

Revelation 17:1-2 The Final Showdown

¹ One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits by many waters. ² With her the kings of the earth committed adultery, and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries.”

Revelation 17:3-7 The Woman on the Beast

³ Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls.

She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. ⁵ The name written on her forehead was a mystery: **BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**

⁶ I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God’s holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished. ⁷ Then the angel said to me: “Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:8-18 The Mystery Revealed

⁸ The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and yet will come up out of the Abyss and go to its destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because it once was, now is not, and yet will come.

⁹ “This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. ¹⁰ They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for only a little while.

¹¹ The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction. ¹² “The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast.

¹³ They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.”

¹⁵ Then the angel said to me, “The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages. ¹⁶ The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to hand over to the beast their royal authority, until God’s words are fulfilled. ¹⁸ The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”

The Characters Explained

- One of the Seven Angels with the Seven Bowls of Wrath Speaks to John
- Great Prostitute (allegorical for “the great city that rules over the kings of the earth” – *not an individual*)
- Many waters (allegorical for peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages)
See OT passages: Psalm 144:7; Isaiah 8:5-8; 17:12-14; Jeremiah 47:2
- Kings of the Earth (world rulers aligned with the prostitute)

- Inhabitants of the world (all people aligned with the prostitute whose names are not in the Book of Life)
- God's Holy People (martyrs for their faith in Jesus Christ)
- Scarlet Beast with 7 Heads and Ten Horns (allegorical for Satan and the antichrist and his evil system of wickedness, who ascends from the Abyss going to his destruction)

The 7 heads are 7 hills (Rome – the present day for John)

Roman Coin image



- The Lamb (allegorical for Jesus who will defeat the beast)
- With the Lamb “his called, chosen and faithful followers” (believers – both Jews and Gentiles)

Revelation 18 The End of Evil and the Beast's Earthly Empire

¹ After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. ² With a mighty voice he shouted:

“Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!’ She has become a dwelling for demons and a haunt for every impure spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable animal.

³ For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”

⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven say: “Come out of her, my people,’ so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; ⁵ for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes.

⁶ Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Pour her a double portion from her own cup. ⁷ Give her as much torment and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, ‘I sit enthroned as queen. I am not a widow; I will never mourn.’

⁸ Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her. ⁹ “When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her.

¹⁰ Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: “Woe! Woe to you, great city, you mighty city of Babylon! In one hour your doom has come!’ ¹¹ “The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes anymore—¹² cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; ¹³ cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and human beings sold as slaves.

¹⁴ “They will say, ‘The fruit you longed for is gone from you. All your luxury and splendor have vanished, never to be recovered.’ ¹⁵ The merchants who sold these things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment. They will weep and mourn ¹⁶ and cry out:

“Woe! Woe to you, great city, dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet, and glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls! ¹⁷ In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin!’ “Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off.

¹⁸ When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, ‘Was there ever a city like this great city?’

¹⁹ They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: “Woe! Woe to you, great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin!’”

²⁰ “Rejoice over her, you heavens! Rejoice, you people of God! Rejoice, apostles and prophets! For God has judged her with the judgment she imposed on you.”²¹ Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said:

“With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again. ²² The music of harpists and musicians, pipers and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again.

No worker of any trade will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in you again. ²³ The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world’s important people.

By your magic spell all the nations were led astray. ²⁴ In her was found the blood of prophets and of God’s holy people, of all who have been slaughtered on the earth.”