

### 24 - THE FALL OF BABYLON – PART 1 (REVELATION 17:1-18)

#### I. The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast (Revelation 17:1-6)

##### A. The Invitation of the Angel (Revelation 17:1a)

- One of the angels invites John to see the destruction of the great whore.

**Biblical Note:** The Great Whore

The great whore in the Book of Revelation has provoked much discussion concerning her identity. The passage refers to the whore of Babylon as a mystery means that we cannot be completely certain as to her identity. The passage does give some clues. Revelation 17:9 explains, "This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits." Some scholars link this passage with the Roman Catholic Church because in ancient times, the city of Rome was known as "the city on seven hills" because there are seven prominent hills that surround the city. However, Revelation 17:10 goes on to explain that the seven hills represent 7 kings or kingdoms, five of which have fallen, one that is and one that is to come. Therefore, the "whore of Babylon" cannot refer exclusively to Rome. Revelation 17:15 tells us, "Then the angel said to me, 'The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.'" Therefore the whore of Babylon will have great worldwide influence over people and nations. Revelation 17:10-14 describe a series of eight and then ten kings who affiliate with the Antichrist. The whore of Babylon will at one time have control over these kings (Revelation 17:18), but at some point the kings will turn on her and destroy her (Revelation 17:16). So we can gain a partial understanding of her identity. The whore of Babylon is an evil world system, controlled by the Antichrist, during the last days before Jesus' return. The whore of Babylon also has religious connotations – spiritual adultery with the beast being the focus of an ungodly, end-times religious system.

##### B. The Influence of the Harlot (Revelation 17:1b-2)

###### 1. Her Geographical Influence (Revelation 17:1b)

- This evil woman symbolizes the religious system of Babylon.
- She will have influence over peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages.

###### 2. Her Political Influence (Revelation 17:2)

- The political systems of the world will embrace her.

##### C. The Vision of the Harlot (Revelation 17:3-6)

###### 1. John is Taken to the Harlot (Revelation 17:3a)

- John is taken to see the whore in a vision.

###### 2. The Description of the Harlot (Revelation 17:3b-6)

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- a. Sitting on the Beast (Revelation 17:3b)
  - The whore is supported by the Antichrist.
- b. Her Apparel (Revelation 17:4)
  - The whore is adorned in the trappings of ritualistic religion.
- c. The Name on Her Forehead (Revelation 17:5)
  - The character of the whore is revealed in her names.
- d. Drunk on Blood (Revelation 17:6)
  - The whore is responsible for the deaths of true believers.

## II. The Significance of the Harlot (Revelation 17:7-14)

- A. The Angel Reveals the Whore's Significance (Revelation 17:7)
  - The angel will explain the meaning of the whore and beast.
- B. The Beast (Revelation 17:8)
  - The beast will be empowered by Satan.
  - He will have influence over the world.
- C. The Seven Empires (Revelation 17:9-10)
  - The whore is supported by seven kingdoms or governments.
  - Five empires have passed. (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persian, Greece)
  - The current king is Ancient Rome.
  - There is a future world empire.
- D. The Eighth King (Revelation 17:11)
  - The Antichrist is the eighth king.
- E. The Future Ten Kings (Revelation 17:12-14)
  - The future ten governments will support the Antichrist.
  - These governments will make war on the followers of the Lamb.

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## III. The Punishment of the Harlot (Revelation 17:15-18)

### A. The Waters (Revelation 17:15)

- The whore will have authority over the peoples of the world.

### B. The Whore is Betrayed (Revelation 17:16-17)

- The kingdoms of the world will turn on the whore and destroy her.

### C. The Nature of the Woman (Revelation 17:18)

- The whore is a great city of influence.