

Antichrist's One World Church (Part 2)

Text: Revelation 17:7-18

Introduction: Review

1. Revelation 17-18 give more detail on the destruction of Babylon as anticipated in Rev. 14:8 and announced in Rev. 16:19. Chapter 17 focuses on the religious part of the Babylonian system whereas chapter 18 focuses on the economic element.
2. Mystery Babylon is comprised of these two elements – religious and economic. This chapter describes in greater detail the end times kingdom of Antichrist and the destruction of that kingdom. Wiersbe writes, “Genesis 2 speaks of a pure bride in a lovely garden; but by the Bible’s end, civilization has degenerated to an impure harlot in a wilderness.”
3. Key points of interpretation in order to properly understand Revelation 17:
 - The woman represents Rome, religious Babylon (Vs. 5, 9, 18).
 - The beast represents the Antichrist and his kingdom (compare Vs. 3 and 13:1).
4. Outline for chapter 17
 - **I. The Description of the Great Whore (Vs. 1-6)**
 - **II. The Definitions concerning the Great Whore (Vs. 7-14)**
 - **III. The Destruction of the Great Whore (Vs. 15-18)**

I. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE GREAT WHORE (VS. 1-6)

- A. Her Power (Vs. 1)
- B. Her Perversity (Vs. 2)
- C. Her Partner (Vs. 3)
- D. Her Portrayal (Vs. 4-5)
- E. Her Persecutions (Vs. 6)
- F. Her Present Manifestation

II. THE DEFINITIONS CONCERNING THE GREAT WHORE (VS. 7-14)

A. The Home of the Beast (Vs. 8)

1. “shall ascend out of the bottomless pit” = the bottomless pit is the home of Satan and devils. He will be satanically possessed and controlled.
2. “was and is not” = repeated twice in the verse and mentioned again in Vs. 11. Central to the Antichrist’s deception of the world is a false resurrection story. Satan is not a creator, he is a counterfeiter, an imitator and a deceiver. Rev. 13:3-4 “*And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*” John Phillips writes, “Satan will duplicate as far as possible, the miracle of Christ’s resurrection.”

Revelation Series

3. “go into perdition” = the future of the beast (antichrist) and of those who worship and follow him. Repeated in Vs. 11 – “And goeth into perdition.”
4. “all that dwell on the earth shall wonder” = the world will be deceived into following the Antichrist.

B. The Heads of the Beast (Vs. 9-11)

1. Seven heads represent seven mountains (Vs. 9).
 - a. This is a clear description of the city of Rome which is famous for being a city of seven hills. See also Vs. 18
 - b. “The unanimous voice of Roman poetry during more than five hundred years, beginning with the age of John, proclaimed Rome as the seven-hilled city...On the imperial medals of that age, which are still preserved, we see Rome as a woman on seven hills, precisely as she is represented in the Apocalypse (Wordsworth)
 - c. “Rome was the city set on seven hills and was known as such to both pagan and Christian writers...Ovid said, “Rome looks around on the whole globe from her seven mountains, the seat of empire and abode of the gods”...She is religious Rome, which at that time will have inherited all the religions of the world...It will attain the goal of the present-day apostates of all the great systems of the world: Romanism, Protestantism, pagan religions, cults and isms.” (J. Vernon McGee)
2. Seven heads represent seven kings (Vs. 10-11)
 - a. The Past kings (Vs. 10a). Possibly a reference to the five previous Roman Emperors – Julius Caesar, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero.
 - b. The Present king (Vs. 10b). The king then living in John’s day was Domitian.
 - c. The Prospective king (Vs. 10c-11).
 - i. “the other is not yet come” = the one who is to come is the Antichrist.
 - ii. “he must continue a short space” = his reign is for the brief 7-year tribulation period.
 - iii. “the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth” = appears to be another reference to the false resurrection story that plays such a large role in antichrist’s campaign of deception.

C. The Horns of the Beast (Vs. 12-14)

1. The Identity of the Horns (Vs. 12)
 - a. The horns represent a 10-kingdom confederacy which will support the Antichrist’s rise to power. The European Union is likely the foreshadowing of this.
 - b. Daniel saw a vision of the same beast with ten horns – Dan. 7:7-8, 24 “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; **and it had ten horns**. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little

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horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn *were* eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things...And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.”

2. The Unity of the Horns (Vs. 13)
 - a. The 10 rulers are completely unified in their support of Antichrist.
 - b. Challenge: If the devil's team can be so unified, how much more unified should a Bible believing church be on the basis of the Word of God (Eph. 4:3).
3. The Hostility of the Horns (Vs. 14)
 - a. “these shall make war with the Lamb” = Antichrist and the 10-kingdom confederacy that supports him will lead the charge in making war against the Lamb. What utter blindness and depravity of heart to try and fight against God!
 - b. Psalm 2:1-4 “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, **against** the LORD, and **against** his anointed, *saying*, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.”
 - c. “the Lamb shall overcome them” = Christ will be victorious. See Rev. 19:19-21 for further details.

III. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GREAT WHORE (VS. 15-18)

A. The Interpretation of her Jurisdiction (Vs. 15)

1. This verse provides the key to interpret verse 1 – “the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.”
2. The harlot church will exert world-wide influence and control during the first half of Antichrist's rule. Even today, the harlot church of Rome wields incredible influence over the world.

B. The Instruments of her Destruction (Vs. 16-17)

1. The Animosity of Earths Rulers (Man's side) (Vs. 16)
 - a. Antichrist and his kings will use apostate religion to gain power but secretly his ambition will be to become the object of total worship. “Satan (and Antichrist) will use the apostate religious system to accomplish his own ends (i.e. attain world power); but then he will do away with “the harlot” and establish his own religious system.” (Wiersbe)
 - b. This will become clear at the half way point in the tribulation when he sets himself up as God and demands universal worship.
 - i. 2 Thess. 2:4 “*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as **God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.***”
 - ii. Dan. 11:36-37 “And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and **magnify himself above every god**, and shall speak marvellous things against the

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God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. **Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers**, nor the desire of women, **nor regard any god**: for he shall magnify himself above all.”

- c. This verse makes clear that the 10-kingdom confederacy under the rule and leadership of Antichrist will turn against the harlot woman and destroy her.
 2. The Sovereignty of the Divine Ruler (God's side) (Vs. 17)
 - a. This verse gives us the heavenly perspective of what is taking place on earth. God is on the throne and is in control even when it looks like He is not. He can even use wicked man to accomplish his purposes and fulfill His Word.
 - b. Psalm 76:10 “Surely **the wrath of man shall praise thee**: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.”
- C. The Identification of her Location (Vs. 18)**
1. 'reigneth' = present tense. The great city that was reigning over the kings of the earth at the time when the Apostle John wrote Revelation was Rome.
 2. This verse makes it abundantly clear that Rome will play a central role in the last days kingdom of Antichrist, both religiously and economically.

Conclusion:

1. What should our response be as Bible believing Christians? Take a stand and strive to be a pure and chaste bride for our worthy Saviour.
2. Friend, are you saved? You need a relationship, not religion!