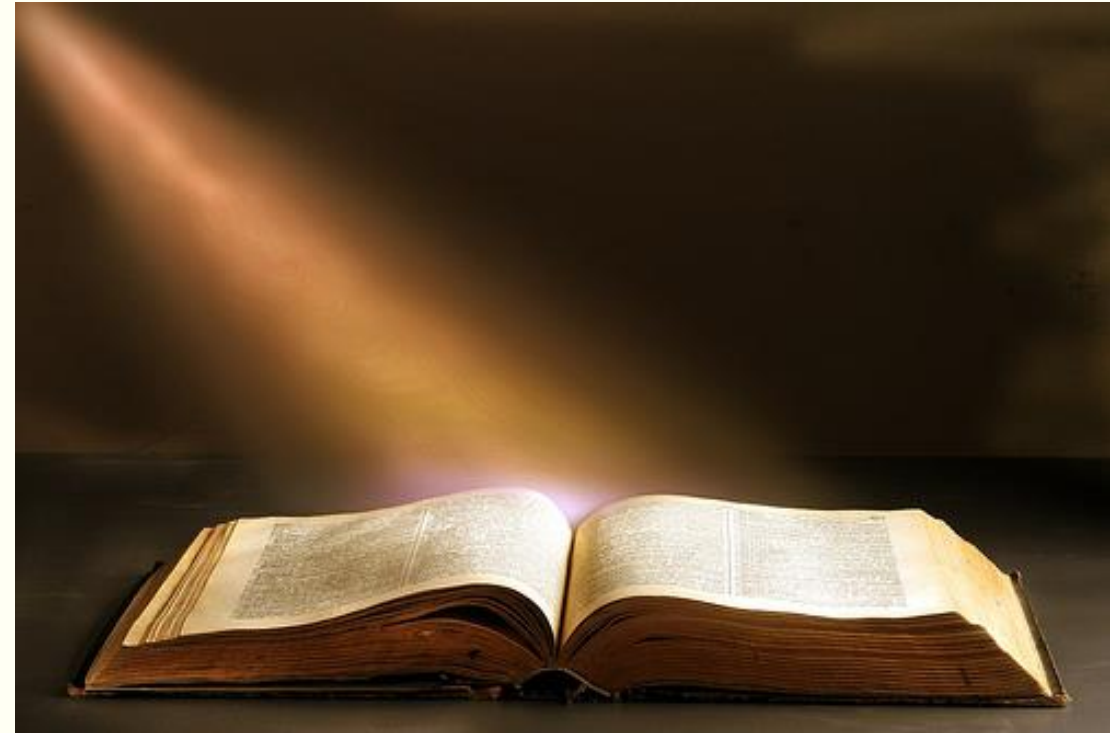




Exploring the Book of Revelation: Verse by Verse

Chapter 17





CHAPTER 17

The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

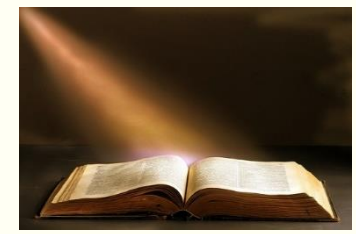
Chapter 17



Primary purpose of our Bible study is to understand Jesus' message to His church AND its personal application for us today

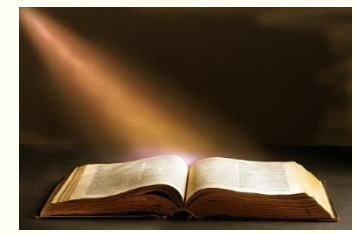
The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

Revelation 17:1-6



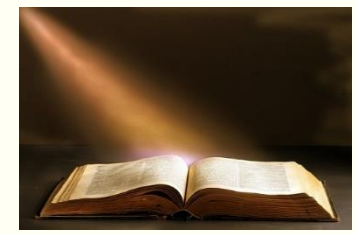
1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” 3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. 5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

Revelation 17:7-13



7 But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9 “Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. 10 There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. 11 The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. 12 “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. 13 These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

Revelation 17:14-18



14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.” **15** Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. **16** And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. **17** For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. **18** And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”

The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

Revelation 14:8 and 16:19 announced the collapse of end-time Babylon

Revelation 17 describes the rise of end-time Babylon power and Revelation 18 expands on the judgment on end-time Babylon

One of the seven angels (probably the 6th or 7th) who poured out the bowl of God's judgment on the rebellious takes John into a vision to give him more understanding

The angel carries John forward in time in vision to the wilderness where God's faithful people fled to escape persecution from the beast and harlot

“When the great prostitute with all her seductive attractiveness and glamour is exposed and destroyed, then the Bride of Christ will be seen in all her beauty and true worth.” – Robert H. Mounce, page 307

End-time Babylon is a worldwide religious confederacy with the Satanic trinity (Satan, the sea beast, the earth beast/false prophet) in opposition to God and his faithful people allied with the secular and political powers of the world

The harlot represents the corrupt and apostate (church) religious system of the Papacy. The beast represents the political system of the Papacy

The harlot sits on the scarlet beast as queen to signify that the church controls or has dominion over the state power and uses it to serve her interests. She is full of corruption and ripe for destruction. The beast depicts Babylon's oppressive power.



The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

“For the Lord has both devised and done what He spoke against the inhabitants of **Babylon. O you who dwell by many waters**, abundant in treasures, your end has come, the measure of your covetousness.” – Jer 51: 12-13

“Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.” – Rev 17:15

Sitting on many waters (Euphrates River) denote world dominance over secular nations and political powers which Babylon depends on to enforce her plans

In the Old Testament, Israel was said to play the harlot when she had illicit relationship with other apostate, idolatrous nations forsaking her covenant with God

“**How the faithful city has become a harlot!** It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers.” – Isa 1: 21

“All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces, and all **her pay as a harlot** shall be burned with the fire; all her idols I will lay desolate, for she gathered it **from the pay of a harlot**, and they shall return to the pay of a harlot.” – Micah 1:7

The great prostitute or harlot committing fornication is symbolized by the illicit union between apostate church and the political powers of the world (church & state)



The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

The kings of the earth are the political powers of the world that will give their authority and influence to the end-time apostate religious system. Babylon will act through them to gain control over the inhabitants of the earth especially those who dare to resist her control. Babylon is also dependent on the secular powers of the nations to enforce her plans and purposes.

Babylon seduces with adulterous wine (by deception, false theology, and sorceries) and the kings of the earth are unable to think clearly or reason rightly

The wilderness was the place God used to protect his faithful people during the 1260 prophetic-year reign of the beast. This is where the beast will be judged

“And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, **fiery red dragon** having **seven heads and ten horns**, and seven diadems on his heads.” – Rev 12:3

“And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having **seven heads and ten horns**, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.” – Rev 13:1

The beast of Rev 17 is associated in color (scarlet) and description to the beast of Rev 12 (Dragon – Satan) and Rev 13 (Sea beast) indicating that the blasphemous religious persecuting system of the Dark Ages is the same end-time power

Scarlet is the color of blood, oppression and persecution of the saints of God



Scarlet and purple are colors worn by the pope, cardinals, bishops and archbishops of Rome

The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

“In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’” – Rev 18:7

The queen harlot is dressed in purple and scarlet as she is drunk with the blood of the saints combined with the splendor, luxury and the desire of global dominance

The colors of purple, scarlet and gold on the harlot’s dress resembles the attire of the high priest of the Old Testament with exception of two colors: blue and white. This identifies her as a counterfeit religious system and union of church and state

Blue signifies obedience to the law of God (Num 15:32-41)

“And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” – Rev 19:8

The pure (woman) church is dressed in white representing Christ’s righteousness

The blasphemous inscription on harlot’s forehead replaces the priestly inscription of “Holiness to the Lord” on the miter of the high priest (Ex 28: 36-38)

The golden cup in her hand (recall the host) resembles the cup from God’s temple which Belshazzar, king of Babylon concealed the wine to seduce the world from God



Precious stones, pearls and gold adorn the Church of Rome’s altars, images, statues, cathedrals, vests and even the Pope’s miter

The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

Wine represent doctrines and teachings

Many of Rome's teachings are offensive to God: the pope is the head of the church rather than Jesus Christ, tradition is the primary authority of the church rather than the Scriptures alone, Mary and the earthly priesthood replaces Christ heavenly priesthood and are mediators, the soul cannot die, prayers can be made to the dead, those who die go to purgatory, the fires of hell will torment forever, everyone born is guilty of Adam's sin, infants can be baptized by sprinkling, Sunday replaced the Bible Sabbath, the sacrifice of the Mass replaces the memorial of Christ's death, the use of images, crosses, beads in worship, etc.

As the children of rebellion have the mark of the beast and his name on their forehead, the faithful people of God have the name of God on their forehead

“It has been known all along that Popery was baptized Paganism, but God is now making it manifest that the paganism which Rome has baptized is in all its essential elements the very paganism which prevailed in the ancient literal Babylon. The essential character of her system, the grand objects of her worship, her festivals, her doctrines and discipline, her rites and ceremonies, her priesthood and their orders, have all been derived from ancient Babylon.”

The Two Babylons or the Papal Worship, page 2-3



The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

In the book of Revelation, there are striking contrasts: God's cup vs Babylon's cup, Jerusalem vs Babylon, Harlot and the Beast vs the Bride and the Lamb.

The Church of Rome is the Mother church

“I recognize the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church as the mother and mistress of all churches.” – Roman Catholic Council of Trent (16th century)

Abomination is associated with spiritual idolatry. It is detestable, abhorrent and offensive to God. “Babylon is termed the mother of abominations because she is the originator of false worship, idolatry, astrology, witchcraft, satanic worship and all the originated in ancient Babylon.” – The Two Babylons or Papal Worship, page 12

As the Mother of harlots, the compromised churches of God are daughter-harlot churches who have apostatized and embraced Babylon's false teachings and practices in rejection of the plain Word of God. These religious organizations came out of her but now imitate, support and follow Babylon.

The religious entity (church - woman) was drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus even though today they continue to ignore or deny these acts. Many modern history books have whitewashed these awful realities or completely.

For example, St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of August 24, 1572 was planned by the Church of Rome and 100,000 Protestants were slaughtered. Bible commentators state that at least 50 million martyrs were killed during the Middle Ages.



Prophetic Glossary

Beast = kingdom or world empire

‘Those great beasts, which are four, are four kingdoms’ – Dan 7:17

‘The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth’ – Dan 7:23

Head = political power

“After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.
– Dan 7:6 [Represent the kingdom of Greece and the four division of the empire after Alexander the Great died]

Horn = king

“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings” – Rev 17:12

“The ten horns are ten kings” – Dan 7:24

Mountain = kingdom – Dan 2:35,44-45; Jer 51:24-25

Water = multitudes of people

“The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.” – Rev 17:15



The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

John marvels at this apostate, persecuting power. But the angel who explains the great harlot to John now reveals to him the identification and judgment of the religious entity - woman (apostate church) and the beast (political entity)

This second section of Rev 17 is enigmatic and requires wisdom and discernment to understand. There are strong parallels between Revelation 17 and Revelation 13. We can see the principle of repeat and enlarge. Chapter 17 enlarges on 13.

“And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. **And all the world marveled and followed the beast.**” – Rev 13:3

The sea beast “was” implying it existed before

“and it is not” implying it is now dead (**John reference point: 1798 AD**)

“and it will ascend out of the bottomless pit” implying it will experience a resurrection and come back from the abyss into existence, as if from the dead

The bottomless pit (or abyss) is used seven times in the book of Revelation. It is the abode of demons whose source and inspiration is Satanic: the symbolic locust of Revelation 9 (5th trumpet), the French Revolution of Revelation 11, and Satan’s prison house when the world becomes a graveyard for 1000 years.

Those whose names are not written in the Book of Life will marvel and follow the beast. These are those who dwell on the earth.



The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

“That was and is not, and about to come up” is a parody of the title of God: “The One who is, and who was, and who is to come”

The end-time deceptive activity of the beast whose source and manifestation is satanic is shown by its rising from the abyss before going into perdition (Rev 19:20)

“All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” – Rev 13:8

Only those whose names are written in the Book of Life will be able to withstand his deception and understand the mystery of the harlot

“**Here is wisdom.** Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.” – Rev 13:18

Spiritual wisdom and understanding is key to have spiritual insight to discern, and this can only be imparted to the believer by the Spirit.

The woman sits on the beast which has seven heads and ten horns

Beast = Head = Mountain symbolize world kingdoms and political powers

Using correct biblical hermeneutics, we must continue with the historical interpretation with the Repeat and Enlarge principle

Seven kings represent seven successive world powers



The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

Five kings have fallen: Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece, Pagan Rome, and Papal Rome

The Papacy (Sea Beast) received its deadly wound in 1798 and lost its sword

One is: The Earth Beast of Revelation 13 (United States)

On Jan 14, 1784, Congress officially declared the sovereignty of the United States of America by ratifying the Paris Treaty which was signed in Paris on Sep 3, 1783. This formally ended the Revolutionary War with Great Britain and established the US as an independent nation, eight years after signing the Declaration of Independence.

“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” – Rev 13:12



The other has not yet come: The resurrected Sea Beast (parody of Jesus: Rev 1:18) after the deadly wound is healed will only hold global dominance for one hour with the ten kings

An hour ~ short period of time (Greek – oligos meaning small, few, little)

Sea beast = Antichrist = Papal power = Little horn = 5th and 7th king

“And **in the days of these kings** the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” – Dan 2:44

The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

Upon the revived beast the harlot sits. There will be a short-lived union of church and states as it existed during the Middle Ages (image of the beast) and persecution will again follow

The ten toes of Dan 2 represent the continuation of Rome in the ten kings (global political powers) who will unite with the Satanic trinity to make war against the Lamb

“In 1798, the political element of Rome was wounded, not the religious element...Political and civil power were stripped from the harlot because the beast on which she rode to power had been wounded to death and she was made a widow. At that time, no political powers supported her. The healing of the wound represents the restoration of the political element that had been stripped from the church.” – An Enduring Vision, page 617



The vision shifts from the seven kings back to the Scarlet Beast which the harlot rides and re-emphasizes its identity, adding more clues

	Past	Present	Future
Rev 17:8a	The beast that you saw was	and is not	and will ascend out of the bottomless pit
Rev 17:8b	The beast that was	and is not	and yet is
Rev 17:11	The beast that was	and is not	is himself also the eighth

The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

The angel gives additional clue showing that the Scarlet beast which the harlot sits on is also one of the seven kings and it will be destroyed at the end

The number 8 is mystic like 666. 8 is the first cubic number (2^3) and symbolizes infinity, totality, balance, new life, or final point of manifestation

“The original Greek reads, “even he is eighth”. **There is no definite article.** This may mean that the number eight does not refer to an eighth head or kingdom but is a symbol. The number eight...symbolize regeneration, newness of life or resurrection.”

Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance, page 181

There are only seven heads and not eight heads. The seventh head is the Papal power restored. The seventh king is rising into dominance

“And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and **ten horns.**” – Rev 17:3

The ten horns are ten kings on the seventh head representing the political powers that will support the Papacy in regaining global dominance at the end-time

The scarlet beast experienced death, resurrection and restoration. Together with the ten kings (global world powers), ruling as a single kingdom and one world government, they will be of one mind, giving their authority to the scarlet beast



Recall from Rev 13:

6 = sum of numbers

1 + 2 + 3

666 = sum of numbers

1 through 36

The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

In 1921, the Council of Foreign Relations (CFR) was officially formed in the United States with counterparts in London, Paris and Hamburg.

Warburg was a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He gained some notice in a February 17, 1950, appearance before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in which he said, "We shall have world government, whether or not we like it. The question is only whether world government will be achieved by consent or by conquest (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Warburg)

Hour (Greek - hora) refer to a definite time or season

“Standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For **in one hour your judgment has come.**” – Rev 18:10

“For **in one hour** such great riches came to nothing.” – Rev 18:17

“For **in one hour** she is made desolate.” – Rev 18:19

“And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.” – Rev 19:19

The battle of Armageddon reaches its climax when Babylon, united with the powers of the earth, fueled by Satanic trinity makes war on Christ by attacking His saints



The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

The last battle is between the forces of good vs evil, Christ and the Satan. It is not a military battle to be fought in the Middle East.

If we are faithful to the Lamb to the end, He will be faithful to us in the coming conflict.
The Lamb is victorious. We are on the winning side!

The Lamb overcomes by executing judgment on Babylon (plagues). The prophetic Word is sure. God's purposes will be fulfilled because He rules over the affairs of men.

The waters of the great river Euphrates which represents the political and religious support from global population and powers dries up. The harlot most devoted and staunchest supporters turns on her. They have been duped and deceived. They have forfeited eternal life and suffered intensely from the plagues.

“Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings.” – Jer 23: 1-2

““Wail, shepherds, and cry! Roll about in the ashes, you leaders of the flock! For the days of your slaughter and your dispersions are fulfilled; You shall fall like a precious vessel. And the shepherds will have no way to flee, nor the leaders of the flock to escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and a wailing of the leaders to the flock will be heard. For the Lord has plundered their pasture, and the peaceful dwellings are cut down because of the fierce anger of the Lord. He has left His lair like the lion; for their land is desolate because of the fierceness of the Oppressor, and because of His fierce anger.” – Jer 25:34-38



The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

“Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls.” – Luke 11:17

Four judgments on the harlot depict her exposure and final destruction. The very supporters of Babylon will be the agents of her destruction.

Desolate (Greek “eremoo”) means to lay waste, ruin and stripped of treasures. It is related to concept of wilderness (Greek “eremos”)

The harlot is stripped of her religious cloak of pretended piety and fraud. Her true character is exposed. She is recognized as the Satanic counterfeit of the church. Like Jezebel, her ill-gotten gains rots or are violently destroyed

“On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel” – 2 Kings 9:36

“The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be burned with fire.” – Lev 21:9

Babylon transitions in Rev 17:18 to Chapter 18 from a harlot woman to a great city

"For many are called, but few are chosen" - Matt 22:14

Everyone is **called** (invited) by the preaching of the Gospel. Only those who respond and chose Jesus are **chosen** for salvation. By allowing the truth to transform them, they are being sanctified to live **faithful** lives and enduring to the end through the power of the Holy Spirit. We must remain faithful to our calling to be saved!



Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God. They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law. The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. This is the view that now appears to those who rejected truth and chose to cherish error. **No language can express the longing which the disobedient and disloyal feel for that which they have lost forever—eternal life.** Men whom the world has worshiped for their talents and eloquence now see these things in their true light. They realize what they have forfeited by transgression, and they fall at the feet of those whose fidelity they have despised and derided and confess that God has loved them. The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; **but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers.** Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. **“We are lost!”** they cry, **“and you are the cause of our ruin;”** and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. **Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.**

GREAT CONTROVERSY, PAGE 655

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