

Bible Study on Revelation Chapters 17–19

Section 1 — Revelation 17:1–6

The Woman on the Scarlet Beast

Revelation 17:1-6 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 (NKJ).

Selective Verse: "And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy..." (Rev. 17:3)

Summary

John is carried in the Spirit into the wilderness, where he sees a woman clothed in luxury, holding a golden cup filled with abominations. She sits on a scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns. She is called "*Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth.*" She is drunk with the blood of the saints.

Themes & Commentary

- **Spiritual corruption:** The woman symbolizes a system of seduction—political, economic, and religious—that draws nations away from God.
- **Persecution of believers:** Her drunkenness with the blood of saints shows hostility toward God's people.
- **The beast:** Represents satanic political power supporting this corrupt system.

Reflection Questions:

- What modern systems or cultural forces resemble this seductive, corrupting influence?
 - Why is spiritual seduction often more dangerous than open persecution?
 - How do believers guard their hearts against subtle compromise?
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■ Section 2 — Revelation 17:7–18

The Mystery Explained

Revelation 17:7-8 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 "And 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. 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."

Selective Verses: "The seven heads are seven mountains... The ten horns... receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast" (Rev. 17:9, 12).

"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***" (Rev. 17:14).

Summary

The angel explains the symbolism:

- The beast "was, and is not, and will ascend" — a counterfeit resurrection.
- The seven heads represent both mountains and kings.
- The ten horns symbolize rulers who will unite briefly with the beast.
- These powers will ultimately turn against the woman (Babylon), fulfilling God's purpose.

Themes & Commentary

- **Human empires rise and fall**, but God directs history.
- **Evil turns on itself:** The same powers that supported Babylon will destroy her.
- **God's sovereignty:** Even rebellious nations unknowingly fulfill God's purposes.

Genesis 50:20 "But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive (NKJ).

Psalms 33:10-11 ¹⁰ The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. ¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations (NKJ).

Proverbs 1:18-19 ¹⁸ But they lie in wait for their *own* blood, they lurk secretly for their own lives. ¹⁹ So are the ways of everyone who is greedy for gain; it takes away the life of its owners (NKJ).

Proverbs 16:9 A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps (NKJ).

Proverbs 19:21 There are many plans in a man's heart, Nevertheless the LORD'S counsel-- that will stand (NKJ).

Reflection Questions:

- How does this passage challenge our fear of political instability?
 - What does it mean that God uses even wicked rulers to accomplish His will?
 - Why do human alliances built on rebellion eventually collapse?
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Section 3 — Revelation 18:1–8

The Fall of Babylon Announced

Revelation 18:1-8 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. ² And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!" ³ "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." ⁴ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. ⁵ "For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶ "Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. ⁷ "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.' ⁸ "Therefore her plagues will come in one day-- death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong *is* the Lord God who judges her.

Selective Verse: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons...." (Rev. 18:2)

Summary

A mighty angel announces Babylon's fall. Her sins have reached heaven, and her judgment is swift. God calls His people to come out of her so they will not share in her sins or plagues.

Themes & Commentary

- **God's call to separation:** Believers must not be entangled in Babylon's values.
- **Judgment is certain:** God's patience is long, but not endless.
- **Sin accumulates:** Babylon's sins "reach heaven," showing deliberate, persistent rebellion.

Psalm 103:8-9 ⁸The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. ⁹ He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever (NKJ).

Reflection Questions:

- What does "come out of her" look like in practical Christian living?
- How do believers discern when cultural participation becomes spiritual compromise?
- Why is God's judgment both just and necessary?

Section 4 — Revelation 18:9–20

Lament Over Babylon

Revelation 18:9-20 ⁹ "The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰ "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.' ¹¹ "And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: ¹² "merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; ¹³ "and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. ¹⁴ "The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. ¹⁵ "**The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,** ¹⁶ "and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! ¹⁷ '**For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.'** Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance ¹⁸ "and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What *is* like this great city?' ¹⁹ "They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her

wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.' ²⁰ "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and *you* holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!" (NKJ)

Selective Verse: "For in one hour your judgment has come." (Rev. 18:10)

Summary

Kings, merchants, and sea captains mourn Babylon's destruction—not because they loved her righteousness, but because they profited from her corruption. Heaven, however, rejoices.

Themes & Commentary

- **Earth mourns; heaven rejoices:** Earthly grief is tied to lost wealth, not lost holiness.
- **Materialism exposed:** Babylon's economy was built on exploitation and luxury.
- **Heaven's perspective:** God's justice is celebrated, not regretted.

Reflection Questions:

- Why does the world mourn the fall of systems God condemns?
 - How does this passage critique consumerism and economic idolatry?
 - What does it reveal about the values of heaven versus earth?
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Section 5 — Revelation 18:21–24

The Final Silence of Babylon

Revelation 18:21-24 ²¹ Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw *it* into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore. ²² "The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. ²³ "The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. ²⁴ "And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth."

Selective Verse: "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore." (Rev. 18:21)

Summary

A mighty angel casts a millstone into the sea, symbolizing Babylon's permanent destruction. Music, craftsmanship, commerce, and even marriage celebrations cease. Her sorceries deceived nations, and she is guilty of the blood of prophets and saints.

Themes & Commentary

- **Total finality:** Babylon's fall is irreversible.
- **The end of deceptive culture:** Her music, trade, and celebrations masked deep corruption.
- **God vindicates His people:** The blood of the saints is remembered.

Reflection Questions:

- What does the finality of Babylon's fall teach us about God's justice?
- How do cultural "sorceries" deceive nations today?
- Why is remembering the suffering of the saints important for the church?

Deuteronomy 18:10 "There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, *or one* who practices witchcraft, *or a soothsayer*, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer (NKJ).

Jeremiah 27:9 "Therefore do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon" (NKJ).

Section 6 — Revelation 19:1–10

Heaven Rejoices — The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Revelation 19:1-10 ¹After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord our God!" ² "For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her." ³ Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" ⁴ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!" ⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" ⁶ And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!" ⁷ "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." ⁸ 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. ⁹ Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." ¹⁰ And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See *that you do not do that!* I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Selective Verse: “Let us be glad and rejoice... for the marriage of the Lamb has come” (Rev. 19:7).

Ephesians 1:10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth-- in Him (NKJ).

Summary

A great multitude in heaven praises God for judging Babylon and avenging His servants. The scene shifts to the marriage supper of the Lamb, where the Bride (the Church) is clothed in fine linen, symbolizing righteous acts.

Themes & Commentary

- Worship as response to justice
- The joy of union with Christ
- The Bride’s preparation: Holiness matters.

Reflection Questions:

- How does worship shape our understanding of God’s justice?
- What does it mean for the church to prepare as Christ’s Bride?
- How does this passage encourage perseverance?

Section 7 — Revelation 19:11–21

The Rider on the White Horse — Christ the Warrior King

Revelation 19:11-21 ¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. ¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, ¹⁸ "that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great." 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. ²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and with him the

false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Selective Verse: “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True...” (Rev. 19:11)

Summary

Christ appears as the conquering King, judging and making war in righteousness. His robe is dipped in blood, and His name is “The Word of God.” The armies of heaven follow Him. The beast and false prophet are captured and thrown into the lake of fire, and the armies opposing Christ are destroyed.

Themes & Commentary

- **Christ as Warrior:** Not passive, but actively defeating evil.
- **The Word of God triumphs:** His sword is His word.
- **Final defeat of evil powers:** The beast and false prophet meet their end.

Reflection Questions:

- How does this image of Christ complement His role as Savior?
- Why is it important that evil is not merely restrained but defeated?
- What hope does this passage give believers facing spiritual opposition?