

## ***The Scarlet Woman, The Beast, & The Fall of Babylon the Great*** **Revelation 17:1-18:24**

### Revelation 17 & 18:

- A continuation of the seventh angel's bowl: "*Babylon the Great was remembered in God's presence; He gave her the cup filled with the wine of His fierce wrath.*" (16:19)
- An interlude leading in to the announcement of the marriage supper of the Lamb, where the bride is the church (Rev. 19). A glaring contrast between the scarlet woman prostitute and the bride of Christ.

### Revelation 17:1-6 Ten distinguishing marks of the Scarlet Woman and the Beast that carries her.

1. She is a "*the notorious prostitute*" (1) *porneia* = general sexual immorality and debauchery.
2. She is "*seated on many waters*" (1) "*The waters that you saw, where the prostitute was seated, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages.*" (15)
3. She is involved in an adulterous relationship with "*the kings of the earth who committed sexual immorality her and those who live on the earth became drunk on the wine of her sexual immorality.*" (2) A dangerous union of church and state.
4. She is "*sitting on a scarlet beast covered with blasphemous names*" with "*seven heads and ten horns.*" (3) The beast rising from the sea in chapter 13 – the political entity of the last days.
5. She is "*dressed in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, jewels, and pearls.*" (4) Incredible wealth and royalty.
6. She holds a "*golden cup in her hand filled with everything detestable and with impurities of her prostitution.*" (4) Enough said.
7. "*On her forehead was written a name, a mystery:*" (5) *musterion* = a secret revealed by God.
8. "*BABYLON THE GREAT*" (5) The ancient city of Babylon, located on the banks of the Euphrates River, destroyed by the Medo-Persian Empire of King Darius (Daniel 5:31, see also Isaiah 13-14 & Jeremiah 50-51). Many Old Testament prophecies about Babylon unfulfilled = Revelation 17-18 envisions Babylon's rebuild as the Antichrist's headquarters in order to complete all of the Babylonian prophecies.
9. "*THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND THE DETESTABLE THINGS OF THE EARTH.*" (5) Her daughters = every hateful, revolting, despicable, abhorrent, vile image or lifestyle, every false religion or cult, every ungodly or godless activity.
10. She was "*drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses to Jesus.*" (6) The scarlet woman personifies the persecutor of God's people.

### Revelation 17:7-18 The Response to John's astonishment.

- The identification of the beast and his cohorts (7-13)
- The purpose of the beast and his cohorts – "*These will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will conquer them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. Those with him are called, chosen, and faithful.*" (14)
- The Babylonian beast will turn on and destroy the Babylonian mother. (15-18)

Application of Revelation 17: We are the bride of Christ. We must take seriously the covenant we have made with God. We must not flirt with false religions or immoral lifestyles. We must be true to Jesus Christ and know His truth. His truth will set us free.

### Revelation 18 – The Fall of Babylon the Great

- The announcement of the angel with great authority – "*It has fallen. Babylon the Great has fallen!*" (1-3) Babylon = dominated by demons.

- The announcement of another voice from heaven (4-8) God's people must avoid fellowship or participation in the sins of Babylon (*"her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes"*) in order to avoid the consequences of her plagues (*"pay her back the way she also paid, and double it according to her works"*).
- The reactions of those associated with Babylon (9-20)
  - ✓ Kings will weep and mourn over her – *"Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon the mighty city, for in a single hour your judgement has come."*
  - ✓ The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her *"because no one buys her cargo any longer."*
  - ✓ The shipmasters and sailors watch from afar off – *"Woe, Woe, the great city, where all those who have ships on the sea became rich from her wealth; for in a single hours she was destroyed."*
- One final action: a mighty angel lifts a large millstone and throws it into the sea – *"In this way, Babylon the great city will be thrown down violently and never be found again."*

Application of Revelation 18: Babylon represents idolatry of wealth and its threat to substitute for devotion to God. The Bible never condemns money or wealth – only its misuse and misconsumption. Babylon represents materialism and religion in unholy matrimony. Jesus warned that two roads are available – the broad road, travelled by many, that leads to eternal destruction and the narrow road, travelled by few, that leads to eternal life.