

DANIEL 2

BABYLON: The Religion of the Gentiles

Dan 2:2 "... the magicians, the conjurers, the sorcerers, the Chaldeans."

These were the leaders of the religion of Babylon. Their ideas infiltrated all peoples and nations, including Israel. Dan 1:20 says they were in "all the realm", that is, in all the nations under the rule of Babylon, including Israel. As a group, these were the Wise Men.

MAGICIANS or MAGI: These were scribes who wrote the Mysteries of Babylon. They were highly educated and were skilled in giving counsel in religious matters. The "uninitiated" common man believed these wise men were able to contact the spirit world. It was men from this group who traveled to Bethlehem to worship the newly born King of the Jews. It was men like these who had served under Daniel, and Daniel's influence continued down through history to the birth of his Savior. How many other Gentiles were saved because of Daniel's faithfulness?

CONJURERS: The men who worked with the MAGI. They served as the priests and carried out the rituals of the religious system.

SORCERERS: In Greek this word is "pharmacopoeia". These men used herbs, potions, charms, cards and devices (like Tarot Cards, Ouija Boards) to read the future and to counsel others in making life decisions. They practiced "state sponsored" witchcraft.

CHALDEANS: This is more than an ethnic term. It is a class of priests. These priests were the specific representatives of the nation of Babylon (Chaldea), while the other "wise men" were of diverse national and ethnic backgrounds.

NIMROD: A Very Mighty Man

Gen. 10:8 Noah - Ham - Cush - Nimrod. Nimrod would have known Noah, because Noah lived 950 years. Nimrod had instruction and Genesis says he walked "before the face of the Lord." He was a "gibbor"; a warrior, a mighty hunter, and everyone knew it (Gen. 10:9). His first kingdom was Babylon in the land of Shinar. His second kingdom was Assyria, centered in Nineveh. He was a city builder and lived up to his name: "marad." In Heb. it means "he rebelled." How did he rebel? By building the city of Babel, which became Babylon. He refused to follow the command to be "scattered."

Gen. 11:1-9 Why was the building of the city and the tower of Babylon a rebellion? Because God had given a command, then a promise, then a covenant, and finally, a SIGN to Noah. Nimrod certainly knew of these things. He knew of the flood that killed the entire human population except for eight people, one of whom was Noah, his great-grandfather. Why did Nimrod reject God's promise, His command and His Covenant? It is because of his character, as defined in his name, Nimrod. Nimrod means Rebel. The LORD fulfilled His own will. He scattered the people, but Babylon remained. And Babylon remains today, as the source of confusion, substituting the worship of idols and ideas for the true worship of God in Christ.

Gen. 11:31 God in grace brought a man out of the kingdom of Nimrod, who was a son of Shem, and a son of Eber (“**Ebri’**t” means “Hebrew”, note root e-b-r), and a son of Terah. The man God called was **ABRAM**. Abram left Chaldea with his father and the idols they worshipped. Abram eventually went to Canaan, to a region headed by the family of Canaan. The same family that had been cursed by God in Gen. 9:25. Abram was going to fulfill the curse placed on Canaan. And he was going to be the head of a line that would bring salvation to all people of all nations. The line would end in Jesus Christ and salvation would be by Faith Alone in Him (Gen. 15:6). He gave to Abram a new three-fold promise: Abram would possess this land, he would be the head of a new nation, he would be a blessing to all peoples (Gen. 12:1-3). The Lord gave him a new sign called circumcision (Gen. 17:10-12). The circumcision covenant mark applies to the sons of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel) who were to dwell in the land of Israel. Righteousness before God, however, was by faith alone for EVERYONE, not just to the circumcised. There is no command to the sons of Ishmael to be circumcised. They could be saved by simple faith in God’s promise to Abraham as well. The only foreigners obligated to perform circumcision were those who wanted to live in the confines of the land of Israel. Otherwise it was not necessary. Salvation was offered to all men through the Promise given to Abraham, by faith alone, through grace alone, according to God’s Word and nothing else. Israel was to serve God and represent Him and this message to the nations. They failed miserably in that task

ISRAEL: The Gentile Corruption Remains

Ex. 32:4 The Golden Calf. This is such a sudden and tragic failure in light of the miraculous things the children of Israel had just seen.

2 Kings 23:4-11 The Baal and the Asherah. **Baal** is the son of El, Chief of all Gods. Baal is the deliverer as well as destroyer. He is controller of the sun, stars and all nature. His other names are Tammuz, Zeus, Jupiter, and Son of Dagon. **Asherah** is the female goddess who stands at Baal’s side and protects us from him. Her other names are Venus, Astarte, Ishtar, Holy One and Diana. According to the Babylonian Mysteries, Baal (Tammuz) is her virgin born son who becomes her partner, her husband (Heb. for husband is “baal”), She is the “Queen of Heaven.” Worship of these false deities takes place through male and female prostitutes. The “high places” are the places where the prostitutes live and work. Worship is a mixture of blood sacrifice and sensual lust, and murder and immorality are glamorized throughout the whole culture. Think of our modern movies, where the thrill may be vicarious, but is no less real. Notice in this passage, 23:6-7, Asherah was actually in the Temple along with the her prostitutes! **Molech** is there as well, a “protecting father”, but only if appeased by fathers offering their children on his altar. Solomon built the altar to Molech to please one of his wives. This worship, the killing and sacrifice of children, is considered the most abhorrent of all idolatries

Jer. 44:15-18, 23 Notice that the focus of worship is “The Queen of Heaven.” Asherah! Note the worship is with **incense, wine, and bread** and cakes made “with her image.” They were made in the shape of a “T” in honor of her son/husband, Tammuz. Tammuz is the one who has to be appeased. It is a great wickedness that the Mosaic worship of JHWH has been abandoned by His people. The people He loves.

Ezek 8:1-18 This time period is close to the passage above. Ezekiel is in Babylon, while Jeremiah is in Jerusalem. But Ezekiel is snatched back to Jerusalem so God can show him the “Idol of Jealousy” at the north side of the altar in the Temple. Inside the Temple it is even worse. God tells Ezekiel the women are “weeping for Tammuz.” Tammuz died every year, went to the place of the dead, and burst forth to life in the spring after being recovered by Ishtar (Asherah), his queen. The women are weeping as part of the 40 ritual of mourning and fasting that preceded the “resurrection” of Tammuz to life. Because of this idolatry, JHWH left the Temple and later the Temple and Jerusalem was totally destroyed. However, God’s remnant, under Daniel, survived until God returned them back to the land under Cyrus the Persian King. But, even after all of that, the religion of Babylon did not go away.

Zech. 5:8-11 This is the **Woman in the Ephah**. Who is the woman? “Wickedness” (Zech. 5:8). This is Asherah, Ishtar, Astarte or Diana. She is carried to the land of Shinar (Babylon) and hidden in the basket until the time of the end. Then she will be revealed and set up as the Idol Queen found in Rev 17 and 18, riding on the Scarlet Beast in the future period called the Tribulation.

Rev. 17-18 In the coming Tribulation, Babylon is the culmination of all the great Mystery Religions. The Woman on the Scarlet Beast is adorned in beauty, yet pours out abominations. In Rev 18:7 she calls herself a Queen. She is “The Queen of Heaven.” She sits on the beast, who is clearly identified as the Satan’s Anti-Christ in Rev 13, and who Daniel identifies as the leader of the New Roman empire in Dan 7. Rev 17 shows the Beast carrying the Harlot in order to deceive the world with her religion, but only until she has accomplished *his* purposes. He destroys her when he is done, as seen in Rev 17:16. The religion is an amalgam of Islam (centered in Babylon) and Western False Christianity (centered in Rome), as well as the Hindu and Buddhist religions. All of these religions will be important to the unity of the new European Empire. Some of the details of this chapter are difficult and not clear to us, but the overall perspective is consistent with Daniel and the prophets.

BABYLON IN ROME

Nimrod’s tower began the worship of the stars and the sun. After he dies, Semiramis, his wife, claims a virgin conception through the now divine Nimrod and bears Tammuz, the sun god (Baal). She proclaims herself as Queen of Heaven and begins the order of the Mysteries of Babylon. She proclaims Tammuz as the Great Savior, who is also divine. She elevates Tammuz to status of “King and Lord of All.” She is the Virgin Mother who gave the world the Savior Son. As time goes on, the story develops that Tammuz is killed but comes back to life 40 days later through the power of the Queen (Asherah, Ishtar). The ritual of weeping for Tammuz and the worship of Ishtar spread to all nations under different names, but the focus centered on the divine mother and her child.

Greece:	Aphrodite (Astarte, Diana) and Zeus
Assyria:	Virgo (Virgin Mother) and Bacchus (Tammuz)
Egypt:	Isis and Osiris
India:	Isi and Iswara
Rome:	Venus (Vesta, Virgo, Astarte) and Cupid (Tammuz)

The Babylonian priests move to Pergamos in 340 BC to escape Alexander's destruction. John calls Pergamos "Satan's Throne" in Rev 2:12,13, a city marked by idolatry and immorality under the doctrines of the Nicolaitans. Then 200 years later Rome begins the conquest of Greece. As Rome marches through Greece in 133 BC, Attalus gives up the priesthood of the Babylonian Religion to Rome in exchange for mercy. Attalus is the Pontifex Maximus of the Babylonian Mysteries. Pontifex means priest. Maximus means the maximum or ultimate. Thus even the Gentile world has its Great High Priest, a counterfeit to the High Priest of the former Jewish Temple. By 74 BC all of the Babylonian priests had moved to Rome and they set up the rites of the Babylonian Order. In 63 BC Julius Caesar becomes the successor to Attalus. He becomes both the Head of Rome (Caesar) and the High Priest (Pontifex Maximus). From Julius on, all Roman Caesars held this dual position.

In 312 AD Constantine converted to Christianity the night before he went to conquer Rome. He made Christianity the official State Religion, and he maintained the office Pontifex Maximus. All persecution of Christians ceased. Pagan rituals were incorporated into Christian worship. In 330 AD Constantine moved his empire to a New Rome, the city of Byzantium, and he renamed the city Constantinople. By 380 AD, a person would be persecuted for NOT being a Christian in this new empire. Jewish feasts, like Passover, were banned. Jews were marginalized and charged by the Christian authorities as the worst kind of pagan: Christ Killers.

Eventually a fight ensued over which Bishop would head the Christian Empire: Rome or Constantinople? In 440 AD Leo I became the first Pope of Rome and the split between East and West was complete. The Bishops of Rome argued that Rome is "the chair of Peter," so the Head of the church should reside in Rome. (Much like Pergamos was "The Throne of Satan" and the center of the religion of Babylon.)

In 451 AD Rome was sacked by Atilla the Hun. Bishop Leo brokered a peace on behalf of the Roman emperor. Then in 455 the Vandals came. Leo came forward again and talked them into a peace treaty. He made a deal with the Vandals, they could take the wealth of Rome, but they would leave the city of Rome intact. Word spread throughout Rome that Leo had "called on the mercy of the Almighty God, who softened the rage of the barbarians." Leo took the title Pontifex Maximus, and also took total responsibility for Rome, which he now called "The Eternal City." "Peter" had come to power. The head of the religion is also the head of state in Rome. Leo the First, the first historical Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, marks the actual beginning of Roman Catholicism.

What happened to Constantinople? In 1453 AD Islamic Turks completely destroyed it. The Eastern Church moved north to Moscow. This removed it completely out of the sphere of Western European influence. The impact of this move was seen later when the Reformation, set in motion by Martin Luther, had little effect on the Russian Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

The Religion of Babylon, however, was still intact in Rome. Christianity became saturated with pagan doctrines as the Church incorporated pagan practices and beliefs. By 400 AD the worship of Mary as the Virgin Mother had begun. The Mass had developed and was called the Daily Perpetual Sacrifice of the Son. In the Mass, the wine and the wafer predominate. These elements of the "Holy Eucharist" were "transformed" into the actual body of Jesus, and Jesus was sacrificed daily, over and over again, for sin. This is still the heart and practice of the Mass today.

The full evolution of Roman Catholic Doctrine occurred in stages and took several centuries.
Doctrines were made binding by Papal Decree.

The Holy Roman Church taught that the Pope spoke infallibly on behalf of Jesus Christ.
The Pope was Christ's True Representative on earth, as if Christ Himself were present.

- 400 Celebration of Passover is banned
- 519 Celebration of Easter and Lent (40 days of fasting) is made mandatory
- 526 Prayers for the dead
- 593 Doctrine of Purgatory
- 600 Mary named Mediatrix and Intercessor for sinners
- 995 Canonization (declared to be in Heaven) of dead saints
- 1074 Doctrine of celibacy for priests
- 1090 The rosary is developed
- 1184 The Spanish Inquisition of heretics
- 1190 Sale of Indulgences to gain release of dead relatives from Purgatory
- 1215 Transubstantiation becomes a Doctrine of Faith
The Wafer becomes the actual body of Jesus during the Mass. His body is re-sacrificed for the sins of the congregation. The wine becomes the actual blood of Jesus and is poured out for sin. In this way Jesus is sacrificed daily in Masses said around the world and is called "The Sacrifice of the Mass"
- 1220 Adoration of the wafer is mandatory
- 1229 Laymen are forbidden to interpret the Bible
There is a Indulgence given, however, for reading the Bible
- 1439 Doctrine of Seven Sacraments is developed:
Baptism, Confirmation, Absolution, Communion, Ordination, Marriage and Extreme Unction are the only means of Grace for salvation and must be administered by an Ordained Priest. The reformation is about to begin.
- 1517 On Oct 31 Martin Luther nails the "95 Theses Against The Sale Of Indulgences" to the door of the Wittenberg Church
- 1534 Ignatius Loyola starts the Jesuit Order of Priests in response to Luther's challenge. Over the next 30 years, more than one million Christians are martyred
- 1545 Traditions of the Catholic Church are declared to be equal to Scripture
The Reformers said the only authority is the Bible: "Sola Scriptura"
- 1546 The Apocrypha is added to the Bible and declared to be Inspired Scripture
- 1563 The Council of Trent declares all who hold to justification by faith alone are considered "anathema"
The Reformation held to Faith Alone, Christ Alone, Grace Alone
- 1854 Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, which states Mary was conceived and born without sin
- 1870 The Pope declared infallible when speaking "ex cathedra" (from the Chair of Peter)
- 1950 Doctrine of the Assumption of Mary bodily into Heaven.
She is named The Eternal Virgin Mother and Queen of Heaven
Mary is crowned The Queen of Heaven during the month of May
- 1963 II Vatican Council begins: The Ecumenical Council

- 1965 Mary is named The Mother of the Church.
Mary is named the co-Redemptrix and co-Heir of all things
Mary has equal divine status with Jesus, her son
- 1969 The Commitment to Ecumenism: The Roman Catholic Church initiates a call to “restore our lost brethren.”
- 1994 The Evangelical Catholic Accord: “Evangelicals and Catholics Together”
Many Evangelicals see this as a repudiation of the Reformation

The Pope, Pontifex Maximus, still wields power in Europe and beyond. The Roman Catholic Church, along with all the churches of the Post-reformation period, will play a role in the future European Revived Roman Empire. Rome and Babylon seem hidden at the present time, but they are alive, and will soon be revealed. Our Lord Jesus is also alive, and He also will be revealed as our King. We wait and look for Him. May He come soon!

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