

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 2ND-3RD, 2019 // BOOK OF REVELATION

## THE PROSTITUTE (REV. 17:1-3A)

### THE FINAL SERIES OF EVENTS

Chapters 17 and 18 give different perspectives of the events that take place in chapters 15 and 16. Almost like a flashback, but from a different point of view.

- One of the angels that has poured out God's wrath kind of pauses what John is seeing and explains in more detail what is going to happen.

### A TALE OF TWO WOMEN

Ch. 17 tells of a city, Babylon the Great, that's personified as a "notorious prostitute." The contrasting city will be the New Jerusalem that's personified as a "pure bride" in ch. 21.

- This imagery helps us understand the culture of the world when Jesus returns. It is the zenith of **arrogance combined with religious and political corruption.**

### "...WHO IS SEATED ON MANY WATERS"

"Many waters" means all people on earth, not just the "kings of the earth that have committed sexual immorality with her" have become "drunk on the wine of her sexual immorality."

- This is both **literal sensuality and spiritual adultery.** This shows us that **humanity will become increasingly perverse and idolatrous.**

### THE LAST GREAT CITY ON THE EARTH

We have mentioned Babylon the Great several times. This city will be the epicenter of technology, spirituality, pleasure and sexual exploration, culture, and finance.

- We will see in chapter 18 how **the world's worship of things that are temporal and fleeting will lead them into destruction.**

### RED AS BLOOD (REV. 17:3B-6)

#### ANOTHER WOMAN IN THE WILDERNESS

In chapter 12 we read about a woman in the wilderness that is probably the church. This is obviously a different woman. This woman was protected by a "scarlet beast."

- Satan called forth his Antichrist (the beast) in chapter 13, but only now do we see the beast's true colors.

### COVERED WITH BLASPHEMOUS NAMES

The blasphemous names on the beast show more than just opposition to God. They also show the audacity of human leaders throughout time that have proclaimed themselves to be gods.

### RIDING ON THE BACK OF THE BEAST

The prostitute represents evil and sitting on the beast represents evil's means of progressing through civilizations throughout human history.

### "ADORNED" WITH JEWELRY

This doesn't mean jewelry is bad, but that this culture will be decadent like the prostitutes of Rome.

### "THE GOLDEN CUP IN HER HAND..."

The imagery of a golden cup exposes the true nature of evil; attractive on the outside and disgusting inside (Gen. 3:6).

- **Bait and switch has always been the tactic of Satan. The "detestable" things of this world appear beautiful at first, but the end is always calamity and destruction.**

### A MYSTERY WRITTEN ON HER FOREHEAD

The woman riding on the beast had 3 cryptic names that tell us about who she is.

- **"Babylon the Great"** This will more than likely be a city that creates a global culture. John's was Rome. **"Mother of Prostitutes"** The ideology (**pursuit of pleasure**) of this city/culture is the source of all idol worship. **"Mother of all Vile Things on Earth"** This city/culture is the source of all immoral things on earth.

### SHE WAS "DRUNK WITH THE BLOOD OF THE SAINTS"

The once attractive whore becomes a staggering drunk.

- **Like all sin, what begins as gorgeous eventually turns repulsive.**

### REVELATION IS PERTINENT TO EVERY ERA

Though this is a book about the future, every generation will have its Babylon before the last empire arises.

- The point is that we all should take a stand against the perverse culture of our age. We do this with **love, servitude, and educating people around us about Jesus Christ.**

## EMPIRES (REV. 17:7-14)

### BE PATIENT, I'LL EXPLAIN

Because John was "astonished" at what he saw, he became anxious. The angel addresses his anxiety and assures John that he will explain "the mystery."

- The title for the beast, "who is, was, and will come," is a direct mockery of Jesus and further shows that **Satan's greatest weapon is slander.**

### STRAIGHT FROM THE PITS OF HELL

The angel says the Antichrist is from "the abyss," which in the 1st century meant home of demons. This leads some to believe that he is not just a possessed man, but a demon incarnate.

- Those who do not have God's spirit and **the ability to discern**, "will be astonished" and love the beast.

### "THIS CALLS FOR A MIND THAT HAS WISDOM"

This phrase is similar to the riddle in chapter 13 about the mark of the beast. This subtly reminds us to **pray for God's wisdom to discern the climate of our culture.**

### 7 HEADS ARE 7 MOUNTAINS AND KINGS

This is the list of empires that stood in opposition to God: Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Roman, and ?.

### THE 8TH KING OF THE 7TH EMPIRE?

V11 is tricky. The last kingdom will give all authority to the Antichrist. The fact that he is the 8th is probably a reference to his death and resurrection that took place in chapter 13.

- The heads of the beast show that Satan's influence has existed through civilizations since the beginning.

### 10 KINGS WHO HAVEN'T COME INTO POWER YET

The Antichrist will be supported by 10 kings that are not in power yet, but will be for "one hour." This probably refers to the last 3 1/2 years of the Antichrist's reign.

- They will support the Antichrist in his war against Christians and eventually his war against God Himself.

### NAKED AND DEVoured (REV. 17:15-18)

#### EXPLAINING THE PROSTITUTE AND THE WATERS

The angel has talked about the beast, now he focuses on the prostitute riding on it. The waters she was also seated on represent all people not marked by God as saved.

- It says the 10 horns (kings) and the beast will hate the prostitute. What we will see is that **evil always turns on itself and self-destructs.**

### REMEMBER, THE PROSTITUTE IS A CITY/PEOPLE

The city and ideals that the whore represents will be stripped of all its glamour and left "desolate and naked." The beast and the 10 kings will also "devour her flesh."

- Satan hates God and humanity. We see again that **sin is deceptive. It promises luxury and pleasure but is intended to "steal, kill, and destroy."**

### SHE WILL "BURN UP WITH FIRE"

This is not only a fitting end for an evil city/culture, but it foreshadows hell that follows.

### THIS WAS ALL GOD'S PLAN

Though it is difficult to understand at times, "God has put it in their hearts (the evil kings) to carry out His plan...until the words of God are fulfilled." This means **God is sovereign during all of this.**

### BEING SEDUCED BY THE PROSTITUTE

The last verse reiterates the point that the woman is "the great city that has royal power over the kings of the earth."

- Since the beginning of civilization, people have fallen to the seduction of culture, pleasure, and the power of kings, but **we were never meant to follow culture or kings (1Sam. 8).**

### THE SPIRIT IS ALIVE AND WELL

- Mankind has always been tempted by **the pursuit of self** (Gen. 3).
- Satan will use this temptation to lure people into not only ignoring God, but hating the idea of a righteous Judge.
- The Antichrist spirit has been around since the fall, and **can easily sway us if we aren't alert.**

### CHOOSING WHERE WE RESIDE

- If Revelation is correct, we fall between the 6th and 7th "heads" or empires.
- Even if Christ's return is centuries away, **everyday we choose which "city" we reside in; the intoxicated prostitute or the pure bride.** How do you know which one you truly follow? **Do our lives reflect the "city" we claim allegiance to?**