

REVELATION 17

Matthew 4:8 and 9

The devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to him, "all these things I will give you, if you fall down and worship me."

2 Corinthians 4:4

The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Ephesians 2:2

You formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the father, but is from the world.

The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

What we have seen with the bowls of wrath is the world passing away and what we will see with the destruction of Babylon is the devils vehicle for controlling the world destroyed. What we see at the end of the age has been the mode of operation since the beginning. Babylon in the end is the devil's last work and his masterpiece.

The destruction of Babylon deals with the elimination of two great evils that have influenced humanity from the beginning. The one deals with the primary satanic system that entices people to sin by two seemingly opposite extremes: religion and/or lust. The second is the last great evil empire and its worldly commercial center that controls humanity.

Revelation 17:1 The great harlot or as KJ says the great whore, a prostitute – a woman who sells her body for sexual uses; a woman who yields herself to defilement for the sake of gain

Revelation 19:1 and 2

"Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her."

"Sits on many waters" according to verse 15 are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. This great whore influences all of humanity save those written in the book of life.

The figure of sexual looseness is common in the OT where it is used in more ways than one. The people of God are seen there as God's bride, so that unfaithfulness is likened to adultery (Jeremiah 3:9; Ezekiel 16:32). The prophets sometimes think of this unfaithfulness as habitual and mercenary. Isaiah says, "See how the faithful city has become a harlot (Isaiah 1:21; Jeremiah 2:20; 3:1; Ezekiel 16:15 and 16; Hosea 2:5). This is a vivid way of describing an unfaithfulness that is horrible; it shows us that sin is first of all a sin against love.

A further way in which the figure is used is to describe insolent and idolatrous world powers as harlots: Tyre in Isaiah 23:16 and 17 and Nineveh in Nahum 3:4. They are not said to be adulterous for they are not God's people, His bride. It is significant the word here is "prostitute" and not "adulterer." John is not speaking of the people of God, but of secular power. It is secular power of low standards, one that has both committed horrible evils and seduced others into sharing her guilt.

Revelation 17:2 Who or what the harlot is becomes clear later. Here we understand that she is connected with immorality. Her influence is with the kings of the earth and those who dwell on the earth, the political arena, and those they influence or control, the general populous. They were made drunk with her immorality. Whatever you drink is simulated into your whole being.

Revelation 14:8

Another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."

Revelation 2:14 In Pergamum, they worshipped Zeus, Athena, Dionysos, Asclepius – gods that brought something to them or seemingly benefited them but really destroyed them

Revelation 2:20 Jezebel was the symbol of wickedness. Remember what we learned about Baal and Baal Peor. The worship of these gods was connected with drunken orgies, prostitution, human sacrifice, deviant sexual practices, mutilation, witchcraft, poles, sacred cakes, libations, and defecation.

Ephesians 6:11 and 12

Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Babylon represents the schemes or methodology of the devil.

The whore lets the John (person) do whatever he wants to feel good allowing him to feel like he is in control. She will do anything to satisfy him, so he thinks the arrangement is primarily for him and that he has the upper hand over her. The great illusion is he thinks that he is using her, but the reality is she is in control and really the one that is using him. The price he pays far exceeds money in that it taxes his moral fiber, physical body, and spiritual wellbeing. The price for her service far exceeds the money and the pleasure gained.

Due to the language use regarding her, we must think about religion. Remember the beast is worshipped as god and the false prophet influences the world to worship him. Religion is like the whore. On the surface, it is pleasurable and seemingly beneficial. Religion is socially acceptable even laudable, morally it appears honorable, provides feelings of importance, acceptance, value, and power. It looks good, feels good, and seldom impedes lifestyle. It feeds the “nice guy” image or “good guy” syndrome. However, the reality of false religion is it will titillate your basic human motives and desires while stroking your ego and leading you to the lake of fire. The methodology of immorality is to give good feeling now for bondage and hell later.

Covetousness can get you what you want, but it decays your moral fiber and, unchecked, leads to hell.

Colossians 3:5

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

Ephesians 5:3

For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

1 Timothy 6:4-11 Covetousness must also be considered with this whore because she seduces the world with money and prosperity.

Revelation 17:3 Scarlet was covering the beast. Scarlet was much used in the needlework and hangings of the tabernacle, in conjunction with blue and purple. If the purple be taken as symbolical of royalty and universal dominion, the scarlet may signify earthly grandeur and Israelitish royalty (Exodus 39:1-29; Joshua 2:18, 21; 2 Samuel 1:24; Proverbs 31:21; Solomon 4:3; Isaiah 1:18). In the N. T., they clothed the Lord in a scarlet robe in Matthew 27.

She sits on the beast with seven heads and ten horns that is the one who is Satan’s world leader. The beast is the exact image of the devil, just like Jesus is of Yahweh. The beast has blasphemous names.

Revelation 12:3

Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.

Revelation 13:1

And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.

Blasphemy is the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God. It can also be the act of claiming the attributes of deity. The beast hates Yahweh as does his father, the devil, and acts in complete contradiction to the commandments of God.

Exodus 20:3-7

You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God... You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

Revelation 17:4 She has the attire and wealth of royalty.

Golden cup of abominations - This word originally meant anything detestable, but in the OT came to be specially linked with idolatry. This will be its significance here. The attractive cup is revealed as no more than an enticement to people to join the glittering harlot in her evil ways. It is her method of seducing them from God. The picture is a vivid one, combining regal state with utter moral and religious corruption.

Revelation 17:5 Names are written on the foreheads quite often in this book. Thus, God's servants were sealed in this way (7:3; 9:4), and the servants of the Lamb were marked similarly (14:1; 22:4). On the other side, the same is true of the adherents of the beast (13:16; 14:9; 20:4). So now the character of the harlot is shown by her name, displayed on her forehead for all to see.

Her mystery is revealed here in the Scriptures for the believers to understand, but the worldly would not know it at all. She is not only a prostitute herself, but she spawns evils like her own. All kinds of abominable things are ascribed to the great city, not one particular vice only.

2 Thessalonians 2:7

For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; avoid such men as these.

Revelation 17:6 Not only is she the source of the evil drowning humanity, she also stands against those who embrace Yahweh and live holy. She stands against Yahweh and His followers to the point of murdering them. According to verse 2, she causes the inhabitants of the earth to be drunk with the wine of her fornication, and here she is drunk with the blood of the saints.

She represents the last world power and influence to promote evil and destroy godliness. Her judgment is coming!

Revelation 17:8 The beast was explained in chapter 13.

ASCEND FROM KING TO WORLDWIDE MONARCH TO GOD

- Power and authority are provided by Satan (Revelation 13:1 and 2; 2 Thessalonians 2:9).
- He becomes the primary leader of the last world empire by defeating 3 of the 10 kings (Daniel 2:40-45; 7:7, 8, 20-24).
- His deadly wound is healed which the entire world learns of and reveres him (Revelation 13:3).
- False prophet verifies him and encourages the world to worship him (Revelation 13:11-15; Matthew 24:11 and 24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).
- His eloquent speech exalts himself and diminishes and disgraces Yahweh (Daniel 7:8, 25; 11:21, 32, 36; and Revelation 13:5 and 6).
- He promises and for short while brings prosperity and peace worldwide (Revelation 13:16-18; Daniel 11:21-23; 1 Thessalonians 5:3).
- Strong military (Revelation 13:4, 7, 10; Daniel 11:25, 33, 36-39)
- Exalts himself above God (Daniel 8:9-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:4).
- He will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it (Daniel 7:7 and 23).

Revelation 17:9 Mountains represent governmental powers (Isaiah 2:1 and 2). Many have concluded the mountains are references to Rome; however, Rome does not exhaust the meaning of the symbol. In the first century, Rome was a striking embodiment of what John means by Babylon. In Rome as nowhere else, people could see the city of humankind bent on its own blasphemous way, opposing with all its might the things of God. Howbeit, Rome's significance in world influence has come and gone. What we read here pertains to the end of the age when a power similar to Rome exists but with much greater influence.

Revelation 17:12 What happens here is unclear to me.

Revelation 17:13 This last point is clear – they have one purpose, and this leads them to give their power and authority to the beast. They are willing collaborators, not men forced into an unwelcome association.

Revelation 17:14 – 16:12-16 Armageddon

Revelation 17:16 In the end, the forces of evil unite for a “moment” under the direction of the beast. However, the collaboration of evil nations always ends with self-destruction. Wicked men are not just one happy band of brothers. Being wicked, they act in jealousy and hatred. At the climax, their mutual hatreds will result in mutual destruction. There will be hatred between the ten horns and the prostitute. Armageddon will end just like the battle in the time of Gideon when the enemies attacked and destroyed each other.

Revelation 17:17 Once again, we see that human history even when it concerns evil ones is under the direction of Yahweh.

Revelation 17:18 The woman's identity is now revealed, albeit in a guarded fashion. She is a great city, and she rules over the kings of the earth.

REVELATION 18

Revelation 18:1 This chapter reflects back to what happened with the destruction of Babylon before we move forward to the marriage of the Lamb.

Revelation 18:2 Babylon the great has fallen. After all the seals have been opened, the trumpets have sounded, and the bowls have been poured out, the angel declares the victory, the elimination of Babylon and all that she represents.

Genesis 10:8-14; 11:1-9 From its beginnings, Babylon grew into becoming the mother of harlots representing everything that stands against the one true God and all that He represents.

Babylon was a city, country, and eventually an empire that, according to the vision of Daniel, was the greatest of all time (Daniel 2). In the end, probably from this same physical location, a world empire will once again rise to renown having world dominance and aggressively oppose the one true God and His people. When we read about Babylon, we think of this last world power that is finally destroyed entirely forever under the direction of Yahweh and the leadership of Jesus. Connected with this evil empire is all that is evil. Not only is the physical empire destroyed, but the evil systems connected with it that have enslaved mankind from the beginning.

Isaiah 13:20-22

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

Micah 4:8-5:15 Babylon may simply be a figure for all the world powers whose hostility to Israel was exhibited in so many ways and would continue to be shown until the time of Israel's restoration. The use of Babylon in this sense may go back to Genesis 10:10 and 11:4-9 where Babylon's function as the center of godless world power is established. Babylon was the first worldly kingdom, and according to Revelation, it will be the last.

The plural “enemies” is used and “many nations” seem to indicate that Babylon had a broader significance than the empire that would soon replace Assyria as the dominant world power. On the contrary, he seems to be saying that God’s people were to come under the dominion of godless nations, a dominion that would endure till the “daughter of Zion” by the plan of God would conquer the nations.

Revelation 18:3 The way the beast, the last great world leader, rises to world prominence and power is by providing prosperity to the other world leaders. He gained the attention of the world by the supernatural healing when he died and rose again but became the world sovereign by satisfying the greed that motivates humanity. His prosperous reign lasts but for a little time because in the middle of the seven years after he moves his headquarters to Jerusalem all hell breaks loose. He attacks Israel and other nations, and the wrath of God begins to unfold.

Revelation 18:4 This verse may be considered one of these insertion verses that speak to the present time. Get out of the world and its evil systems because destruction is coming.

Revelation 18:5 They are commanded to do to the city what she has done to others.

Jeremiah 50:29

"Summon many against Babylon, all those who bend the bow: encamp against her on every side, let there be no escape. Repay her according to her work; according to all that she has done, so do to her; for she has become arrogant against the LORD, against the holy one of Israel.

Revelation 18:6 She has mixed a cup for others so her drink will be of double strength.

Revelation 18:7 She has the same illusion as that of other world leaders and empires – the material prosperity and lustful living will never end.

Isaiah 47:1-15

Revelation 18:9 Earth’s rulers will be exceedingly distressed at the city’s overthrow, for they have been closely associated with her in the sins that brought about her fate.

Revelation 18:11-16 The merchants who benefited because of her mourn.

Revelation 18:17-20 Those that transported her goods join in the lamentation because they too benefited from her. The economic systems of the world become completely unraveled with the loss of Babylon as she represents everything that is wrong with worldly commerce. The love of money is the determining factor that Satan uses to control the world. With the destruction of Babylon, his evil grip is removed from the throat of humanity.

Revelation 18:21 – 23 Everything is going to change forever.

Jeremiah 51:63 and 64

As soon as you finish reading this scroll, you will tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates, and say, 'just so shall Babylon sink down and not rise again because of the calamity that I am going to bring upon her; and they will become exhausted.'" thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

Revelation 18:24 In this city was found the blood of God's people, specified as prophets and saints. To this is added "all who have been slain on the earth." Babylon will be a literal location and at the same time symbolical for all the earthy cities.

Revelation 19:1-6 The passage on the judgment of Babylon concludes with a mighty thanksgiving in heaven at the conclusion of God's judgment with the end of the old world and the beginning of the new world.