Chapter 17

Introduction to Chapter 17

Chapter 17 reveals details of Satan's work from Noah's flood until the end of this age. The methods used by Satan are tried and true throughout the ages. In this chapter, we see Satan's method to subdue and seduce the kings of the earth. We also see how God plans to destroy these satanic institutions. Chapters 17 and 18 of Revelation deal with the "New Babylon". Chapter 17 deals with the religious system and 18 with the political system. Chapter 17 requires spiritual understanding as we let scripture interpret scripture. The timing of the 17th chapter is parenthetical and actually takes place at the beginning of the second half of the tribulation period.

The Antichrist at the start of the tribulation period comes to power in the guise of peace. One method of his peace is the establishment of a religious system. The system will unify a world at war.

The Beast and the false prophet will unify kingdoms of the world under a religious and economic system. Islam and apostate Christianity, along with other religions will be united, following the rapture. The world will look for answers, and they will be ripe for spiritual deception.

During the Midpoint, changes in the spiritual realms will cause changes to the

Religious system, the Beast and his Image will become the focus of worship. Satan who will inhabit the body of the Antichrist will want direct worship from the world. The False Prophet

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who helped unify the earth into one world religion will now turn the world to worship the Beast and his image. With worship of the Beast and his Image as the focus, there will no longer be a need for a unified world religion. The Beast will now be the focus; the kings in the Beast’s kingdom will now turn on the religious system and destroy it. By destroying the system, they will accomplish God’s will.

Revelation 17

The invitation to view judgment of the great harlot

1Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Revelation 17:1-2

One of the seven angels… One of angels who had poured the bowl of God’s wrath now is telling John a preview of what he will see. Chapter 17 of Revelation deals with religious Babylon and chapter 18 deals with political Babylon. John is now about to receive insight into religious Babylon.

Come I will show you… John is to be taken to view what the angel is about to describe in an actual sense, not in a metaphorical sense.

The judgment of the great harlot…. (Gr. porneô… a woman who sells her body for sexual uses1a) a prostitute, a harlot, one who yields herself to defilement for the sake of gain)

Who is the great harlot who sits on many waters? To understand the vision John is about to see. We need to understand the use of women in biblical symbolism.

Throughout the Bible, the picture of the women portrays spiritual purity or defilement. Proverbs has two distinct female profiles the adulterous wife (Proverbs 5) and the faithful wife (Proverbs 31). In Hosea Israel is pictured as the wife of Jehovah. Hosea relationship with his adulterous wife Gomer models God’s relationship with adulterous Israel who seeks after other gods.

1Then the LORD said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans.” So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels, and one and one-half homers of barley. And I said to her, “You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man—so, too, will I be toward you.” For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days.
Hosea 3:1-5

In this picture, Israel is the wife of the Lord, but she is an adulterous wife who must remain apart from her husband. However, in the end God restores Israel as Hosea restored Gomer in the “Latter days”. Hosea’s must purchase his wife, Gomer, from her lovers for 15 shekels, she must stay apart for a extended period. Gomer, as a women, represents Israel’s relationship with God. Israel will be without a Temple or sacrifice, but in the end Israel will be restored and again seek the Lord.

Jerusalem, the city is also portrayed as an adulterous wife of who sought other lovers and abandoned her husband the Lord, in favor of other gods.

How degenerate is your heart!” says the Lord GOD, “seeing you do all these things, the deeds of a brazen harlot. You erected your shrine at the head of every road, and built your high place in every street. Yet you were not like a harlot, because you scorned payment.
Jeremiah 16:30-31

Harlotry is equated with spiritual adultery or idol worship in the scriptures. The church, pictured as the bride of Christ. (Eph 5:25-28, 2 Cor. 11:2, Revelation 19:7) The church must
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remain pure and free from friendship with the world (James 4:4). James equates this with adultery or idol worship.

This picture of the harlot is associated in with spiritual unfaithfulness. The statement that the harlot sits on many waters portrays the large territory she occupies.

With whom the kings of the earth... The work of this great harlot is world wide, to the point where the rulers of the earth have had intimate relations with her.

Inhabitants of the earth... The great harlot intimacy with the “Kings of the earth” results in the inhabitants of the earth becoming intoxicated with the wine, from this adulterous relationship between the (Mega Pornee) great harlot and the kings of earth.

This is John’s angelic preview of what he is about to see in this vision.

The Woman on the Beast

So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. Revelation 17:3-4

He carried me away... John was before the throne witnessing the wrath being poured out of bowls onto the earth. Now one of the angels with one of the bowls came over to John and spoke with him, the angel is about to take John away from the throne.

In the Spirit into the wilderness....(Gr. erēômos ....desert, desolate, solitary, wilderness.) John is carried in his spirit man, this experience is similar to Ezekiel’s when he was taken “In the spirit” into a valley of dry bones (Ezk 37:1). Paul was also taken up into the third heaven and was given a horn in his side to keep him humble (2 Corn. 12:1-6). Being in the spirit John sees a vision in the spiritual wilderness.

A woman sitting on a scarlet beast....The identity of the woman sitting on the beast is the great harlot mentioned in verse 1. The beast she is sitting on links her identity. Who is the beast? This is the same beast seen in Daniel and Revelation. The beast has distinct characteristics having 10 horns, seven heads and blasphemous names. The meaning of the 10 horns and 7 heads is revealed in Daniel and Revelation.

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. Rev 12:3-4

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” Rev 13:1-4

After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words. Daniel 7:7-8

From our previous reading we know the identity of this beast as being the living embodiment of Satan who was cast out of heaven and to the Earth. Who at the midpoint inhabits the body of antichrist. In the Revelation chapter 12, we see the dragon as active in the Earth before his fall as he stood before the women to devour her child as soon as it was born. His activity did not begin at this point but was continual through out history. As Satan was active from history, we will see the harlot has and is an active force throughout history.

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Woman was arrayed... The women is riding on the Beast which reveals she is distinct but acting in concert with the Beast. Her appearance is appealing in the eyes of the world; her clothing is made of purple and scarlet.

The color purple represents priesthood, royalty and wealth (Judges 8:26, Dan. 5:7, Esther 8:15, Luke 16:19). The color scarlet is also associated with the priesthood, sacrifice and wealth. (Exodus 38:18, Lev. 14:4, Josh 2:8, 2 Sam: 1:24, Prov 31:21, Isaiah 1:18, Matt 27:28). Another defining characteristic of the women is her gold, precious stones, and pearls. Gold and precious stones are also associated with priesthood and royalty. The woman received or was adorned with these items to the point where she seemed golden as the Greek word implies.

In her hand a golden cup... She is further pictured as having golden cup. Gold cups were used by royalty and priests. Her cup on the outside is appealing, but inside its filled with the detestable. Abominations and fornication are both words associated with idol worship in the scripture. The word for abomination, (Gr...bdelugma) is only used two other times outside of the book of Revelation. One reference is to the “Abomination of desolation” (Matthew 24:15) and the other is to the Pharisees who loved money.

And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. Luke 16:14

The harlot uses a combination of outward beauty and majesty with a religion to subdue and seduce the kings and inhabitants of the earth. Contrast the harlot to the “Two witnesses” who are God’s representatives who come to the Earth dressed in sackcloth.

The name of the Woman

Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth. Revelation 17:5

On her forehead... The identity of this woman is further manifested in her name. One way a prostitute would advertise her services was by having her name emblazoned on her forehead. This was popular in the time of Jeremiah as well as in the time of John.

Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no latter rain. You have had a harlot’s forehead; You refuse to be ashamed. Jeremiah 3:3

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Babylon... The city built by Nimrod from which mankind was scattered throughout the Earth. (Gen 11:1-9). According to scripture Babylon as a capital city will be rebuilt. The rebuilt city will be the “Religious” and “Economic” capital of the world in the last days. This very day several significant events are taking place. One is the world working in unison to rebuild and reconstruct the nation of Iraq. Baghdad is located 60 miles to the north of the ancient city of Babylon. And could become the New Babylon as the countries of the Earth begin reconstruction of the land where man first assembled after the flood. (Gen 10)

Babylon was the first nation city-state, from which the kingdom of the Earth was headquartered. And Babylon will be the last city-state from which the kingdom of the Earth will be headquartered.

In Isaiah 14:4, 12 Lucifer is called the King of Babylon. In Zechariah 5:5-11, the woman, called “Wickedness” is flown to the valley of Shinar (Babylon) where a base will be built for her. When it is built, she will set there.

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sitting inside the basket”; 8 then he said, “This is Wickedness!” And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth. 9 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. 10 So I said to the angel who talked with me, “Where are they carrying the basket?” 11 And he said to me, “To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base.” Zechariah 5:5-11

Babylon was never destroyed but gradually faded from history as a major city after the fall of Babylon in 539 BC after the conquest of Cyrus the Great. (Daniel 5). In the book of Jeremiah and Isaiah we view the eternal destruction of the city. The defeat of Babylon in 539 was a foreshadowing of the future eternal destruction of Babylon.

19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, The beauty of the Chaldeans’ pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. 20 It will never be inhabited, Nor will it be settled from generation to generation; Nor will the Arabian pitch tents there, Nor will the shepherds make their sheepfolds there. Isaiah 13:19-20

The religious system was set in motion in Babylon and has continued to this very day in one form or another throughout the world. After tower of Babel, when man tried to build a tower out of rebellion, and the Lord scattered humanity by families, through the earth. These tribes took with them, the religious system established in Babylon. The various religions of the earth have similarities because they have a similar origin, Babylon.

The woman drunk with the blood of martyrs

6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. Revelation 17:6

I saw the woman...The religious system first established in Babylon has continued throughout history and one of the reasons God judge Judah. The propagation of this “Babylonian” religion is not limited to Israel, but has made its way to nations throughout the world.

17 But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble. 18 But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine.”

19 The women also said, “And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, did we make cakes for her, to worship her, and pour out drink offerings to her without our husbands’ permission?” Jeremiah 44:17-19

12 Then He said to me, “Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, ‘The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.’” 13 And He said to me, “Turn again, and you will see greater abominations that they are doing.” 14 So He brought me to the door of the north gate of the LORD’S house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz. Ezekiel 8:12-14

Some Jews who escaped Babylonian captivity fled to Egypt. In Egypt they refused to give up their worship of the “Queen of Heaven” and her son, “Tammuz”. Jeremiah was taken captive by this group to the land of Egypt. This same Babylonian religion has elements that have been transferred to today’s cultural Christianity. For example, the word Easter is of pagan origin, along with eggs, white dresses and bunny rabbits these practices have been traced back to Babylon fertility rites. The assault is not just on cultural Christianity, but on the faith directly. Catholism today is incorporating many of the errors Israel made during the time of Jeremiah. The following is from the official Catholic Catechism ratified by the Second Vatican Council, section 996.
1. Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death. [506] The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians:

In giving birth you kept your virginity; in your Dormition you did not leave the world, O Mother of God, but were joined to the source of Life. You conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death. [507]

Today there is a move within the Catholic church to give Mary the title Co-Redemptrix, meaning that she plays a part in redemption. This is contrary to scripture which clearly teaches there is one-Mediator.


2

Pope Leo XIII: "The recourse we have to Mary in prayer follows upon the office she continuously fills by the side of the throne of God as Mediatrix of Divine grace; being by worthiness and by merit most acceptable to Him, and, therefore, surpassing in power all the angels and saints in Heaven. Now, this merciful office of hers, perhaps, appears in no other form of prayer so manifestly as it does in the Rosary. For in the Rosary all the part that Mary took as our co-Redemptress comes to us

The blood….The work of Satan, through this religious system has been active since the building of Babylon. (Gr. hagios (saints) sacred (physically pure, morally blameless or religious, ceremonially consecrated)—(most) holy (one, thing), saint. The two categories are saints, those killed before Jesus (Dan 8:13). And the martyrs of Jesus, those killed for their witness of Messiah. Both groups are killed by this satanic religion that operates in opposition to God’s word.

There is a well documented history of those who have been killed in Europe and throughout the world for the sake of the gospel.

I marveled…John wondered in amazement because he did not understand the extent of the work of the woman who was riding the Beast. How active she has been in the prior centuries and how active she will be till the end of days.

Origin of the Woman

But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. [7] The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. Revelation 17:7-8

Angel said….The angel is slightly rebukes John marveling at the Woman riding the Beast.

I will tell….Now the angel will explain the meaning, so there is no misunderstanding about the Woman or the Beast.

The beast….from the context of the other verses is the future kingdom the will be unified under Satan’s power in the final kingdom on the Earth. The seven heads and ten horns are referred to three times outside of the

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<tr>
<td>1. Was</td>
<td>Babylon as a world kingdom unified under one man did exist.</td>
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1 Catechism of the Catholic Church, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Liguori Publications, 1994, Pg.252
2 (Iucunda Semper Expectatone, n. 2), http://www.catholicplanet.com/CMA/
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| 2. And is not Babylon is not now a world kingdom. |
| 3. And will ascend out of the bottomless pit When the antichrist dies, Satan will inhabit his body at the Midpoint. |
| 4. go to perdition Satan, and the Antichrist will go into Eternal destruction |

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<td>and on his heads a blasphemous name.</td>
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<td>that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, He shall speak pompous words against the Most High.</td>
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Those who dwell... The inhabitants of the Earth will be in awe of the Kingdom of the Beast, and the source of its power and the power behind the Beast, Satan.

Whose names are not written... Those who are not going to be part of the Lamb's eternal kingdom will fall for the Beast and his religious system. The "Book of Life is mentioned seven times in the book of Revelation (Revelation 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 15, 21:27, 22:19).

Seven heads of the beast

Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. Revelation 17:9-11.

Here is the mind... Spiritual wisdom, to understand what the description of the Beast means.

Seven heads... In 3 of the 4 descriptions of the Beast we are shown a beast with seven heads. In 4 of the 4 descriptions there are 10 horns. Here the angel is about to describe the meaning of the 7 heads. The seven heads mean two things.

Seven mountains... First the seven heads represent 7 mountains. A mountain is symbolic with a seat of power. In Daniel 2:35 the rock became a mountain which filled the earth. This refers to the kingdom of Messiah. We are told the woman sits on these 7 mountains, meaning she dominates 7 kingdoms. What kingdoms does she sit on?

Also seven kings... Second, the seven heads represent seven kings. We know from the context of Daniel 7:17 that there are 4 kingdoms from Daniel’s time till then end of days.

Daniel 7:16-17

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Those 4 kingdoms are Babylon (625-539 BC), Persia (539-333 BC), Greece (333 BC-556 BC), Rome (55 BC-132 AD). 2 Kingdoms that dominated Israel were Egypt and Assyria both before Daniel’s time. These would make up the 6 till John’s day, where we are told, “One is”, which would be Rome. The other has not yet come would be the 7th of the coming Antichrist. Who will make an agreement with Israel in the first half of the 7 year tribulation. The Beast, Satan who will incarnate is the Antichrist is the “Eighth” who will be of the 7 yet distinct because he will be indwelling the 7th.

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<td>1 Egypt</td>
<td>Tried to assimilate Israel</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Assyria</td>
<td>Exiled 10 tribes of Israel, tried to exile Judah</td>
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<td>3 Babylon</td>
<td>Destroyed Jerusalem, slaughtered Israel</td>
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<td>4 Persia</td>
<td>Attempted to destroy Jews during time of Ester</td>
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<td>5 Greece</td>
<td>Antiochus Epiphanes, Abomination of Desolation 164 B.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Rome</td>
<td>Destroyed Jerusalem, over 1.5 million Jews died, rest expelled. During John’s day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Revived Rome</td>
<td>Future Kingdom during the Time of the Antichrist. Ten kingdoms unite under Satanic power</td>
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All these kingdom’s had a direct connection with Israel, not that there were not other kingdoms more powerful then these but its through Israel, God is going to operate.

Ten horns of the beast

15 The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”

Revelation 17:12-14

The ten horns... The ten horns represent 10 future kings who at the Midpoint of the tribulation will turn over their power of their kingdom to the Antichrist.

24 The ten horns are ten kings
Who shall arise from this kingdom.
And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from the first ones,
And shall subdue three kings.

25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
And shall intend to change times and law.
Then the saints shall be given into his hand
For a time and times and half a time. Daniel 7:24-25

These verses in Daniel confirm the information in the 17th chapter and give us additional details about this final kingdom. One, we find inner conflict which in which 3 of the 10 kings are actually subdued before they relinquish power. Secondly, the period will last 3.5 years which corresponds to the second half of the tribulation. (time and times and half a time=3.5years).

These are of one mind... The will be unified in purpose to make war with the lamb and will overcome the saints during this 3.5 year period. This verified in Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 17:14

These will make war... This is confirmed in the Daniel 7:25

Revelation 17:9-11, The waters the Woman sits on

15 Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

The waters... Religious Babylon will dominate the Earth. The one world religion in the first half will include the whole earth as all religions are unified into one.

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Destruction of the Woman

16And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. 17For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. 18And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. Revelation 17:16-18

Will hate the harlot....The ten horns or kings will make the transition at the 3.5-year mark as they turn over their power to the Beast. As a result the religion of the Earth will focus on worship of the Beast and his Image. The woman who rides the Beast will have served her purpose. The Beast will then turn on the woman. The woman will now be in the way, her wealth will be taken, her flesh eaten and burned with fire as those who choose to resist change will be destroyed. The irony is that God will be using the Beast to accomplish his judgment on the Harlot who from the time of Babylon through the use of religion and state was able to subdue and seduce nations.

The woman whom you saw....From the city New Babylon kings of the Earth be forced to submit to the kingdom of Antichrist. The will hate the Woman.