Mystery Babylon

Jerusalem, Mother of Harlots... Jesus told his listeners, ***"The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"*** (Matt. 21:43). For many people, this verse provides the heart of ***"replacement theology"*** the idea that the Christian Church has ***replaced*** the old physical nation of Israel as God's chosen people and priestly nation (1 Pet. 2:9–10, et al).

Without even requiring the use of the label ***"replacement,"*** this is essentially what the verse teaches. It does not mean that Jewish people can never again taste of God's grace; it simply means that the Old Jewish way of God's witness and work on earth, the Old Testament Temple ritual system, is being abolished.

The abolishment was because it was never meant to be permanent, but only a symbol that pointed to the reality of ***Jesus Christ,*** the true Temple, and the true ***Emanuel.*** Those Jews who rejected the true ***Temple*** and insisted on clinging to the Old Testament traditions were thereby committing idolatry just as grossly as any pagan ritual.

The Kingdom had moved on to its greater fulfillment. Those who refused to embrace the fulfillment found themselves bereft of the true kingdom; it would be taken from them, and given to the disciples of the true and faithful people of God.

Jesus denounced the teachers of the Old tradition which led the way in opposing Him. These were the Pharisees, and Christ's denunciation of them appears in Matthew 23 among other places. It extends to the whole of the physical city of Jerusalem of which they were representatives in disbelief.

Jesus concluded with the prophecy that Jerusalem would fall because she was responsible for ***"all the righteous bloodshed upon earth"*** and that she was ***"the city that kills the prophets"*** (Matt. 23:35, 37).



Mystery Babylon... From this sweeping condemnation we can learn that the city called ***"Babylon"*** in Revelation 17-18 is not the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar, but Jerusalem called Babylon because she had corrupted herself and become like that ancient pagan Empire...

The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet ***[colors of the chief priest and the Temple; Exodus 25–28; 38–39],*** and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her immorality.

And on her forehead was written a name of mystery... ***"Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations."*** (Rev. 17:4–5) Therefore we know this blasphemous Babylonian ***"mystery"*** whore is indeed Jerusalem, because she is pronounced guilty of the exclusive crime which Jesus earlier pinned on Jerusalem. And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, so will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and will be found no more... And ***in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth*** (Rev. 17:6, 18:21, 24).

It is not possible that two cities can both be guilty of a crime of which only one party could be guilty, killing all the prophets and all who have been slain in the earth. Jesus clearly attributed this crime to Jerusalem in Matthew 23; so we must conclude that here in Revelation; ***"Babylon"*** is a ***"name of mystery"*** because it symbolizes what Jerusalem had become.

Thus, it is highly likely that when Peter wrote his first epistle from ***"Babylon"*** (1 Pet. 5:13), he was literally writing from Jerusalem, which he had by then already condemned ***"in these last times"*** (1 Pet. 1:20) as Babylon. Peter was, after all, an apostle to the Circumcision as Paul said (Gal. 2:7).

It was not uncommon practice in that window between Christ's ascension and Jerusalem's destruction that the New Testament writers symbolized Jerusalem with the names of the great enemies of God's people down through the ages.

Thus, Revelation speaks of ***"the great city"*** where the ***"Lord was crucified,"*** obviously Jerusalem, ***"that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt"*** (Rev. 11:8). Some would complain that interpreting the Great Whore of Babylon of Revelation 17 as Jerusalem is anti-Semitic.

This is ad hominem nonsense. Besides, how anti-Semitic was it of John! Calling Jerusalem ***"Sodom"*** and ***"Egypt"*** instead of praying for her peace as dispensationalists demand we do... The nerve of him

Thus it is understandable when Paul compares the false teachers creeping into the church to Pharaoh's magicians (2 Tim. 3:8–9). Likewise, Matthew 2 presents Jesus as the New Israel fleeing from the new Pharaoh who kills all the male babies.

Except the roles are reversed... Jesus' family has to flee ***into Egypt*** in order to avoid this new Pharaoh, who was Herod; and the children killed are not Egyptian, they are Jewish.

Lesson... Old Israel has become like Egypt, the persecutor of God's people, and she shall suffer the plague of Egypt, while Jesus is the true Israel.

Keep in mind, it was Herod who then ruled Jerusalem and who had rebuilt the Temple at which the Jews then sacrificed. Once Jesus appeared on the scene as the Final Sacrifice, the sacrifices at the Temple became idolatrous and pagan. It was then rejecting God to continue that system.

It was, in fact, to commit the abomination of desolation, because it was an idolatrous sacrifice in the Temple which caused God's presence to leave that House desolate.

Indeed, God's presence would forever leave that Temple to dwell in the New Temple, His People. This occurred on the day of Pentecost.

Within a generation, the idolatrous, adulterous nation, the great whore temple in Jerusalem suffered a final blow from God. It was destroyed into oblivion.

Thus it is further understandable that the inspired writers would refer to their persecutors and false brethren in their Church as ***"them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan"*** (Rev. 2:9).

Conclusion... Modern day Christians simply do not understand that when they demand the land of Israel for the Old Jewish people so that they may rebuild a Temple and resume sacrifices, they are praying for the rankest and vilest of idolatries to occur. God destroyed that temple for that very reason in AD 70. Why would he now change and desire it to be rebuilt?

You may think that since God did this before, sending His people into exile with their temple destroyed behind them, then He will do the same again; have them return to rebuild the temple.

But this time would be different... This time the ***True Temple*** came as the rebuilt ***(resurrected***) temple. This time there would be no bricks and mortar, stones cut out with hands.

The Old Jewish people were not merely exiled from their kingdom someday to return.

No... This time, the kingdom was ***taken from them*** and given to the true nation. Indeed, God's presence would forever leave that Temple to dwell in the New Temple, His true nation; His people...

No... This time, ***"the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."*** (Dan. 2:44–45.).

Christ created a new bride. Why would Christ desire to return to the whore he has cast aside and divorced when He has a pristine Bride descending from heaven, uncorrupted by idolatry?

He didn't... He left that whore riding her patron, the beast of Rome. And the ***great mother of harlots*** suffered the judgment of her whoredom. She was divorced and disinherited. The inheritance now belongs to the Bride.

Jesus' Lawsuit against Israel... Most people don't realize that many if not most of Jesus' parables were intended not as general morality tales, but as particular pronouncements of coming judgment and change.

Jesus was warning Jerusalem to repent and to accept its new King ***(Jesus)*** or else fall under ultimate condemnation of God.

In fact, much of Jesus' teaching in the Gospels pertains primarily to that pre-AD 70 crowd, and without reading it in this light, we misunderstand it. And when we misunderstand it, we misapply it.

The section of Luke ***(Luke 9:51–20:26, and beyond)*** requires this understanding. The parables Jesus tells during His final journey to Jerusalem almost all pertain to the rebellion, faithlessness, judgment, and coming destruction of Jerusalem, and the salvation of a tiny remnant of His elect people.

There is unison to the prophetic message of the gospels and the rest of the New Testament. It's about new wine in new wine skins. And everything about the old covenant was planned obsolescence. And because of ***"planned obsolescence,"*** the ***old covenant*** and its sacrificial system passed away.

Jesus was always in view, from the first promise of a savior in Genesis 3:15 to the revelation that ***"the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"*** in Revelation 19:10. So much of modern-day prophecy commentary is an attempt to rebuild what was never meant to be rebuilt.

The parables, as Joel makes abundantly clear, serve to show that the breaking down of the dividing wall was on the horizon for them and the world with the result that there would be ***"one new man"*** in Christ (Eph. 2:11–22).

The destruction of Jerusalem and the dismantling of the temples stones were a foregone conclusion because Jesus had always been the reality over the shadow (John 2:19).