

## **Babylon, Mother of False Religion Revelation 17:1-18 (Part 24)**

**Key characters:** The Great Prostitute (false religion), Babylon (the worldly system), and the Beast (the Antichrist).

**Big idea of chapter 17:** The Great Prostitute, who is false religion and that began in Babylon will finally come to an end.

**Revelation 17:1-2** *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk."*

**I will show you the judgment:** This chapter highlights false religion in the tribulation and from the beginning. It shows the end of false religion.

**The great prostitute:** denotes false religion, spiritual adultery. It stands for idolatry, religious apostasy and spiritual betrayal.

**Who is seated on many waters:** The answer is given in verse 15, "*peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.*" False religion is carried by all the people groups of the world.

**The kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality:** There seems to be an alliance between the rulers of the earth during the tribulation and false religion. They may use her to control and deceive the people.

**The dwellers on earth have become drunk:** The unbelievers on earth are influenced by false religion and are more easily deceived.

### **1. We are living in Babylon.**

**Revelation 17:3-4** *And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality.*

**Woman sitting on a scarlet beast:** We see false religion being carried by the Antichrist. There is an unity between the Antichrist and false religion.

**The woman was arrayed... :** The woman's clothing was purple, symbolic of royalty, and scarlet, representing luxury or blood. Her ornaments included gold, precious stones, and pearls—counterfeiting of the Jewish priests and temple.

**Revelation 17:5** *And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations."*

- Babylon, or spiritual Babylon and the center of Satan's spiritual kingdom on earth is no longer hidden.

**Revelation 17:6-7** *And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I marveled greatly. 7 But the angel said to me, "Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her.*

**Drunk with the blood of the saints:** False religion will persecute and kill true believers. This has been the case by most zealous religions against believers in the last 2,000 years.

### **2. We are to be cautious about ecumenicalism.**

**Revelation 17:8** *The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.*

**The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise:** The Antichrist's counterfeit of the life, death, and resurrection are seen in this verse. This refers back to the Antichrist's mortal wound or death and counterfeit resurrection.

**Revelation 17:9-10** *This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; 10 they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while.*

**This calls for a mind with wisdom:** Wisdom from understanding God's Word, namely Daniel. Possibly wisdom of being alive when the 7th kingdom unfolds.

**The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated:** This is a reference to Rome as a city or empire or 7 kingdoms mentioned as kings.

**They are also seven kings:** The heads of the Antichrist represent 7 kings or kingdoms.

**Five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come:** As John is being told by the angel 5 of the kingdoms have fallen or are gone, 1 kingdom is presently active, and 1 kingdom is future.

- ❖ Daniel chapter 2 statue - (1) Gold: Babylon, (2) Silver: Medo-Persia, (3) Bronze: Greece, (4) Iron: Roman, (5) Iron & Clay: Revived Roman Empire
- ❖ (1) Egypt, (2) Assyria, (3) Babylon, (4) Medo-Persia, (5) Greece, (6) Roman Empire, (7) Revived Roman Empire

**Will remain only a little while:** The 7th kingdom of the 10 nation confederation will not last very long before the Antichrist conquers 3 of the kings and takes over leadership of the rest.

**Revelation 17:11** *As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction.*

**It is an eighth but it belongs to the seven:** The Antichrist was one of the 10 rulers that unified to rule the world during the first half of the tribulation. After the Antichrist's counterfeit resurrection He becomes the sole ruler over all others which becomes the 8th.

### **3. Religion is used to deceive people.**

**Revelation 17:12-13** *And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. 13 These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast.*

**The ten horns that you saw are ten kings:** These 10 powers seem to be the same as the tens toes in Daniel 2 that make up the Revived Roman Empire.

**Revelation 17:14** *They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful."*

**Revelation 17:15-16** *And the angel said to me, "The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. 16 And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire,*

**The waters... are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues:** This tells us that the harlot's influence is worldwide, through her connection to the beast.

**10 horns and the beast will hate the prostitute:** The Antichrist will hate his anti-church while Christ loved the Church. The Antichrist will persecute and uncover his bride and use her for all she has. Christ comforts, clothes, and sacrifices for His bride.

**Revelation 17:17-18** *for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. 18 And the woman that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth."*

- ❖ God demonstrates that He is ultimately in control until all that He has proclaimed comes to pass.

**The great city:** Babylon literally or Rome? Definitely the system of false religion that will captivate the kings and peoples of the earth during the tribulation.

### **4. Satan is the master counterfeiter.**