

Chapter 16

Verse 20- *And every island fled, and no mountains were found.*

island fled, and no mountains were found- Again, as a result of the global earthquake, all mountains, on land and underwater (islands), tumble.

We've seen the beginning of this during the sixth seal judgment in Revelation 6:14:

*The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and **every mountain and island was removed from its place.***

Chapter 16

Verse 21- *And huge hailstones, weighing about a talent each, came down from heaven upon people; and people blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because the hailstone plague was extremely severe.*

hailstones, weighing about a talent each- Hail reminds us of the seventh plague of Egypt (Exodus 9:22-23). These hailstones weighed a talent (100 – 120 pounds each). A bag of ice from a machine usually weighs 2 pounds, so each hailstone would be the equivalent of 50 bags of ice melted together. They would kill whoever they fell on instantly.

Chapter 16

Verse 21- *And huge hailstones, weighing about a talent each, came down from heaven upon people; and people blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because the hailstone plague was extremely severe.*

blasphemed God- Once again, the reprobate (those who reject God and so are rejected by God) who follow the beast curse God.

Greek- *blasphēmein*,

Latin- *blasphemare*,

Middle English (from Old French)- *blamer*, *blasmer*,

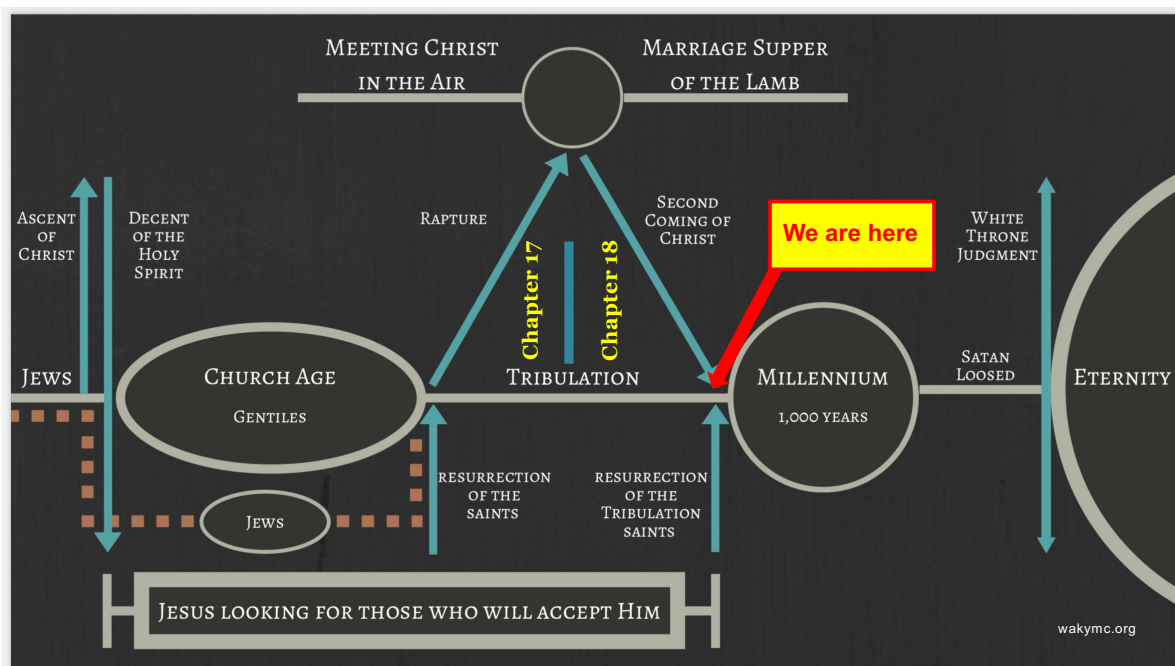
Modern English- *blame*

Chapter 17

Chapters 17 and 18 are a look back at the Tribulation before the Lord returns in chapter 19.

- *Chapter 17 looks at the global religion of Babylon (probably the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation)*
- *Chapter 18 looks at the global economic system of Babylon (probably the second 3 ½ years of the Tribulation)*

Where are we headed?



Chapter 17

Verse 1- *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters,*

Four figurative women in Revelation:

- 2:20 Jezebel- An actual women (with the alias "Jezebel") leading people astray in the church of Thyatira
- 12:1 Woman clothed with sun, moon, and stars- (Israel)
- 17:5 **The mother of prostitutes (False religious/commercial world system)**
- 19:7, 21:9 The bride/wife of the Lamb (the Church)

Chapter 17

Verse 1- *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters,*

great prostitute the great prostitute- (**pornēs tēs megalēs**- Speaks to her vocation and activity). Babylon involves idolatry (chapter 17) and commerce (chapter 18). This is in contradistinction to the bride later in the book:

*Revelation 21:9- Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you **the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**"*

Chapter 17

Verse 1- *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters,*

sits- Denotes sovereignty. She is in religious and commercial control and commands these nations and peoples.

many waters- Represents many peoples and nations who commit spiritual fornication and carry out commerce with her.

Chapter 17

Verse 2- *with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of **sexual immorality**, and those who live on the earth became drunk with the wine of her **sexual immorality**."*

- Verse 1- sexual immorality (noun- **eporneusan**)
- Verse 2- committed acts of sexual immorality (verb- **eporneusan**)
- Verse 2- drunk with the wine of her sexual immorality (noun- **porneias**)
- Israel and Judah were accused of being spiritual prostitutes (Ezek. 23); and Jesus labeled the religious leaders of his day "an adulterous generation" (Matt. 12:39; 16:4).

Chapter 17

Verse 2- *with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of **sexual immorality**, and those who live on the earth became drunk with the wine of her **sexual immorality**.*"

- When Israel commits idolatry, it's adultery because they are in a covenant relationship with God.
- The church is "the bride of the Lamb" and is in covenant relationship with the Lord. It's spiritual adultery when we follow false gods.
- When the lost world follow this false religion, it is fornication.

Chapter 17

Verse 2- *with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of **sexual immorality**, and those who live on the earth became drunk with the wine of her **sexual immorality**.*"

drunk with the wine of her sexual immorality- This "prostitute" (Babylon) lures people away from following Christ. The security of a global false religion and economic prosperity is intoxicating. It is the difference between love (covenant) and lust (immorality).

In the Old Testament, Tyre (Isa. 23:15-18) and Ninevah (Nah. 3:4) are called "prostitutes" by the prophets because they forsook the LORD for false gain and riches.

Chapter 17

Verse 3- *And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.*

into a wilderness- This is a fulfillment of prophecy (Isaiah 21:1-10).

a woman sitting on a scarlet beast- The false global religion of the Tribulation. The false religion in the first half of the Tribulation is supported by the beast (sits on him). At the midway point, he survives a seemingly mortal head wound and is “resurrected.” In reality, it’s a resuscitation (counterfeit resurrection).

Chapter 17

Verse 3- *And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.*

scarlet- John saw a red horse (war) in 6:4, Satan as a giant red dragon, and now we know the beast from the sea (13:1) is scarlet in color, just like his master.

blasphemous names- Earlier, each head had carried a sacrilegious name; now, the entire beast is covered with blasphemous names. Blasphemy is now in full force.

seven heads and ten horns- On the beast, not the prostitute.



The Lion- Babylonian Empire


The Bear- Medo-Persian Empire

The Leopard- Grecian Empire After Alexander the Great's death in 323 BC

- Greece/Macedonia
- Thrace/Asia Minor
- Syria/Babylon/Middle East
- Egypt/Palestine

The Dragon- Roman Empire The Beast John sees in Revelation 13

Divided Kingdom- 476 – present



1. Egyptian Empire

2. Assyrian Empire

3. Babylonian Empire

4. Medo-Persian Empire

6. Grecian Empire

5. Roman Empire

7. Revived Roman Empire

8. The Beast

Revelation 17:10-11
 “And they are *seven kings*; *five have fallen*, *one is*, the other has *not yet come*; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. The beast which was, and is not, is himself also *an eighth* and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.

Chapter 17

Verse 3- *And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.*

a woman sitting on a scarlet beast- We will see soon that the beast no longer needs the prostitute after his false resurrection. He is empowered by Satan up to his “resurrection” and his indwelt by him afterward. In Revelation 11:7:

*When they (the Two Witnesses) have finished their testimony, **the beast that comes up out of the abyss** will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them.*

Chapter 17

Verse 4- *The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls, holding in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her sexual immorality,*

Purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones, pearls- Then, as now, prostitutes needed to identify themselves for business. Culturally, prostitutes wore colors every day people could not afford (dye was expensive!) Later, we see gold, precious stones, pearls as part of the heavenly city (21:18-21). This could be a mockery of the bride who was dressed beautifully for her husband described later in 21:2.

Chapter 17

Verse 4- *The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls, holding in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her sexual immorality,*

gold cup full of abominations- The outside of the cup will be beautiful, and the inside will be filthy. The flesh of those who drink from the cup will be satisfied, but it will come at a price- eternal damnation (separation from God).

The expression cup of gold is an allusion to Jeremiah 51:7-
"Babylon was a gold cup in the Lord's hand; she made the whole earth drunk."

Chapter 17

Verse 5- *and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery: "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."*

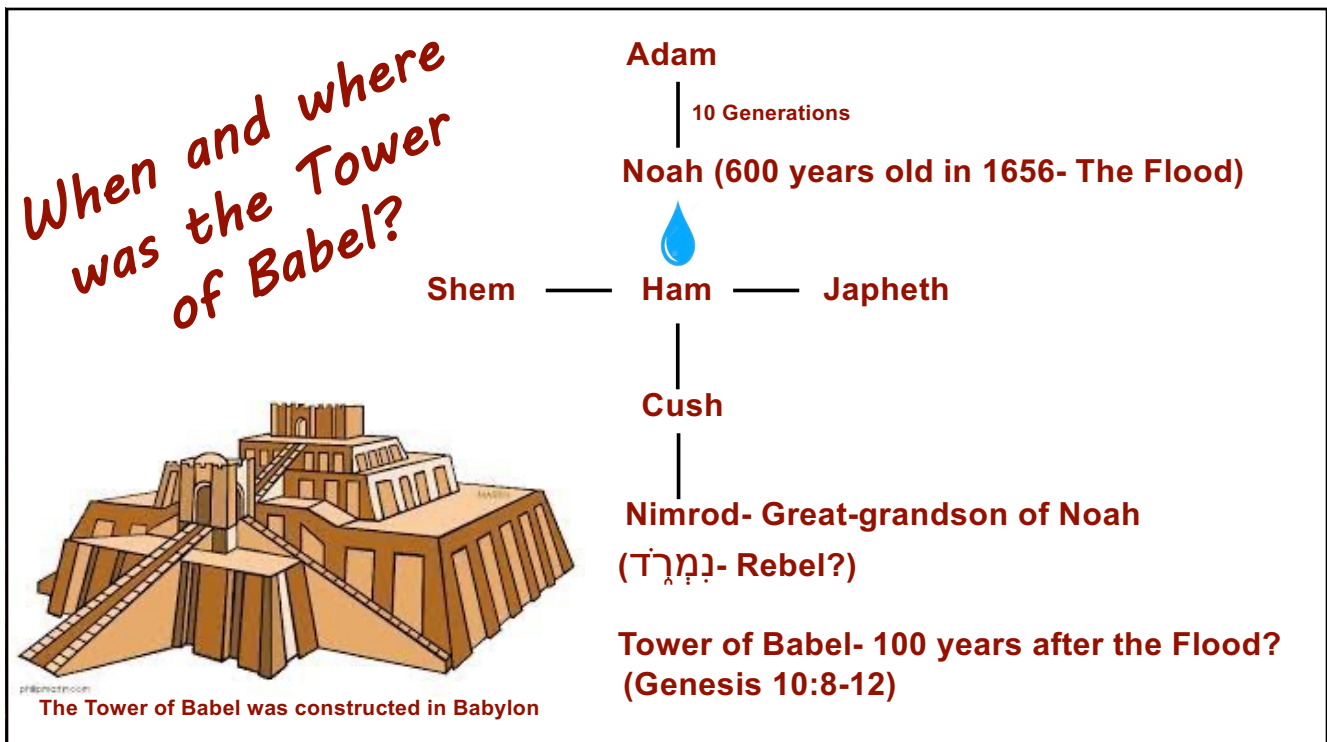
forehead a name was written- Prostitutes would identify themselves by wearing their names or the name of their owner on a headband. It is an imitation or maybe a mockery of the name of God on the saints. It also reminds us of the mark of the beast on the forehead or hand.

Chapter 17

Verse 5- *and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery: "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."*

a mystery- Something that is hidden, but it will soon be revealed. Also, it can refer to the ancient mystery religion of Babylon that God thwarted at the Tower of Babel.

By contrast, Christ the rider on the white horse wears a name on his thigh, "King of kings, Lord of lords" (19:16).



Ziggurat: A pyramidal stepped temple tower



Ziggurat of Ur, Iraq



Maya Pyramid,
Guatemala



Koh Ker Temple,
Cambodia



Monks Mound,
Collinsville, Illinois



Ziggurat in Jilin, China



Pyramids of Meroe - Sudan



Borobudur temple
Java, Indonesia

Borsippa ("Tongue Tower") Ziggurat located in Babylon Province, Iraq



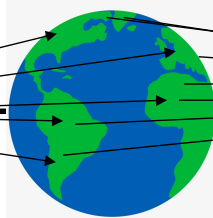
Chapter 17

Verse 5- *and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery: "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."*

MOTHER OF ALL PROSTITUTES- The first unified false religion of the Tower of Babel will once again return to Babylon under this **MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES** (*false religions*).



Babylon (Genesis 10)



False Religions/Cults Today



Babylon (Revelation 17)

Chapter 17

Verse 6- *And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.*

drunk with the blood of the saints- The prostitute is the global religious system, and the beast she rides is the global political/economic system. Followers of the Lamb do not have the mark of the beast (belong to him), so they cannot buy or sell, and their life is forfeit if caught by the world religious system.

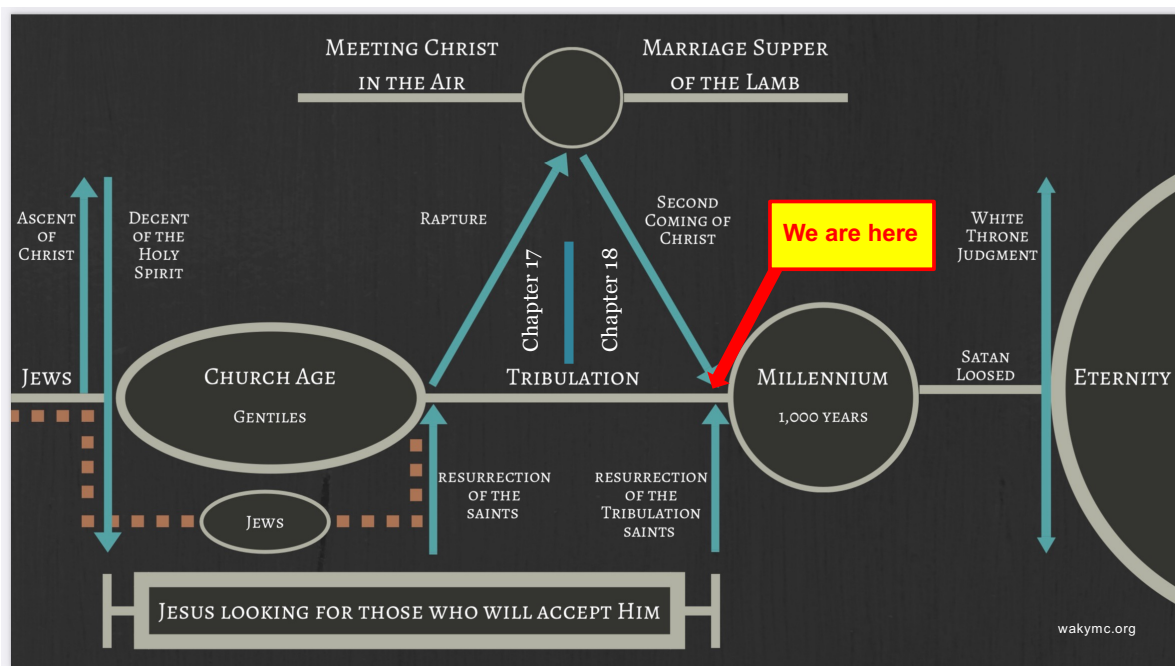
saints...witnesses- The same people. Many Christians will die in the Great Tribulation.

Chapter 17

Verse 6- *And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.*

I wondered greatly- “I marveled with great marvel.” Thinking he would see the demise of Babylon, he saw the prostitute drunk with the blood of the saints (remember, we are back in the first part of the Tribulation). Instead of seeing their victory, he sees their death and martyrdom. In verse 7, the angel will explain the mystery of Babylon the Great.

Where are we headed?



Next week...

Chapter 17-
“The Explanation of the Mystery”

