

? 18. What appeal does God give to those still in Babylon? Revelation 18:4

The Bible answer: _____

God's call is not to stay in Babylon and reform it, but to come out of Babylon. Soon the plagues will fall on all inhabitants of Babylon. In love God has sent you a message to come completely out. Will you respond?

MY DECISION

I love Jesus and desire to follow His truth completely. Today I choose to follow Jesus and turn aside from all teachings not in harmony with the Bible.

NAME _____

Address _____

PHONE _____

For more information on Bible study materials contact:

It Is Written
P.O. Box 0
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

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IT IS WRITTEN TELEVISION PRESENTS:
SEARCH FOR Certainty I

The Mystery of Spiritual Babylon Revealed
God's Call for the 21st Century

The book of Revelation portrays a great conflict between truth and error. It graphically describes two systems of worship in collision.

Truth, opposed by error, triumphs. In Revelation's prophecies, a pure, chaste woman represents the true church (see Revelation 12:1, 2). A harlot woman represents the fallen church. The bride of Christ, the true church, radiates the glory of God, revealing His truth to the world. The apostate church, pictured as a harlot, offers her wine of false doctrines, confusing the mind and leading multitudes to destruction.

In this lesson we will especially notice the characteristics of this false system of worship so we can keep from being deceived. We will also discover the characteristics of true worship so we can embrace it.



The book of Revelation portrays a great conflict between truth and error

SPIRITUAL BABYLON REVEALED

- ?** 1. How does God describe the true church?
Revelation 12:1

The Bible answer: _____

In each of the following texts God describes His people as His bride: Isaiah 54:5, 6; Hosea 2:19; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22-26. The woman clothed with the sun represents the bride of Christ.

- ?** 2. What does the Lord call His church?
1 Timothy 3:15

The Bible answer: _____

- ?** 3. How is the false church pictured? Revelation 17:1-5

The Bible answer: _____

Wine affects the forebrain, where conscience, reason, and judgment are located. It signifies the confusion of false doctrine. Psalm 116:13 speaks of the "cup of salvation." Babylon's wine cup full of lies may be called the cup of death.

Revelation's Babylon represents a false religious system, which brings the principles of Old Testament Babylon into religious worship in the Christian era. An understanding of Old Testament Babylon lets us positively identify New Testament Babylon and flee its errors.

- ?** 4. Who is the author of all false doctrine?
John 8:44

The Bible answer: _____

- ?** 15. How did many religious leaders relate to this union of true and false religion in Bible times?
Ezekiel 22:26

The Bible answer: _____

CHARACTERISTIC 5—Self-indulgence

- ?** 16. Does the false religion of Babylon sense the significance that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit? Daniel 5:4

The Bible answer: _____

This drunken feast is a typical example of Babylon's desire to gratify the physical senses.

- ?** 17. What earnest appeal does the apostle Paul give?
Romans 12:1

The Bible answer: _____

Spiritual Babylon's principles run through many religious organizations today. They include:

- Looking to a visible, earthly head rather than Christ.
- Any form of idol/image worship.
- A misunderstanding of what happens to people when they die: prayers to saints, veneration of dead loved ones, etc.
- Worship on Sunday.
- A misunderstanding of the body as God's temple: use of alcohol, tobacco, and unclean foods.

CHARACTERISTIC 4—Pagan Sun Worship

- ?** 13. What Babylonian worship practice mingled with the worship of Israel for a time? Ezekiel 8:16

The Bible answer: _____

Sun worship was a part of pagan worship for centuries. The Edomites, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians, and the Romans all revered or worshiped the sun.

- ?** 14. What sign had God given His people?
Ezekiel 20:12, 20

The Bible answer: _____

The following historical quotations enable us to discover how the pagan day of worship gradually slipped into the Christian church:

In *Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church*, Arthur B. Stanley says: "[Constantine's] coins bore on the one side the letters of the name of Christ; on the other the figure of the Sun-god. . . . as if he could not bear to relinquish the patronage of the bright luminary" (p. 184). Absolutely amazing. On Constantine's coins were Christ on one side, and the Sun-god on the other side. A wedding took place, a wedding between Christianity and paganism. A wedding between the church of Rome and the pagan emperors of Rome.

Stanley also says: "The retention of the old pagan name of 'Dies Solis,' or 'Sunday,' for the weekly is, in great measure, owing to the union of pagan and Christian sentiment with which the first day of the week was recommended by Constantine to his subjects; pagan and Christian alike, as the 'venerable day of the Sun'" (*ibid.*).

Satan, the father of lies, counterfeits truth. He attempts to deceive us. Through religious deceit he desires to capture the minds of thousands.

CHARACTERISTIC 1—Rebellion

- ?** 5. What is the origin of Old Testament Babylon?
Genesis 11:5-9

The Bible answer: _____

The Tower of Babel was built shortly after God destroyed the earth with a flood. Filled with rebellion, proud people determined to build a monument to their own egos. If the world was ever destroyed again by a flood, they would survive. God demonstrated their folly by confusing the languages of the workers. The Tower of Babel is a monument to their confusion. It demonstrates the foolishness of human wisdom. It reveals the folly of substituting human ideas for divine truth. Old Testament Babylon was built on the site of the Tower of Babel. It represents confusion or humanity's way in opposition to God's way.

- ?** 6. Was Old Testament Babylon centered on God's way or humanity's way? Daniel 4:30

The Bible answer: _____

Old Testament Babylon was established in direct opposition to the plain commands of God. It was a system of religion based on the traditions and authority of human beings rather than God. It was human-centered rather than God-centered. Any system of worship that places the word of human leaders above God's word is part of the Babylonian system. Any system that substitutes religious leaders for Christ is a false system.

- ?** 7. According to the Bible, who is our only Saviour?
Acts 4:12

The Bible answer: _____

- ?** 8. What counsel does the prophet Isaiah give us?
Isaiah 45:21

The Bible answer: _____

Salvation is not in the rites and ceremonies of the church. It comes from looking to Jesus. Salvation is a gift received by faith. It is based in Jesus' death on the cross, not our good works. The false Babylonian system is based on human teachings, human works, and human accomplishments.

CHARACTERISTIC 2—Idolatry

- ?** 9. How was Babylon's rebellion against the true God revealed? Ezekiel 6:4

The Bible answer: _____

Modern Babylon is a system of religion that uses idols in its worship. Its statues, images, and religious icons revive the idolatry of ancient Babylon. Any system that incorporates images into its worship service is part of spiritual Babylon.

- ?** 10. What clear, obvious command had God given His people? Exodus 20:4, 5

The Bible answer: _____

CHARACTERISTIC 3—Immortality/Ancestor Worship

- ?** 11. What was the ancient Babylonian concept of death? In Ezekiel 8:14 whom were the Jewish women weeping for?

The Bible answer: _____

Tammuz, the god of vegetation, was one of the many deities of Babylon. The Babylonians believed that in the winter, Tammuz died. In the season of abundant crops, they believed, he lived again. This worship of the dead was common in Babylon.

The concept of the immortal soul was at the heart of Babylonian worship. The thought that the soul leaves the body at death comes directly from paganism.

- ?** 12. What does the Bible teach regarding death? Summarize the following texts.

a. Ecclesiastes 9:5 _____

b. Psalm 115:17 _____

c. Psalm 146:4 _____

Any system of religion that teaches the doctrine of the immortal soul is part of Old Testament Babylon.