scripture text that all men should know. It is the great text that declares God's love for the world. The word "world" means "order or arrangement." In this case it speaks of all mankind. Here God declares his love, unequivocally for all men. It is an unconditional love for the most vile of sinners and the kindest of men. It is a non-discriminating love. It is for all.

To the Church of Rome, Paul wrote, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). The word "commendeth" means "to demonstrate." Not only did God declare his love, but he also demonstrated it. He did this so we might know to some degree the extent and depths of his love for us. It was a love of great sacrifice on God's part for us. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time" and "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, the ungodly" (Romans 5:6,8).

Why did God share such a wonderful love with us, who are so undeserving? The answer lies in the result of what that great love accomplished for us. That accomplishment is found stated for us in an exhortation to husbands to love their wives, "as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it ... that it [we] should be holy and without blemish."

(Ephesians 5:25-27). Yes, that great love has made it possible for us, to be "justified by his blood" and "reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Romans 5:9-11). It's a fact, that God's great love has brought to all mankind an escape from perishing in hell. That escape is everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, which is the expression of His love. And it is for all who will believe in Him repenting of their sin. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). -CAR

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

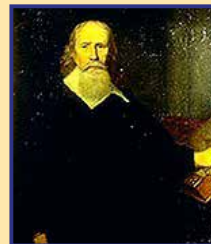
II Timothy 2:15

Quotes From the Past:

John Clarke

1609-1676

Baptist Preacher



John Clark

"To hold forth a lively experiment that a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained with full liberty in religious concernments."

Grow in Grace for Women

Keep Yourselves from Idols

1 John 5:21

Exodus 20:4 "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:"

Satan has from the beginning desired to be exalted above the LORD and since then has continued to find ways, in the world, to replace our heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in the hearts of men (**Isaiah 14:14**).

Santa Claus requires that we lie to our children and are supportive of them as they lust and covet after what they do not have (**1 John 2:16**). Families go into debt to purchase what they cannot afford (**Prov. 22:7**).

Santa Claus, the false god, is one way he uses to attack the children and parents must guard children from this instead of promoting it (**Proverbs 22:6**).

Santa is fictitious you say. What harm can he do? Have you ever stopped to think about these attributes given to Santa?

- He is watching you
- He knows what you want
- He sees what you do
- He judges if you are good or bad
- In one night he can be everywhere
- He does not change year after year and death escapes him
- Overcomes any and all obstacles
- Children sit on his lap and make their requests known to him
- Households are excited about his coming

The attributes of Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresent, Eternality, Sovereignty, Worship, Supplications, and many more, belong to the One and Only True God, Jehovah

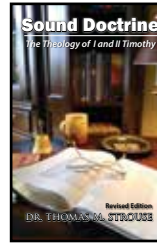
2 Peter 3:18

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever Amen"

THE BOOK CORNER

The Book Corner

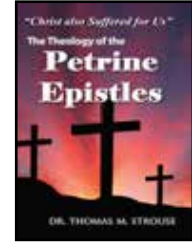
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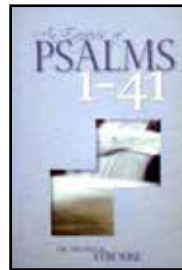
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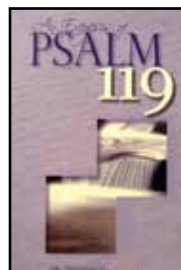
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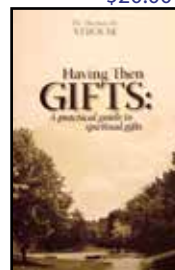
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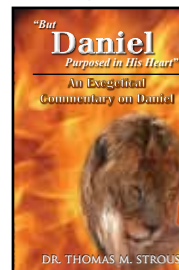
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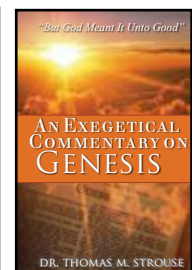
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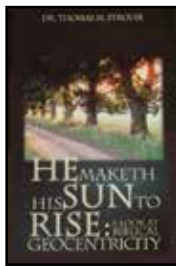
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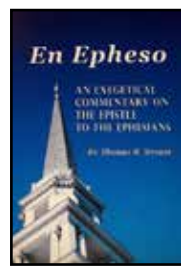
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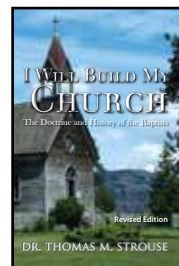
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