

## The Book Of Revelation Study 84

### *Revelation 17:1-18 (NASB)*

- <sup>1</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters,  
<sup>2</sup> with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality."  
<sup>3</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.  
<sup>4</sup> The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,  
<sup>5</sup> and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."  
<sup>6</sup> And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.  
<sup>7</sup> And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? 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.  
<sup>8</sup> "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.  
<sup>9</sup> "Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits,  
<sup>10</sup> and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.  
<sup>11</sup> "The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.  
<sup>12</sup> "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.  
<sup>13</sup> "These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast.  
<sup>14</sup> "These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."  
<sup>15</sup> And he \*said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.  
<sup>16</sup> "And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.  
<sup>17</sup> "For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled.  
<sup>18</sup> "The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."

To remind us, the term Harlot here refers to the final world religion. And these verses records the exposure of the harlot, the explanation of the harlot, and the extermination of the harlot.

In our last study we looked at the first area of exposure, and that would be the source of authority for the "the great Harlot." As we talked about that we realized that she received her authority from the nations of the world.

Tonight we want to take that a bit farther, and look at the second part of that exposure:

## THE ALLIANCES OF THE HARLOT

### *Revelation 17:1-18 (NASB)*

<sup>2</sup> *with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality."*

<sup>3</sup> *And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.*

Here associations with the **Kings of the earth** reveals that the scope of the harlot's influence will be immense.

Those at the highest level of power and influence will commit spiritual fornication with her.

The phrase **committed acts of immorality** translates a form of the Greek verb *porneu*.

It aptly describes the harlot's interaction with the **kings of the earth**.

The symbolism of spiritual adultery, used in the Old Testament to describe Israel's apostasy from Jehovah:

### *Ezekiel 16:22-23 (NASB)*

<sup>22</sup> *"Besides all your abominations and harlotries you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare and squirming in your blood.*

<sup>23</sup> *"Then it came about after all your wickedness ('Woe, woe to you!' declares the Lord GOD),*

<sup>26</sup> *"You also played the harlot with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, and multiplied your harlotry to make Me angry.*

<sup>28</sup> *"Moreover, you played the harlot with the Assyrians because you were not satisfied; you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied.*

<sup>29</sup> *"You also multiplied your harlotry with the land of merchants, Chaldea, yet even with this you were not satisfied.""*

<sup>35</sup> *Therefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD.*

<sup>36</sup> *Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because your lewdness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered through your harlotries with your lovers and with all your detestable idols, and because of the blood of your sons which you gave to idols,*

<sup>37</sup> *therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, even all those whom you loved and all those whom you hated. So I will gather them against you from every direction and expose your nakedness to them that they may see all your nakedness.*

Is inappropriate here.

The unredeemed rulers and the nations they represent do not know God and are never pictured as His wife.

Rulers from around the world will become obsessed with the Babylonian harlot.

Deceived by the false prophet, Antichrist, and Satan and his demon hosts, they will become enamored with the false world religion.

### *Revelation 13:8 (NASB)*

<sup>8</sup> *All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.*

But having joined themselves to the harlot, economically, socially, militarily, politically, and religiously, they will share her disastrous fate.

The harlot will not be allied just with the rulers and influential people of the world.

But all **those who dwell on the earth** (a technical term for unbelievers, **were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.**

All the unredeemed will be caught up in the final false religion; they will give their hearts and souls to the abominable Babylonian harlot.

The angel here is not describing people who are physically **drunk** with literal **wine** committing sexual **immorality** with an actual prostitute, though that may be happening, instead, he is talking about those who are passionately intoxicated with Antichrist's illicit false world religion.

The imagery derives from Jeremiah 51:7;

*Jeremiah 51:7 (NASB)*

*<sup>7</sup> Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the LORD, Intoxicating all the earth. The nations have drunk of her wine; Therefore the nations are going mad.*

Before the next alliance of the harlot is revealed, the scene of John's vision changes, he is **carried away by the angel in the Spirit into a wilderness.**

**Wilderness** translates *eremos*, which describes a deserted, desolate wasteland like the region where modern Babylon is located.

In that place John saw a woman, the Babylonian harlot whom the angel had just described.

She was **sitting on a scarlet beast**, whose description identifies him as Antichrist (13:1, 4; 14:9; 16:10)

The **woman** sitting on the scarlet beast signifies that he was supporting her.

The initial unifying and controlling factor of Antichrist's kingdom will be religion.

With the heavens and the earth being ravaged by God's judgments, and the world's political, economic, and military might crumbling, people will turn in desperation to the supernatural.

The **beast** and the **women will coexist for a while**; that is, the religion will be separate from the kingdom of Antichrist at first.

But eventually "the beast will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire (V. 16).

It will be at that point that the false prophet will make the whole world worship Antichrist (13:11-14)

And everything will be one in the beast's universal and comprehensive rule.

**Scarlet** is the color associated with luxury, splendor, and royalty.

It is also the color associated with sin (Isa. 1:18), and it is the hue of blood.

Antichrist will be splendid, royal, sinful, and a bloody beast, **full of blasphemous names. (13:1)**  
In his arrogant self-deification, Antichrist will take for himself the names and titles that belong to God.  
He will not only blaspheme God by what he does, but also by what he says.

**Daniel 7:25a (NASB)**

<sup>25</sup> ~ *He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One,*

**Daniel 11:36a (NASB)**

<sup>36</sup> *"Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods;*

This demonic **scarlet beast** is further described as **having seven heads and ten horns**, showing the extent of his alliances.

As will be seen in the discussion of verses 9 and 10 as we move forward,

The **seven heads** are seven mountains on which the woman sits and they are seven kings;

Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while (V. 9-10).

They represent seven mountains, seven past, present, and future governments.

The **ten horns** represent ten kings (V. 12), who will rule as subordinates to Antichrist (V. 13)

The harlot's alliances will be comprehensive. Her deadly embrace will encompass all the unredeemed, from kings and rulers to common people; all will worship and submit to her religion.

Far from being separated, church and state will be united as never before in human history.

Next:

#### THE APPAREL OF THE HARLOT

**Revelation 17:4a (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> *The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls,*

Prostitutes usually dress so as to attract attention to themselves and metaphorically the harlot Babylon will be no different.

John saw her **clothed in purple and scarlet**, the colors of royalty, prosperity, nobility, and wealth  
(Judg. 8:26; Est. 8:15; Lam. 4:5; Ezek. 23:6; Dan. 5:7, 16, 29)

That she is **adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls** portrays her as a prostitute who is both attractive and as having plied her trade successfully and thus become extremely wealthy.

#### THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE HARLOT

**Revelation 17:4b-5 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> *having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,*

<sup>5</sup> *and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."*

As further indication of her wealth, the harlot had **in her hand a gold cup**.

Like prostitutes who want to take everything their victims have, she will make her victims drunk, as did ancient Babylon: *Jeremiah 51:7 (NASB)*

*<sup>7</sup> Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the LORD, Intoxicating all the earth. The nations have drunk of her wine; Therefore the nations are going mad.*

The harlot's gold cup was full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality.

All idolatry is abominable to God (1Kings 14:22-24; 2Kings 21:1-9; Ezek. 20:30-33), and the gross idolatry of Antichrist's false religion will be the worst ever.

No wonder Babylon's sins will be "piled up as high as the heaven" (18:5), bringing her destruction.

It was customary for prostitutes to identify themselves in the Roman world, the harlot Babylon also had a name written on her forehead;

*Jeremiah 3:3 (NASB)*

*<sup>3</sup> "Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no spring rain. Yet you had a harlot's forehead; You refused to be ashamed.*

John saw the name it was "Mystery BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.."

Babylon will be the source of all the false, idolatrous, blasphemous worship in the end times.

Her designation as the MOTHER OF HARLOTS is appropriate, since harlotry in Scripture often symbolizes idolatry. So Babylon, the city that spawned the system that corrupted the world with false religion, will do so again.

#### THE ACCUSATION OF THE HARLOT

*Revelation 17:6 (NASB)*

*<sup>6</sup> And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.*

Like many harlots, this woman was drunk, but not from drinking alcoholic beverages.

In a graphic indictment of her, for her murderous persecution of God's people, the Babylonian harlot is pictured as drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.

That vivid expression was commonly used in the ancient world to depict a murderous lust for violence.

Some commentators see the saints and the witnesses of Jesus as two distinct groups, the former being the Old Testament saints and the latter the New Testament saints.

More likely, however, the two descriptions refer to the same group and describe God's people throughout history. The important point is that the false religion represented here by the harlot, is a murderer. And has killed millions of believers over the centuries.

The history of the church has demonstrated that apostate Christianity is relentless in its persecution of those who hold to true faith in Jesus Christ.

While the world becomes drunk with lust for her, the harlot becomes drunk with the blood of God's people.

The vision was so appalling that **when John saw her, he wondered greatly**; expressing that fact that when he saw the vision, he was confused, shocked, astonished, and frightened by this ghastly vision of such a contrastingly magnificent figure of the woman with such deadly intent.

Such deadly accusations, lead to great judgment of this world religion. Just as surely as the Satanic system of the world will be judged so will the world religion that holds that system together in the beginning.