

Checkin' Out My Walk -
9 Pergamos - Mystery Babylon The Great - Part II

'*THE TWO BABYLONS*' by Alexander Hislop details important points regarding the "religion" of Semiramis and documents it is the origin of all pagan systems on earth.

1. Semiramis developed a system of a celibate Priesthood which was answerable to her and the High Priest, Nimrod, who was known by the title of 'Pontiff' or Pontifex Maximus ... meaning 'highest bridge-maker'.

The High Priest Nimrod was the 'BRIDGE' between this life and the life to come.'

a. Title for Roman Emperors from 63 BC - 4th Century

b. Pontifex (priest) = Bishop > 3rd Century

c. Pope Leo the Great = Pontifex Maximus > 5th Century

d. Pope = Roman Pontiff

2. Semiramis knew an unmarried celibate priesthood would be more devoted to the religion, to her and her husband.

3. Semiramis developed a system of female devotees known as vestal virgins, later to be known by the Chaldean word, NUN, which means "Daughters of Nimrod" (Hislop, p.223).

4. Their 'duty' in service to their 'god' Nimrod in the Babylonian priesthood > 'sexually' serve the priests since these men were not allowed to marry and have wives.

a) This was seen as a form of worship to their god.

b) This kept the priests satisfied and happy in the priesthood, not to mention keeping them from turning homosexual.

c) History attests to the horror of countless abortions which arose from this immoral system as countless bodies of babies have been found near convents and monasteries thru history. (details in Babylon Mystery Religion by Ralph Woodrow, page 116,117).

d) Many such gravesites for the aborted babies of these Nun/priest relationships were found in the underground tunnels between Convents and Monasteries in Spain and in Rome.

By 1936, the citizens of Spain were so outraged of this debauchery; they attacked and burned many of the church buildings to the ground!

5. Hislop also documents: Nimrod had a council of 12 priests to assist him in the temporal and political affairs of running the empire. They were called "CARDINALS" and they were dressed in scarlet and red robes (Hislop p.210).

6. Hislop tells us the regular priests wore black robes, which was the color of Satanism & the occult (Fausset's Bible Ency.p291).

7. Another distinguishing mark of the priests of Nimrod, later known in the Old Testament as Priests of Baal, was the clerical tonsure, and initiation rite in which the priest of Nimrod has the top of his head sheared bald, while the edges of the hair were allowed to remain as a ring. This was in honor to Nimrod who was also worshipped as the SUN-GOD! (Hislop, p 222) For this reason God forbade it in Leviticus...

Leviticus 19:27 You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard.

Leviticus 21:5 "They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh."

8. Nimrod was also known as the 'fish god,' DAGON. This is why a fish-mitre hat (shape of a fish open mouth) was worn by the High Priest. These are still worn by priests today.

a. Dagon, chief deity of the Philistines, is mentioned 3x in Scripture.

b. I Samuel 5 > The Philistines had captured the Ark of the Covenant, and they "carried the ark into Dagon's temple (I Chron. 10:10) and set it beside Dagon.

c. When the people of [the city of] Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord!

d. They took Dagon and put him back in his place. But the following morning when they rose, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord! His head and hands had been broken off and were lying on the threshold; only his body remained.

e. That is why to this day neither the priests of Dagon nor any others who enter Dagon's temple at Ashdod step on the threshold.

f. The Lord's hand was heavy on the people of Ashdod and its vicinity; he brought devastation on them and afflicted them with tumors. When the people of Ashdod saw what was happening, they said, 'The ark of the god of Israel must not stay here with us, because his hand is heavy on us and on Dagon our god'" (verses 2-7).

9. Semiramis claimed her 'Mystery Religion' possessed the highest wisdom and revealed 'Divine secrets.' It was propagated by a hierarchy of priests and priestesses, to whom were assigned the task of initiating the populace at large into its ascending degrees of revelation, culminating at the highest level in both direct worship of Satan and demon-possession.

a) Members of the Babylonian Religion would be the only ones to receive 'salvation' to heaven after completing a series of 'religious works' beginning with 'Baptism' by the Babylonian Priest and ending with 'prayers for the dead.' Hislop: These became known as 'Sacraments'.

b) Semiramis taught: Devotees did not immediately enter 'heaven' at death, but went to an intermediate place known as PURGATORY (Hislop, p 169).

c) This held the family to remain 'faithful' to the Babylonian Priesthood to assure their loved one could 'move on' to heaven!

d) Property and money could be donated to the Babylonian Priesthood. This would 'help' get the one out of purgatory sooner. Hislop: This later became known as 'Indulgences.'

e) The Priests also had control over the devotees because Semiramis compelled the people to confess to a Babylonian Priest at least once a year and to do penance according to the degree of the sins committed.

f) The original purpose of the confessional was to keep tabs on any rebellion or uprising in the empire! This was effective because people were compelled to confess every sin...moral, ethical, whatever, to the priest. Omission of any sin could forfeit salvation!

In Scripture, Baal & Asherah led the nations into idolatry. (False Religion)

Marduk became the manifestation of Nimrod.

Marduk was later worshipped in	<u>Babylon</u>	as Shamash
Marduk was worshipped in	<u>Egypt</u>	as Osiris
Marduk was worshipped in early	<u>Assyria</u>	as Bel
Marduk was worshipped in	Babylon, Assyria, Egypt and Israel	as Baal

Baal's female counterpart was the goddess Asherah who originated as Ishtar of Babylon.
Ishtar was the deification of Queen Semiramis of Babylon; the mother goddess of Babylon;
the Queen of heaven

Ishtar evolved into Isis the "mother goddess" of Egypt.

Ishtar evolved into Astarte of the Sidonians (Hebrew Ashtoreth) > 1 Kings 11

Before entering the land of Canaan, God told the Israelites > Beware Of Idolatry
Deut. 4:15-19 Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, ¹⁶ lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female, ¹⁷ the likeness of any animal that *is* on the earth or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, ¹⁸ the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground or the likeness of any fish that *is* in the water beneath the earth. ¹⁹ And *take heed*, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and *when* you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the LORD your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage.

Deut. 12:30-31 take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, "How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise." You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

Because of Israel's incomplete conquest of the land of Canaan, >

Asherah-worship survived and plagued Israel, starting as soon as Joshua was dead.

Judges 2:13 They forsook the LORD and served Baal [various lord gods depicting Nimrod] and the Ashtoreths. [Asherah > chief female deity worshiped in ancient Syria.

Astarte > in Phoenicia and Canaan]

An Asherah pole is a sacred tree or pole that stood near Canaanite religious locations to honor the goddess Asherah. The trunk was usually carved into a symbolic representation of the goddess.

Worship of Asherah was noted for its sensuality and involved ritual prostitution.

The priests and priestesses of Asherah also practiced divination and fortune-telling.

Considered the moon-goddess, Asherah was often presented as a consort of Baal, the sun-god (Judges 3:7, 6:28, 10:6; 1 Samuel 7:4, 12:10).

The Lord God, through Moses, forbade the worship of Asherah.

Deut. 16:21 You shall not plant for yourself any tree, as a wooden image, near the altar which you build for yourself to the LORD your God.

Despite God's clear instructions, Asherah-worship was a perennial problem in Israel.

Judges 10:6 Then the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals [various lord gods depicting Nimrod] and the Ashtoreths [Semiramis], the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him

I Kings 11:5, 33 As Solomon slipped into idolatry he went after Ashtoreth the goddess

I Kings 18:19 Later, Jezebel made Asherah-worship even more prevalent, with 400 prophets of Asherah on the royal payroll

II Kings 21:7 One of King Manasseh's evil deeds was that he "took the carved Asherah pole he had made and put it in the temple.

I Samuel 7:3-4 "If you return to the LORD with all your hearts, *then* put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the LORD, and serve Him only;

I Sam. 12:10 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD and served the Baals and Ashtoreths;

At times, Israel experienced revival. Notable crusades against Asherah-worship were led by: Gideon in Judges 6:25-30 "Take your father's young bull, the second bull of seven years old, and tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the wooden image that *is* beside it;

King Asa in 1 Kings 15:13 Also he removed Maachah his grandmother from *being* queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of Asherah. And Asa cut down her obscene image and burned *it* by the Brook Kidron.

King Josiah in II Kings 23:1-7 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven. ⁶ And he brought out the wooden image from the house of the LORD, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground *it* to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people. ⁷ Then he tore down the *ritual*/booths of the perverted persons that *were* in the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the wooden image.

Israel's Worship of the "Queen of Heaven"

The phrase "the queen of heaven" appears in the Bible twice in the book of Jeremiah.

1. Israel's activities provoked the Lord to anger. Entire families were involved in idolatry. Jer. 7:18 The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and *they* pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger.

2. During the time of the prophet Jeremiah, the Jews worshiped the queen of heaven so devoutly they could not be convinced to give up this paganism even after Jerusalem had been burned and the land desolated due to this very pagan worship: He reminds the people that their disobedience and idolatry has caused the Lord to be very angry with them and to punish them with calamity. Jeremiah warns them: Greater punishments await them if they do not repent. Response: We have no intentions of giving up their worship of idols, promising to continue pouring out drink offerings to the queen of heaven, Ashtoreth, and even going so far as to credit her with the peace and prosperity they once enjoyed because of God's grace and mercy.

Jeremiah 44:17-18 But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For *then* we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble. ¹⁸ But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine."

Pagan Beliefs Regarding Tammuz

1. Tammuz was born during the winter solstice on December 25th. His birthday was celebrated throughout Babylonia and surrounding areas. The evergreen was his chosen symbol and was set up in honor of his birth at the winter solstice.

2. Tammuz died tragically in his 40th year while boar hunting in the spring. In honor of him, the people mourned his death each spring for 40 days, one day for each year of his life.

3. He was resurrected from the dead 40 days later.

.Note: This was a satanic anticipation and counterfeit of Christ's resurrection.

Thus, each year afterward the temple virgins of this cult would enter a forty-day fast as a memorial to Tammuz' death and resurrection. These 40 days were observed with weeping, fasting, and self chastisement, to gain Tammuz's favor again, so he would come forth from the underworld and cause spring to begin. This was later called 'LENT.' (according to Hislop, THE TWO BABYLONS). LENT, observed for 40 days, ending with Easter, is derived from the Babylonian system of mysteries.

Note: According to Catholics, Lent is derived from the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness. However, they admit: the observance of Lent was unknown to the disciples and it did not find its way into the church until several centuries after the time of the Messiah. Lent was an indispensable preliminary to the great annual festival in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Tammuz.

So the 40 days of Lent is connected with the Babylonian goddess Ashtoreth/ Astarte/Ishtar

(the origin of the word Easter), and the worship of Tammuz.

4. After the forty-day fast, a joyful feast of Ishtar (Easter) took place.

5. At this feast colored eggs [eggs were sacred to Tammuz] were exchanged and eaten as a symbol of the mystery of his resurrection.

6. A feast of ham,[boar's head] symbolizing victory over the boar that killed Tammuz, was enjoyed by all.

7. Finally hot cakes marked with the letter "T" (remind all of Tammuz) were baked and eaten.

Israel's Idolatry

As the nation of Israel decayed spiritually, the religious leaders incorporated into the temple rituals the worship of other gods along with Jehovah.

Stages of Idolatry

1. Jewish people became CURIOUS about their neighbors' religion.

2. They investigated their neighbors' religion.

Its baser elements appealed to their fleshly appetites.

3. Secretly participating in pagan worship

4. Worshiping idols openly

5. Moved false worship into the temple as though Jehovah was one of many gods

Note: Since Israel and the Lord were "married" in a covenant relationship, Israel's "religious prostitution" aroused the Lord's holy jealousy.

Ezekiel's Vision of Israel's Idolatry

1. God showed Ezekiel a hole in the wall leading to a secret chamber in the temple in Jerusalem.

2. He saw 70 elders of the people burning incense before various idols whose images were painted on the wall. Each worshiped his own idol.

3. So gross was their appetite for false gods they worshiped creeping things.

4. Their justification for their sin > Ezek. 8:12 > The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the land.

Note: The false thinking of the elders reached the people and they adopted it as their excuse for sin. (Ez. 9:9)

Note: The idol worship in secret will now move out into the open.

5. Ezekiel 8:13-14 He said to me, "Turn again, *and* you will see greater abominations that they are doing." ¹⁴ So He brought me to the door of the north gate of the LORD's house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz.

God showed Ezekiel a cultic practice in process.

Ezekiel watched the women of Israel weeping for Tammuz and observing the 40 days of Lent.

6. Ezekiel 8:15-16 Then He said to me, "Have you seen *this*, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these." So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar,

were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east.

Note: The idolatry of the 70 elders was hidden in secret, but these men practiced their idolatry openly. Remember: When Israel entered the Promised Land under Joshua, they failed to destroy the idols and shrines in the land. This idolatry became a snare to them.

Truth: An idol is ANYTHING that has our devotion, commands our will and takes the place of the true and living God.

I John 5:21 "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Mother and son worship is a perfect example of how Satan set up a counterfeit religion so humans will worship him. Almost every religion encompasses the worship of a mother and child. It all leads back to the mother goddess of Babylon, Semiramis, the "queen of heaven," who gave birth to a child she claimed was supernaturally conceived. She taught she and her child were divine. When she presented Tammuz to the people, he was hailed as the promised deliverer; the savior of the people. This mystery religion claimed this birth fulfilled the promise God gave to Eve in Gen. 3:15 and thus a (false) messiah was born.

Tammuz= counterfeit of Jesus Christ.

Note: The Biblical names used for Jesus were also used for the child in ancient religions.

Zoroaster	Seed
Dionysus	Sin-bearer
Mithra	Savior
Bacchus	The Branch
Vishna	Victim-man
Osiris	King of kings

The mother with the god-incarnate son in her arms became the grand object of worship. They were so firmly entrenched in the pagan mind that when Christianity appeared in the 4th century, these statues and paintings were merely renamed and worshiped as the virgin Mary with her god-incarnate son Jesus. Thus, the pagan mother and child entered Christianity as the Roman Catholic worship of Mary with the infant Jesus. *The mother eventually became the preferred object of worship.* The son was exhibited merely as a child in his mother's arms without any particular attraction.

From this mystery-religion, the patriarch Abraham was separated by the divine call, and with this same evil cult the nation that sprang from him had constant conflict, until under Jezebel, a Phoenician princess, it was grafted onto what was left of the religion of Israel in the northern kingdom in the day of Ahab. It was the cause of their captivity at the last. Judah was polluted by it, for Baal-worship was but the Canaanite form of Babylonian mysteries, and only by being sent into captivity to Babylon itself did Judah become cured of her fondness for idolatry.