

The Destruction of Babylon, the Great Prostitute

Revelation 17:1-19:4

Study 17. Part 1: The Explanation of the Prostitute, the Beast, and Their Relationship

Revelation 17

By James T. Bartsch, WordExplain.com

A. The Angel's Invitation to View the Judgment of the Great Prostitute. 17:1-3a

1. Who came and spoke to John? 17:1a _____

2. What did he offer to show John? 17:1b _____¹

3. On what was she sitting? 17:1c _____
4. What had the kings of the earth done with her? 17:2a _____

5. What happened to those who dwell on the earth? ² 17:2b _____

6. Where did this angel escort John? 17:3a _____

B. John's Description of the Beast and the Prostitute. 17:3b-6

1. John saw a woman. On what was she sitting? 17:3b _____

2. What kind of names was the beast full of? _____
3. The beast had _____ heads and _____ horns.

¹ 17:1 - judgment of the great harlot: The fact that this woman is called a harlot, or prostitute, and that the kings of the earth commit immorality with her (17:2), and that those who "dwell on the earth" are drunk with the wine of her immorality (17:2), suggests strongly that she represents a false religion that will be global in scope. This prostitution represents primarily a spiritual prostitution, not a physical one, for "the kings of the earth commit immorality with her." (See false worship described as harlotry: Jer. 2:20-28; 13:27; Ezek. 16:17-19.)

² 17:2 - those who dwell on the earth: In the book of Revelation, this phrase seems to be almost a technical term describing unbelievers.

4. What color clothing was the woman wearing? 17:4a _____ and _____
5. With what was she adorned? 17:4b _____ and _____ and _____.
6. She held a golden cup. 17:4c It was full of what? _____
7. On her forehead was a name that constituted a mystery.³ What was her name? 17:5 _____
_____ ⁴
8. With what was the woman drunk? 17:6a _____
_____ ⁵
9. What was John's reaction to the woman? 17:6b _____

C. The Angel's Explanation of the Beast Ridden by the Prostitute. 17:7-14

1. The angel expressed surprise at John's amazement. Then he proceeded to explain to John the _____ of the woman and the beast who carried her. 17:7
2. The angel proceeded first to explain to John the significance of the beast from a yet future time frame. In that future time frame what will be true about the beast (and his kingdom) in relation to time? 17:8a
 - a. He _____

³ 17:5 - mystery: The angel will explain this mystery in 17:7.

⁴ 17:5 - Babylon the Great: At the time of the end, this false religion will be headquartered in Babylon.

⁵ 17:6 - drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus: The fact that John saw the woman being drunken (present active participle of *methuō*, 3184) indicates that she was presently and continuously in a drunken state from imbibing, not wine, but the blood of the saints (*hagios*, 40) and witnesses (*martus*, 3144) of Jesus. These are not two different groups of people, but are synonymous descriptions of one group of people. In other words, the saints are also the witnesses of Jesus. This false religion will be characterized by an ongoing, insatiable lust for the brutal killing of followers of Jesus during the Tribulation period.

- b. He _____⁶
- c. He is _____⁷
3. What is the ultimate destiny of the beast? 17:8b _____
 _____ (See Rev. 19:20.)
4. What will be the reaction of those who dwell upon the earth in regard to the beast and what happens to him? 17:8c _____

5. What is true about the names of “those who dwell upon the earth,” who also “wonder when they see the beast...”? 17:8b _____

6. How did the angel explain to John the meaning of the seven heads of the beast on which the woman was sitting? 17:9 They represented seven _____.
7. He also said that they represented seven _____ 17:10
- a. Five had _____⁸
- b. One _____⁹
- c. The other _____¹⁰. But when he comes he must _____.

⁶ 17:8 - The beast that you saw was and is not. The world ruler, or antichrist, will head up a Revived Roman Empire. The Empire existed, ceased to exist, but in the end times will be revived. Similarly, the world ruler who will head up the Revived Roman Empire will himself exist for awhile, be killed, but then be miraculously brought back to life (see Rev. 13:3).

⁷ 17:8 - is about to come up out of the abyss: Since his origin will be from the abyss (when he and his regime are resurrected), he will be demonic, empowered by Satan.

⁸ 17:10 - five have fallen: These kings / empires represent major world empires (from a Biblical perspective). The five that have already fallen likely include Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece.

⁹ 17:10 - one is: The angel is likely referring to the world empire in existence in John’s day, the Roman Empire.

¹⁰ 17:10 - when he comes, he must remain a little while: This is likely a reference to the Antichrist’s brief reign over a Revived Roman Empire during the time of the Tribulation described in Revelation 6-18.

8. The beast which was and is not is himself an _____ king, and yet is one of the _____.¹¹ He goes to _____. 17:11
9. What do the ten horns of the scarlet beast represent? 17:12 Ten _____. (These are not successive empires (the seven heads / mountains), but ten kings who reign contemporaneously with the Antichrist for a very brief time in his global reign.)
10. Whom will these ten kings willingly support? 17:13 _____
11. Against whom will they wage war? 17:14a Against _____
 - a. Who will ultimately win this war? 17:14b _____
 - b. Why? 17:14c _____
 - c. Who are those with Him? 17:14d The _____; the _____; the _____.

D. The Angel's Explanation of the Waters upon Which the Prostitute Sat. 17:15 (The waters represent...)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

E. The Angel Predicts the Destruction of the Prostitute. 17:16-17

1. The ten kings and the beast will have a change of heart towards the prostitute. What emotion will they manifest towards her? 17:16a _____
2. What will they do to her? 17:16b
 - a. They will make her _____ and _____

¹¹ 17:11 - an eighth, and is one of the seven: This probably means that the Antichrist is the seventh king in that he briefly heads up the Revived Roman Empire. But he is an eighth king in that he will briefly head up the final anti-Christian World Empire in the latter stage of the Tribulation. This global rule is described in Revelation 13.

- b. They will _____ her _____
- c. They will _____ her with _____.
3. Who will motivate the beast and the ten kings to do this? 17:17a _____

4. Whose purpose will they execute? 17:17b _____
5. Instead of giving allegiance to the prostitute, these ten kings will give total allegiance to whom? 17:17c _____
6. This will all be done to fulfill whose words? 17:17d _____

F. The Angel Identifies the Prostitute. 17:18

1. The woman John saw is the great _____.
2. This city _____ over the _____ of the _____.

G. What We Have Learned

1. At or near the time of the end, a religion, headquartered in Babylon, will gain enormous influence around the globe.
2. It will be a false religion, inimical to God and Jesus, and the followers of Jesus.
3. It will have enormous political influence, controlling, for awhile, a revived Roman Empire led by an evil, charismatic ruler, supported in his conquest of the world by ten contemporary sub-rulers.
4. This false religion will embark upon a frenzied mission to kill followers of Jesus.
5. After a period of time, the global dictator from the revived Roman Empire will, along with his ten subordinates, grow weary of this false religion, and they will burn her with fire.
6. As we grow nearer the end, being a follower of Jesus will become increasingly unpopular on a global scale. Ultimately, following Jesus will cost millions their lives.
7. As society turns against Christians, will you have the courage to remain loyal to Jesus?

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