

# A Study Of The Book Of Revelation

May 30, 2021

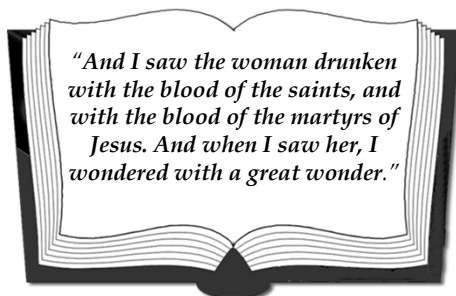
## Revelation 17

### Judgment of Wicked Babylon

- Pride, full of idols, cruelty in war (cf. Jeremiah 51:7-13)
- “The designation ‘**Babylon the great**’ (used consistently throughout Rev: e.g., 14:8; 16:9; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21) goes back to Daniel 4:28-33 and emphasizes, as Henry Barclay Swete says, ‘the Nebuchadnezzar-like self-importance of the rulers of Rome rather than the actual size or true greatness of the city’ (p. 183).”  
(Robert Harkrider, *Revelation*, Truth Commentaries, Page 262)
- “The Seer ascribes to Rome a character which the Prophets of Israel had ascribed to more than one of the great pagan cities of antiquity.”  
(Henry Barclay Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, Page 184)

## Revelation 17

### REVELATION 17:6



## Revelation 17

### THE HARLOT’S DESCRIPTION

- John carried away (*by the angel*) “**in the Spirit**”
- Into the “**wilderness**” a safe place to see as she really is!
- Sitting on a “**scarlet beast**” – the civil power – made scarlet by Satan’s power
  - City of Rome answers to the emperors!
- “**Full of names of blasphemy**”
  - Actions against God and His people
- “**Seven heads – ten horns**” (13:1)
  - Full power and authority

## Revelation 17

### BEAST BEFORE?

#### CHAPTER 13

- Out of the sea (**verse 1**)
- 7 heads, 10 horns (**verse 1**)
- Warred with the saints (**verse 7**)
- One head wounded to the death, healed (**verse 3**)
- All the world wondered (**verse 3**)

#### Chapter 17

- Out of abyss (**verse 8**)
- 7 heads, 10 horns (**verses 3-4**)
- Makes war with the Lamb (**verse 14**)
- Was, is not, is ... (**verse 8**)
- Earth shall wonder (**verse 8**)

## Revelation 17

### THE HARLOT’S DESCRIPTION

- Woman arrayed in **purple and scarlet**
  - Well dressed prostitute
- Adorned with **gold and precious stones, pearls**
  - A sign of wealth and position
- Revelation 17:4, “*having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication*”
  - Loved by her – intoxicating history of the persecutions of the church

Revelation 17

### THE HARLOT'S DESCRIPTION

- On her **forehead a name** written:
  - **Mystery** (cf. 10:7; 17:7)
  - **Babylon the Great**
  - **The Mother of Harlots**
  - **Abominations of the Earth**
  - Title indicates her ungodliness, impurity, and filthiness
  - **Mystery, a wonder, producing amazement to those who saw her**
  - **Rome a fitting image of Babylon!**

Revelation 17

### THE HARLOT'S DESCRIPTION

- Drunken with the **"blood of the saints"** (verse 6)
  - Killed many of God's children (cf. Revelation 6:9-11; 18:24)
  - Cares nothing about God and opposes all His ways
- **"And Martyrs of Jesus"** Obsession to kill the saints – **intoxicated** on their blood!
- Saw it with **great admiration**
  - Astonished and amazed – Think what he saw

Revelation 17

### Rome Fits the Bible Descriptions Better Than Jerusalem

**Political Descriptions:**

- 17:18 – Reigns over kings (over those who receive power as kings with the beast, 17:12).
- 17:1, 15 – Sits upon many waters (over "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues").
- 17:3, 7 – Sits upon the beast (the Roman Empire had power "over all kindreds, tongues, and nations," 13:7).
- 17:4 – Clothed in purple and scarlet color and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls (the attire of rulers).

(Robert Harkrider, *Revelation, Truth Commentaries*, Page 323)

Revelation 17

### Geographical Descriptions:

- 18:17-19 – All who traded by sea mourned over her (Rome was located at the coast of the Mediterranean Sea).

**Commercial Descriptions:**

- 18:11-17 – The world marketplace for merchandise of all kind.
- 18:17-19 – A sea trading city; all that had ships were made rich by her.

(Robert Harkrider, *Revelation, Truth Commentaries*, Pages 324-325)

Revelation 17

### Moral Descriptions:

- 17:4 – Clothed in scarlet (attire of a harlot).
- 17:5 – The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth
- 17:6; 18:20, 24 – She is guilty of the blood of the martyrs of Jesus ... and of all that were slain upon the earth.
- 18:3, 9 – Committed fornication with all nations, kings of the earth, and merchants.
- 18:23 – Deceived all nations by sorceries.

(Robert Harkrider, *Revelation, Truth Commentaries*, Pages 326)

Revelation 17

### When this City Fell Descriptions:

- 18:17-20 – Merchants mourned, but God's saints rejoiced when that great city was made desolate.

(Robert Harkrider, *Revelation, Truth Commentaries*, Pages 328)

Revelation 17

**REVELATION 17:7**

Revelation 10:7; 13:18

*"And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and the ten horns."*

Revelation 17

**REVELATION 17:8**

Revelation 13:8

*"The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition. And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (they) whose name hath not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast, how that he was, and is not, and shall come."*

Revelation 17

**HARLOT AND BEAST IDENTIFIED**

- John's amazement is about to be explained – what did these **signs mean**?
- Contrast between what **he saw** – what **he expected**
- Judgment of the city, instead sees the **beast and the harlot!**
  - The beast and the harlot are inseparable. Lust rides upon, controls, and governs any persecuting and self-seeking political beast.
- The angel is going to **explain** the meaning to John

Revelation 17

**HARLOT AND BEAST IDENTIFIED**

- **Three-fold** aspect of the beast
  - **Was** – past persecution
    - Satan's cause had revived once again in the power and might of the Roman Empire
  - **Is not** – temporary reprieve
  - **Will ascend (NKJV)** – start again
  - **"Was, and is not, and yet is"** (cf. Revelation 13:3)
    - Kingdoms come, have power for a while, die, another takes its place ...
- Ascend out of **the abyss** (bottomless pit)
  - Used three times in Revelation. (9:1-2; 11:7; 20:1-3) – Always the **habitation** of Satan and his agents
  - **Perdition** – destruction and ruin – the results!

Revelation 17

**REVELATION 17:9**

Revelation 13:18

*"Here is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth"*

Revelation 17

**HARLOT AND BEAST IDENTIFIED**

- **Seven heads – seven mountains**
- Rome was built on seven hills
  - "Latin literature is replete with references to Rome being built on seven hills" (Caird, page 216)
  - Revelation 17:9-10, "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth: and they are seven kings" ASV
  - Revelation 17:9-10, "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings" ESV
- Seven kings – The whole of the **emperors** of Rome
- Kings represent **kingdoms**