

Chapter 17 - Part II

I. Introduction

Great Harlot -

- A. V 1, 15 Idolatrous ecumenical (one world) religion of the tribulation
- B. V. 5 Had its birthplace in ancient Babylon (her name) and has existed throughout human history but will have its greatest influence when it is unbridled by the absence of the true church and the Holy Spirit.

This false religion is the idolatrous worship of Semiramis, first high priest of idolatry. Spread all over the world!

- C. V. 2-3, 7-12 It has great influence over government (Antichrist and 10 kings) for the first half of the tribulation.
- D. It will be headquartered in Rome (7 hills) where the Antichrist rules over the reestablished Roman empire.
- E. This false church is nothing like the church of John's day (humble, poor, separated from the world.) Rather it is clothed in wealth while carrying out abominations to Holy God.
- F. V. 6 John was filled with wonder with the persecution of the saints by religious Rome. He had experienced the persecution of pagan Rome - but to see the Roman church as a persecutor was shocking!

Can this happen? Yes

When did this influence happen to the church?

- (1) When Babylon was defeated - The Babylon mystery religion moved to Pergamos then Rome. The Etruscan Mysteries of Rome.

When Constantine was supposedly "converted," he sought to make Christianity the religion of Rome. He appointed himself as the leader of the church/the high priest of the Roman mysteries. He hoped to weave the two together. Pontifex Maximus!

↙ Brought heathen ideas into the church

- (a) Mother/Child Worship (Adoration of Mary); (b) Holy Water; (c) Eating of the body and blood of Jesus; (d) Purgatory - praying for the dead; (e) Praying to Saints (Statues of Saints); (f) 40 Days of Lent

* When Constantine died, the bishop of Rome became Pontifex Maximus - "Pope"

Pagan Crown - Shape of a Fish Head - - "Keeper of the Bridge"

↙ Pontifex Maximum - "Major Keeper of the Bridge" → Still Called Today - Pontiff

Reformation Period - Not just about Scripture. It was to confront Rome about the evil practices of heathen religions - Had lost the calling to be "separate!"

II. Important Questions:

How? It is possible for the church of the tribulation to persecute saints because it has happened in human history!

↙ A time in human history when the church of Rome cared more about political position and influence than the souls of man - * Haley's Bible Handbook contains a detailed section on "The Inquisition" which gives a view of Roman brutality (through the church.)

“The Inquisition was the main agency in the Papacy’s effort to crush the Reformation. It is stated that in the 30 years between 1540 and 1570 no fewer than 900,000 protestants were put to death. . . The Inquisition is the most infamous thing in history. It was devised by the popes and used by them for 500 years to maintain power.”

* It has been estimated that this church has slain over 5 million servants of Jesus Christ! *

Just as in the past → During the tribulation those who become believers will suffer intensely under the rule of the one world church!

This reestablished Roman empire with the one-world church will rule powerfully and ruthlessly during the first half of the tribulation.

III. The Antichrist and 10 kings will put the one world religion to an end!

The Ten Kings:

(1) Receive authority for a short time with the Antichrist.

(2) Their purpose is to give their power and authority to the beast.

* They will eventually war against Jesus Christ and be defeated!

(3) They will join with the Antichrist to take down the harlot of false religion - “make her desolate, naked, eat her flesh, burn her.”

(4) The Antichrist will proclaim himself god and demand that the world worship him.

* God is still fulfilling His purposes! *

“City” → Could refer to Jerusalem where he enters the temple, breaks the treaty, persecutes the Jews!

Application:

Warning to the Church!

→ The digression of the spiritual condition in the world and the true church is an open door for the church of the tribulation to transition smoothly.

→ What is the church prior to the tribulation? → The Laodicean Church (The Lukewarm Church)



There is a constant push to no longer be separate but rather to lose all conviction and distinction and just fit in!!
(How much can we be like the world and still be saved?)

→ The Mindset of the Tribulation False Church!

Like your teenage children who seek to convince you about what they wear, where they go, etc.