

Egypt and Babylon

Introduction

It is well understood that both Egypt and Babylon are symbols of the world; but in what way do they differ? Why is Egypt only mentioned once in passing in Revelation and not used as the main symbol of the world, while Babylon is strongly emphasised? Why is Babylon not used in the NT outside of Revelation as a symbol of the world but only geographically?

It behoves us to examine Egypt and Babylon and identify the specifics of their typology. Since I have not seen anyone else do this, it falls upon me to deal with it. To keep matters simple I will use a tabular format.

Egypt	Babylon
Comparisons	
A symbol of the world of sin.	A symbol of the world of sin.
Oppresses the Lord's people.	Oppresses the Lord's people.
Dominated by sin.	Dominated by sin.
A centre of false religion.	A centre of false religion.
A centre of false, rebellious authority.	A centre of false, rebellious authority.
A place of divine judgment.	A place of divine judgment.
A Hamitic race.	A Hamitic race.
Babylon is spiritually identified as Egypt [Rev 11:8]; i.e. the world.	
Contrasts: historical	
Dates much later than Nimrod and developed from multiple sources including Libyan, Canaanite, Somali and Cretan.	Goes back to Nimrod and earlier than Babel ('Babylon' is Greek for 'Babel'). The original world empire in rebellion to God after the flood.
Associated with oppression of the elect.	Associated with Nimrod's wider rebellion.
The origin of Hermetic mysticism.	The origin of all false religion and occultism.
Animal sacrifices. ¹	Noted for human sacrifice and particularly child sacrifice. ²
Was not a world empire.	Was a world empire twice in history. ³ It is typified as the world empire at the end of the world that is judged by God.

¹ There is slight evidence for human sacrifice occasionally in the archaeological record, but it was far from usual practice. At some points there are examples of retainer sacrifices (killing the servants of a king when he was entombed) but even this is not universal and this is not a religious sacrifice to appease the gods.

² The child sacrifices to Molech (Moloch, the fire god) are attributed in Scripture to the Ammonites, and Chemosh of the Moabites, but it derived from Babylonian occultism and was common in many eastern and Mediterranean religions. The idol had a human form with a calf's head. Note Nebuchadnezzar's attempted execution of Daniel and the three young men for religious infractions.

³ The earlier or Old Babylonian Empire under Hammurabi and the later Neo-Babylonian Empire rising from the ashes of the Assyrian Empire. Hammurabi (d.1750 BC), was the sixth king of the first dynasty of

The main problem of the saints at the beginning of OT history.	The main problem of the saints at the end of OT history and typified as the main problem at the end of all history.
Invaded Israel / Judah but never occupied it, though Judah did become a vassal state.	Invaded Judah and completely subjugated it, carrying off most of the nation as exiles.
	Babylon defeated Egyptian power at Carchemish in 605 BC.
Also known as: Mizraim (Egyptian Mes-ra-n, 'children of Ra', the Sun) [Gen 10:6, 50:11]; Rahab ('the insolent') is used in poetry [Ps 87:4, 89:10; Isa 51:9]; 'the land of Ham' [Ps 105:23, 27]; 'the field of Zoan' ⁴ [Ps 78:12, 43; Isa 19:11; Ezek 30:14].	Also known as 'Babel'.
Abraham visited Egypt.	Abraham came out of Babylonia. ⁵
Contrasts: symbolic	
This problem is dealt with by redemption. The beginning of salvation is getting out of Egypt. Saints live by faith that the world is dead to them [Gal 6:14].	This problem needs the action of the saints, 'come out of her' [Rev 18:4]. Some people that got out of Egypt later went into Babylon and stayed there.
Symbolises bondage to worldliness, to worldly forms.	Symbolises Satanism [Rev 17:3, 18:2], seduction of earthly abominations [Rev 17:6], worldly power committed to Satan [Rev 17:17-18], deception [Rev 18:23], persecution of saints [Rev 18:23], blasphemy [Rev 17:2-3], fornication [Rev 17:4, 18:1], riches [see below], and hedonism [Rev 18:7, 9]. This is the world fully given over to sin and Satan in full denial of God. It is a civilisation of vice.
Idolatry (multiple gods).	The idolatry of one god ('a woman sitting on a scarlet beast' ⁶ [Rev 17:3], the beast is the world ruler representative of Satan – the dragon). ⁷ This suggests that at the end there is one universal religion in the world empire. The False Prophet (Second Beast) endorses that.
Has the characteristic of human government and forms.	Has the characteristic of universal rebellion against God exemplified at Babel. This rebellion sought for man to take the place of God.
Is usually considered in male terms since almost all	Has the allusion of being female [Rev 17:3] and a harlot

Babylonia who reigned 1792–1750 BC. He extended the Babylonian Empire and instituted one of the earliest known collections of laws. The great king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire was Nebuchadnezzar.

⁴ I.e. Tanis (Gk.), an ancient city of Lower Egypt.

⁵ 'Ur of the Chaldees' was within ancient greater Babylonia. It lay south of Mesopotamia ('region between the rivers'), in southern Babylonia. In early Jewish times this area was called Chaldea, Shinar and Sumer. 'Chaldea' was sometimes used for all of Babylonia but was strictly the tract at the Northwest end of the Persian Gulf (south-west of old Babylonia). Mesopotamia was the entire country between the Tigris and the Euphrates. Sumeria, or Southern Mesopotamia, was the region inhabited by Sumerian-speaking people from the 4th millennium BC, which was later part of Babylonia. In early Babylonia the land was divided into Accad in the northern part and Sumer in the southern. All these areas intersect somewhat.

⁶ 'Beast' typifies base lusts and natural power; scarlet typifies royalty, often Jewish royalty but also symbolises sin.

⁷ Historically Babylon had many gods, beginning with the deification of Nimrod (sun god) and his wife (moon goddess). This established the basic pantheon of many lands that followed, such as Marduk the ruling god. However, Revelation treats Babylon symbolically as the servant of Satan specifically through the Beast.

Pharaohs were male.	[Rev 17:1, 15, 16, 19:2] which is to typify seduction.
Chiefly mysticism and false worship.	Chiefly sorcery and false worship [Rev 9:21, 18:23].
Pleasures of include: food. ⁸	Pleasures of include: fornication (immorality) [Rev 14:8, 17:2, 4, 18:3, 9, 19:2], luxury, ⁹ riches, ¹⁰ entertainment, ¹¹ mercantilism: commercial or economic power [Rev 18:3, 11, 15, 23]. The seduction of luxury entails all types of things: minerals (gold, silver etc.), plants (fine linen, silk), animals (ivory, cattle) and even the souls of men (slavery).
Had one king: Pharaoh.	Typified as dominating many kings [Rev 17:2, 18, 18:3, 9].

Conclusion

Egypt seems to be the elemental forms of the world system, the world that seeks to bring God's people into bondage to its forms. It is the fabric of human life on earth at any given time. This fabric can involve good, bad and neutral forms.

For example, following the world's fashion is worldliness, but this does not necessarily involve sin. Wearing a suit and tie at a wedding is a western worldly form, but it is not sinful. Using Cocaine as an adjunct to entertainment is a worldly form that is sinful.

Abraham got deceived by going down to Egypt and acted wrongly, but he later left it and had peaceful relations with it as a necessary neighbour. However, Abraham never went back to Babylonia at all and had no part with it after leaving Ur.

Babylon is more than Egypt. It is the forms of the world subsumed in absolute satanic saturation. It is where all the forms in the world (art, science, craft, commerce, power, authority, economics etc.) are used in the service of Satan and directed against God and his elect. Everything is centred in deception and blasphemy and used to entice sins of selfishness, pride, lust and rebellion.

Some examples of modern Babylon include:

- Drug abuse to elevate self-satisfaction.
- Pornography and fornication.
- Homosexuality.

⁸ Num 11:5, 'We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic'.

⁹ Rev 18:3, 'For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury'.

¹⁰ Rev 18:12-14, 16, 19 'merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. ... Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! ... all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth!'

¹¹ Rev 18:22, 'The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore'.

- Occultism of all sorts, including the types found in ‘Christian’ churches.
- Greed for money, power, control.
- Waging war to extend power.
- Sexual abuse and paedophilia.
- Commercial monopolies that prey upon people.

You can be in the world (Egypt) but not of it and not with sin; however, you cannot be involved in Babylon without being blasphemous and sinful. Total separation from Babylon is absolutely necessary.¹²

Comments

Rome?

It is true that many rabbinic commentators claimed that Babylon typified Rome, which was the natural enemy at the time. Sadly this line of thought is followed by very many evangelical commentators who claim that by ‘Babylon’ Rome is meant, either as the Roman Empire, but more commonly the papacy as the continuation of Roman power today.

They are partly fooled by the mention of it sitting on seven mountains, forgetting that the seven is symbolic and the mountains represent kingly human power. In any case Rome sits on seven *hills* not mountains. Imperial degenerate Rome may be an illustration of Babylon but it is not Babylon itself.

This completely misses the point and certainly avoids the obvious meaning of an end-time global empire that rules all nations and introduces open Satanism and economic wealth. The Roman Church cannot be intended here, it is far too small in scope.¹³ Neither does it rule all nations; the majority of the world’s population is not under the sway of the pope.

Commentators that specify Rome include:

- *Robertson’s Word Pictures*.
- Albert Barnes, *Notes on the NT* (the papacy).
- Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*. He includes the possibility that Babylon is the Roman Empire, the papacy or Jerusalem (on Rev 18:2).
- John Gill, *Commentary on the Bible* (the papacy).
- *Matthew Henry’s Commentary*.
- *The Westminster Dict. of the Bible* (John D Davis, et. al.).
- William Hendriksen (*‘More than conquerors’*) affirms that John meant Rome, in the first instance, but then extends the symbolical meaning to a similar meaning that I affirm.

More than an external world system

The end-time Babylon is not just a world system, as in the case of Egypt, it is also a blasphemous principle that enters the mind and seduces the heart. It is a quasi-religious power that dominates the world by force and through deception, creating willing supporters who benefit from it (e.g. merchants).

¹² Since modern national political forums are connected to Babylon, politics is not a place for believers.

¹³ No doubt the papacy, especially the ‘Black Papacy’ ruled by Jesuits is a small part of the final global antichristian empire.

Thus it dominates kings; it is a royal or ruling power. It is full of blasphemies; it is satanic. It creates wealth and a vibrant economy; it is full of greed for riches. It is immoral. It panders to human pride and selfishness.

The woman rests ('sits') upon the beast and the false prophet supports the beast. Taken together, the final world system has two outward characteristics: political power used ruthlessly and religious power used to support political power. Both aspects are used to seduce or impress (coerce) people to worship Satan.

Description

- It is the great harlot (Rev 17:1); n.b. not an adulteress.
- Who sits on many waters (i.e. peoples & nations, Rev 17:1, 15).
- With whom the kings of the earth committed fornication (Rev 17:2).
- And the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication (Rev 17:2).
- Sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns (the beast from the sea, Rev 17:3). Scarlet indicates Jewish royalty, but here may better be interpreted as sin (Isa 1:18). The beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns (Rev 7:7).
- The woman was arrayed in purple [Gentile royalty] and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls (royal privilege, Rev 17:4, 18:16).
- Having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication (Rev 17:4). The gold indicates here preciousness, the height of something. All the seductions of the whore are exquisite not paltry. Thus antichristian science is brilliant; antichristian poetry is sublime, antichristian art is full of genius; antichristian entertainment is well produced and glossy etc. Yet within these things are uncleanness and corruption. There is also no satiating from this cup; those who drink always want more and get deeper into sin.
- And on her forehead [in her mind] a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (Rev 17:5). This tells us what the inner purpose of the whore is in her seductions.
- I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus (Rev 17:6).
- The woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth (Rev 17:18).
- A centre for demons (Rev 18:1).
- Made the world rich through economic progress (Rev 18:2, 11-13, 15, 19).
- Was filled with artistic accomplishments (Rev 18:22).
- Is full of sin (Rev 18:5).
- Is full of sorcery (Rev 18:23).
- Deceives the nations (Rev 18:23). Note the golden cup does not contain an exquisite royal beverage but abominations (Rev 17:4).
- Reigns as a queen (Rev 18:7).
- Will be utterly condemned and judged by God and burned up (Rev 18:8, 21, 19:2).
- Persecutes the church (Rev 18:24).

To summarise

Babylon is:

- The world as the seduction of vice, past, present and future, working through various world governments and human institutions.
- The world's lusts ruling through the beast.
- The seduction of immorality, greed and selfishness.
- Philosophies and occult principles inspired by Satan.
- Satanic blasphemy and demonic deception.
- The centre of church persecution.
- The name of the end time satanic empire.

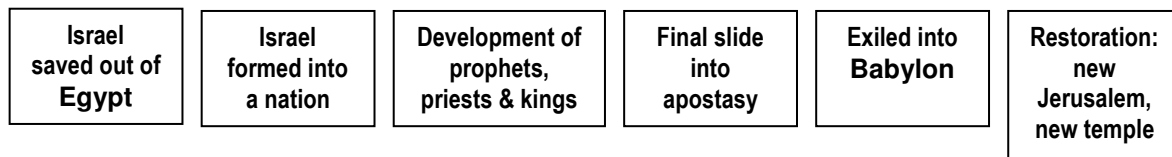
The principle of Babylon is present at all times throughout history and saints must come out of her in every age. Saints must not be deceived and lured into the false philosophies, commercial gains, luxury, blasphemy and sin.

In the same way that Antichrist has been present from the beginning when John wrote about him, so also is Babylon. In the same way that Antichrist comes to fulness and world domination in the very end, so also Babylon comes to completion at the end as a universal force of satanic deception.

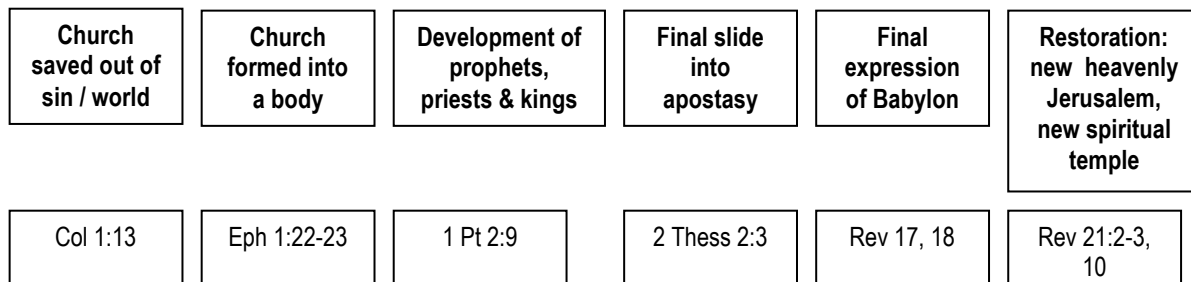
Church history summarised symbolically

The history of Israel gives us a pattern for what happens to the church throughout history. I will explain this by keeping the overall summary as simple as possible. It is possible to further sub-divide this history in many ways, which I will avoid here.

Israel



The church throughout history



Conclusion

Egypt and Babylon have similarities and contrasts, but they are not the same thing. While they both speak of the world as their realm, it is Babylon that represents absolute corruption, iniquity, blasphemy and Satanism.

Egypt is the form of the world governed by sinful man, and thus contains sinful elements. Babylon is the form of the world utterly submitted to Satan that is full of immorality, blasphemy and wickedness.

Thus being employed in a job to feed your family is a necessary involvement in Egypt but obeying the policies of the global elite is serving Babylon. Where Babylon intersects with Egypt there is danger. So, working in the world is necessary and not sinful but working for Babylon is. Certain parts of society are fully given over to Babylon now and working in those realms is not possible; this would include national politics, the armed forces, security services and much of the mainstream media.

Revelation explains the trinity of evil that dominates the world at the end.

- The first beast: antichristian political power.
- The second beast, the false prophet: antichristian religion and propaganda (the religion is propaganda and deception).
- Babylon: the antichristian empire, which is a great whore (Rev 17:1); i.e. seduction.

Thus the end is characterised as being the control of the world by a strong, wild political power that is assisted by propaganda and false religion using the seduction of worldly attractions and lusts. Babylon is the term to comprise all this.

There are two cities at the end: Jerusalem and Babylon. Jerusalem is the persecuted minority, true church of Christ.

Appendix

The best commentaries on Revelation

- William Hendriksen, *More than conquerors*, Baker.
- PE Hughes, *The Book of the Revelation*, IVP.
- Herman Hoeksema, *Behold He Cometh*, RFPA.
- Charles D Alexander, *Revelation spiritually understood*, K&M.
- RCH Lenski, *The Interpretation of St John's Revelation*, Augsburg.

The various Reformed and traditional commentaries contain many good nuggets of information but often fail to understand the overall symbolic picture (e.g. Swete, Caird, Poole, Alford, Henry, Gill, Clarke, JFB, Barnes etc.).

The Dispensational commentaries, such as by John Walvoord, also contain some useful details but terribly corrupt the main eschatological message in favour of Dispensational doctrines. These lead to nothing but confusion.

I have many notes and some complete papers on Revelation and have long considered allocating time to writing a complete commentary on Revelation, but so far this has not been possible.

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