

RCC History: Satan's Religions, Paganism & the End of the World Revelation 17 & 18

Satan is Leading a Global Rebellion Against God

The only key to correctly understanding history comes from God's Word. God's Word explains to us the struggle going on behind the pages of history is that: Satan is a rebel.

First, as Lucifer, the greatest and most powerful creature God ever made, **Satan rebelled against God and lost his position as the anointed cherub (Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28)** and became Satan, the adversary of God.

Next, Satan led **a third of the angels of God in rebellion against God (Rev. 12:4)**, and they become Satan's demon warriors, following with him in his ongoing rebellion against God.

Then, Satan goes on to enlist humanity in his rebellion against God by tempting Eve (Genesis 3), and leading Adam into sin.

Finally, at the Tower of Babel, Satan devises a global spread of his rebellion through false religion and materialism.

God had made a way for mankind to be redeemed, by a substitutionary, sacrificial, blood-sprinkled, way. But Satan wanted at all costs, to obscure and confuse God's Way. To do so Satan devised snares to catch humans up in his rebellion.

When God describes the world's end at the close of the Tribulation, He devotes two entire chapters of Revelation to detail the end of Satan's twin pathways of rebellion.

Revelation 17 & 18: God Judges the Rebellion of Religion & Materialism

Since the temptation and fall of humanity in Genesis 3, Satan has most often ensnared the world into his rebellion through one or the other of these two systems. First in Revelation 17:5, God describes the false system of Satan's religion, by which he

deceived humanity and led them away from God. Note: Mystery, Babylon the Great.

Revelation 17:5 (NKJV) And on her forehead a name was written: **MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**

Then in Revelation 18:2, God explains the end of the other way Satan has enslaved humanity through the false worship of materialism. Note: Babylon the Great.

Revelation 18:2 (NKJV) And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "**Babylon the great** is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!

The Harlot of Revelation 17 represents the spiritual adultery, drawing people away from God and to false gods, of Babylon's Mystery Religions. Our study of the church at Pergamum, and the connection that Pergamum has to Satan's Seat through pagan religions, is where we are today.

Religion is mankind seeking the wrong gods, neglecting the True Creator, and offering any kind of worship, other than what God's Word has commanded.

Religion is the self-styled offering of a humanly designed worship, rather than the Spirit-prompted offering of strict obedience to God's Word. Now, turn back with me to:

Genesis 11: Babel's Idolatrous Tower, Babylon's Mysteries & Organized Religion

Remember that Satan's plans of false worship began to be exported globally at the tower of Babel in **Genesis 11:1-9** which was the advent of what we would call *Organized Religion*. This was over 24 centuries before Christ, and nearly 4,500 years ago.

The Tower was the first idol and it became the object of men's worship, the point of their pride. It spawned a complex of weird, strange, mysterious religions that are still going on in our world today.

Genesis 11:1-4, 9 (NKJV) Now the **whole earth had one language and one speech**. 2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. 4 And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and **a tower whose top is in the heavens**; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." 9 Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

Satan desires to counterfeit, confuse, and mess up God's plan. So the one-world plans Satan had at Babel, God confounds; but the scattered humans took with them Babel's

false worship, mystery religions, and idolatry to the ends of the earth.

The rebellion of Satan promotes human-invented religion, and it has spread to every corner of the Earth. From the Tower of Babel's worship ziggurat, the Babylonian Mystery Religions fill the pages of ancient history. They're all over everywhere and they're still with us today all in different forms.

In Genesis 11, on the plains of Shinar, probably not far from the original Garden of Eden, Satan's rebellion grows as Nimrod organized humans into Creator-rejection and false worship. From history we can see that:

IDOLATROUS RELIGIONS ORIGINATE FROM BABYLON

There is no record of any pre-flood idolatry among humans, they were just totally corrupted. Even the unsaved historians chronicle the spread of Babel's religion. Listen to the conclusions of the late Joseph J. Campbell (1904-1987), a New Age guru and media personality, who wrote in his classic treatment of mythology called *The Masks of God*¹:

"the dead and resurrected god Tammuz (Sumerian Dumuzi), prototype of the Classical Adonis, who was the consort as well as son by virgin birth, of the goddess-mother of many names: Inanna, Ninhursag, Ishtar, Astarte, Artemis, Demeter, Aphrodite, Venus".

Unlike the unbelieving mythologist Campbell just quoted, the godly Alexander Hislop², a great 19th century Scottish theologian and historian, traced the concept of false religions under the idea that Babel's idolatry spread as Babylon's mystery religions. Both Campbell and Hislop saw the same pattern.

After God destroyed the tower, He scattered mankind into multiplied language groups. According to the cult of Ishtar, Tammuz was conceived by a sunbeam, a counterfeit version of Jesus' virgin birth.

Semiramis & Tammuz of Babel were worshiped as a divine mother and son under many different names. They became:

- **Ishtar & Tammuz of Assyria**
- **Ashtaroth & Baal of Phoenicia**
- **Isis & Horus of Egypt**
- **Aphrodite & Eros of Greece**
- **Venus & Cupid of Rome**

In every case, the worship of those gods and goddesses was associated with sexual immorality.

¹ Oriental Mythology: *The Masks of God*, pp 39-40.

² Adapted from *Two Babylons* quoted by MacArthur in Acts and I Corinthians. (For a discussion of the relationship of the pagan mother-child cults to Roman Catholic teachings about Mary, see Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons* [Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux, 1959].)

History shows that Babel, became the fountainhead of all false religion. That's why when false religion reaches its climax in the end times, God's Word calls Satan's rebellion by the name of Babylon again, in Revelation 17-18.

The mystery religions of Babylon also propagated the idea of baptismal regeneration, (being born again merely through the rite of water baptism), and the practice of mutilation and flagellation to atone for sins or gain spiritual favor.

Nimrod's wife Semiramis, along with her son Tammuz, formed the basis for the many counterfeit mother-child cults of antiquity. Satan deceived humans into a religious system, which made both the mother and her son the objects of divine worship. That is why:

Rebellion Against the Creator: The Common Denominator of World Religions

Always remember that behind every idol is a demon warrior that is part of Satan's rebellion. At the crescendo of the Tribulation, when demons are wreaking havoc, and hundreds of millions of people are dying, God makes this sobering declaration in Revelation 9. Turn there again with me:

Revelation 9:15-16, 20-21 (NKJV) So **the four angels**, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, **were released to kill a third of mankind**. 16 Now the number of the **army of the horsemen** was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. 20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, **that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk**. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Demons promoting Satan's rebellion through idols, is also what Paul dealt with in the Church of the Corinthians. Those early saints had to face the influence over their city of Babel's mother/son religion portrayed in the temples of Aphrodite and Eros, at the midpoint of the 1st Century. Turn back to:

1 Corinthians 10:19-21 (NKJV) What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? 20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice **they sacrifice to demons and not to God**, and I do not want you to have **fellowship with demons**. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and **the cup of demons**; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the **table of demons**.

God's people have always had to resist Satan's idolatry. Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost writes, "I visited an archeological museum in Mexico City. A find had been put on display, which Mexican archeologists had authenticated as belonging to the period about 200 years before Christ. The object was the center of religious worship among some of the early Indians in Mexico. To my amazement, it was an image of a mother with a child in

her arms. This Babylonian religion spread abroad to become the religion of the world³.”

What was the central teaching of Semiramis’ idolatrous worship? That Semiramis herself was the way to God. She actually adopted the title “Queen of Heaven.”

About 2000 B.C. God called Abraham away from all this idolatrous worship from Babel (see Joshua 24:2-3) and led him into the Promised Land.

But by the ninth century B. C. Israel had returned to this false worship of Babel’s idols under the influence of wicked Jezebel (see 1 Kings 16:30-33). At this time the cult was worshiped under the name of Ashtoreth (the mother) and Baal (her son). Israel had been snared repeatedly, but by the time of Jeremiah, Baal (Tammuz) and Semiramis (Queen of Heaven) had moved into the Temple at Jerusalem. The words “Queen of Heaven” are found in five verses in the Bible (Jeremiah 7:18; 44:17-19, 25).

Now open with me to:

Jeremiah 44: The Queen of Heaven’s False Religion

In Jeremiah, we are introduced to this whole idolatrous form of worship.

Jeremiah 44:17-19 (NKJV) But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to **the queen of heaven** ...18 But since we stopped burning incense to **the queen of heaven** ...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?”

Do you know where the title of the “Queen of Heaven” came from? It came right out of Egyptian idolatry, Isis and Osiris. It has nothing to do with the New Testament at all.

And if you have ever heard that the **Queen of Heaven** is Mary, and wondered where that came from—look at these words in Ezekiel 8:12-16.

The prophet Ezekiel is taken by God into the temple, and there he sees idols. God is very unhappy. To see what is offending God so greatly, he’s shown this scene:

Ezekiel 8:13-14, 16 (NKJV) 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**. 16 So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD’s house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with **their backs toward the temple of the LORD** and their faces toward the east, and **they were**

³ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Prophecy for Today*, p. 133.

worshiping the sun toward the east.

There it is, the idolatry of Babel exported to Israel: the worship of the virgin goddess in Jeremiah 44 called the Queen of Heaven; and the worship of her son Tammuz, as they wept the 40 days awaiting his resurrection in Ezekiel 8. Here we find in God's Word:

SEMIRAMIS & TAMMUZ: THE PAGANISM OF LENT & ROMANISM

Let me just give you some interesting details from a book entitled, "***The Two Babylons***" by Alexander Hislop. The worship of **Semiramis** throughout history has often had these elements:

- **Semiramis** was called the Queen of Heaven;
- **Semiramis** was worshipped by the offering of a wafer, or cake;
- **Semiramis** began the practice of 40 days of weeping over Tammuz before the feast of celebrating his resurrection.
- The mystery cults around **Semiramis** also taught of a place of purgatory.⁴

The worship of Mary as the Queen of Heaven and the 40 days of Lent for her Son, has no basis in Scripture, but rather developed from the pagan celebration of Semiramis' mourning forty days over the death of Tammuz before his alleged resurrection—another of Satan's mythical counterfeits.

What are some of the pagan rites that have crept into the Church? To name a few would be:

The incense burning before images, the orders of priests and monks that are so contradictory to Christ-like humility, the calendar of observances that each originate with pagan events that have only been renamed with Christian events, the titles of pagan priests like: Pontifex Maximus, pontiff, vicar, and most excellent.

Then there are also all the pagan-originated and never-recorded in the Bible practices like: holy water, purgatory, prayers for the dead, indulgences, and so much more.

All of these names, observances, and practices came directly from the pagans; the very pagans that the early saints tried to convert!

The majority of those who call themselves Christians in our world today follow a way of worship that would have offended the apostles and early saints. What do I mean?

The statues of Mary, calling her the Queen of Heaven, the images of Christ and saints; and all of them being revered with candles and incense burning before them are idolatrous.

⁴ John MacArthur preached this in a Mother's Day message on 5/14/72

There are some people in the Catholic Church who have met Jesus Christ and I praise God for that, but they had to do it circumventing their own theology, if they even knew their own theology.

So how did the Church inherit this wickedness? Hold on to your seats, here is an overview of world history in 3 minutes:

THE PAGAN ORIGINS OF ROMANISM

By⁵ the time of Christ, paganism had so influenced Roman life that the Caesars were not only crowned as emperors of Rome but also bore the title Pontifex Maximus, meaning, "high priest." They were high priests of the Babylonian idol worship.

When Christ came into this world the mystery of iniquity was everywhere holding sway, save where the truth of God as revealed in the Old Testament was known. Thus, when the early Christians set out upon the great task of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth, they found themselves everywhere confronted by this system, in one form or another; for though Babylon as a city had long been but a mystery, her mysteries had not died with her.

BABYLON TO PERGAMOS

When Medes and Persians moved in and took the city and temples of Babylon in 539 BC, the high-priest fled with a company of initiates and their sacred vessels and images to **Pergamos**, where the Symbol of the serpent was set up as the emblem of the hidden wisdom.

The chief priests wore mitres shaped like the head of a fish, in honor of Dagon, the fish-god, the Lord of life-another form of the Tammuz mystery, as developed among Israel's old enemies, the Philistines. The chief priest took the title Pontifex Maximus, and this was imprinted in on his mitre.

PERGAMOS TO ROME

Three hundred years later, Rome moved into power, Julius Caesar had all the priestesses and priests of Semiramis moved from Pergamos to Rome. That's history. You can read that yourself. Julius Caesar had a great idea about having more power if he could combine a false religion with his system. You see, he knew what every good conqueror knows; you've got to get the people religiously.⁶

When the worship of Semiramis arrived in Rome, the chief priest of the Mystery Religions in Rome took the title Pontifex Maximum and it was imprinted on his miter. The title had to do with the worship of a god called Dagon the Fish-god. From then on,

⁵ Henry Allen "Harry" Ironside (October 14, 1876-January 15, 1951) was a Canadian-American Bible teacher, preacher, theologian, pastor, and author. Found also on Lambert Dolphin's site at: <http://ldolphin.org/semir.html> This article copied from:

<http://www.biblelineministries.org/articles/basearch.php3?action=full&mainkey=BABYLONIAN+RELIGION+%28By+Harry+A.+Ironside%29>

⁶ John MacArthur speaking at a Q&A 10/7/1973 said these things. http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/1332_The-Destruction-of-the-Nations-Part-3?q=lent

every emperor in Rome wore the title Pontifex Maximum. It had nothing to do with Christianity; it meant you were the chief priest of the worship of Semiramis.⁷

CONSTANTINE & CHRISTIANITY

During the year A. D. 306 a Roman emperor named Constantine was threatened by a very powerful enemy army. Realizing that his uneasy troops needed confidence, Constantine claimed to have seen a vision on the eve of the battle. He saw a large blue flag with a red cross on it and heard a mighty voice that said ***In hoc signo vinces*** -- "in this sign conquer."

He thereupon marched his troops into a shallow river, claimed them to be officially baptized, and ordered the sign of the cross painted on all his weapons. Thus inspired, he led his troops to victory and subsequently made Christianity the state religion of Rome.

Thus, for nearly 300 years the Devil had desperately attempted to destroy the church from outside by his terrible persecutions. But with the advent of Constantine he changed his tactics, walking the aisle, applying for membership, and joining the church!

The Roman Empire's official priests of Tammuz soon discovered that they could easily make the transition into Christianity (with certain changes) and thereupon carried their traditions forward without interruption by promoting the Mother-Child worship concept, the holy-water sacrament, and many other practices imported from the pagan mystery religions.

Up until the Roman emperor **Constantine** Christianity in the early 4th century A.D., were both head of the Roman empire and also Pontifex Maximus--head of the pagan church. Constantine's proclamation of Christianity led to the merger of Christianity and paganism in the Roman empire. As head of the pagan church, Constantine wore the garb and paraphernalia of Babylon's idolatry which had been passed down through the Babylonian empire, preserved in Pergamum, willed to Rome, and was worn by Julius Caesar and the subsequent Roman emperors. The Roman emperor Constantine had the fish hat, the crosier, and the keys of Janus and Cybele.

Babylonianism to The Church

In 381 A.D., the Roman emperor **Gratian** refused to wear the paraphernalia of Babylonianism, but he passed it to the Roman Pope Damasus. Since Damasus, every Pope of Rome has worn the garb of Babylon--the fish hat, the crosier, and the keys of Janus and Cybele. In our days, Pope John Paul II and his most recent successor, Pope Benedict XVI, wears the garb of Babylonian idolatry. As the pagans had worshipped their gods (icons of their deceased pontiffs) in their pantheons and temples, they now worshipped their patron saints and their Icons in cathedrals and churches.

Semiramis: who was Ashtoreth in Canaan, Aphrodite in Greece, Venus in Rome, known also as Astarte, Ishtar, Aurora, Diana, Rhea, Urania, and Isis: was worshipped now as Jesus' mother Mary. ⁸

⁷ John MacArthur speaking at a Q&A 10/7/1973 said these things. http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/1332_The-Destruction-of-the-Nations-Part-3?q=lent

⁸ The historical timeline quoted from: Hislop, The Two Babylon's, page 241. <http://philologos.org/eb-ttb/default.htm>

Historian Will Durant⁹ states that paganism conquered Christianity, saying that paganism continued "in the form of ancient rites and customs condoned or accepted and transformed by an often indulgent Church."

Durant goes on to explain: "An intimate and trustful worship of saints replaced the cult of the pagan gods, and satisfied the polytheism of simple or poetic minds. Statues of Isis and Horus were renamed Mary and Jesus."

Many years ago as a professor of Church History at the Masters Seminary and College, I used to give a lecture series from Church History and the History of Doctrine called:

7 Reasons I am not a Roman Catholic

1. The first reason why the Roman Catholic church is wrong is because of the doctrine of Christ's being offered over and over in the **Mass**.
2. The second reason is because of the **inordinate place that Mary** has been given.
3. Thirdly, because they have **elevated tradition over the Scripture**. Mass, with their doctrine of Mary. They put it, their teachings which have become traditions, over the holy scriptures.
4. Fourthly, because of **the veneration or worship of images**. The scriptures tell us that God is not to be reduced into a physical form. He is not to be worshipped by anything we can make with our hands.
5. Because of the **false teachings about the sacraments**. The Roman church, teaches that grace is infused through the operation of these sacraments; and that grace can be earned instead of being imputed by God.
6. Sixthly, the teaching of the Roman Catholic church about **purgatory** is a falsehood.
7. Finally, many practices of Roman Catholicism are tied to **ancient paganism's rites**.

There are some people in the Catholic Church who have met Jesus Christ and I praise God for that, but they had to do it circumventing their own theology, if they even knew their own theology.

Christ's message for them and to us today is: *Stay separated from false doctrine and evil practices.*

How Romanism Entered the Church 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 & Rev. 2:12-17

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⁹ William James Durant (November 5, 1885 – November 7, 1981) was a prolific American writer, historian, and philosopher. He is best known for The Story of Civilization, 11 volumes written in collaboration with his wife Ariel Durant and published between 1935 and 1975. The Story of Civilization, Vol. IV, page 73.

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 (NKJV) Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: **“I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.”** 17 Therefore **“Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.”** 18 “I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty.” 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us **cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**