

## **I. Review (Rev. 1-6)**

- A. John has just witnessed the bowls of wrath being poured out upon those who worship the Antichrist and bear his mark of allegiance. One of the angels responsible for pouring out the bowls tells John that he wants to explain why so many individuals received such harsh judgement and still refused to repent and blasphemed God. (Rev. 16:2, 9,11, 21, 17:1)
- B. The angel then shows John a symbolic vision to explain to him how the nations positioned themselves to be so wicked and deceived. He shows him a beautiful powerful luxurious woman, riding on a beast of prosperity. The vision represented an ideological system (harlot Babylon) that in the future many of the leaders and peoples of the earth will give their love and worship to. (Rev. 17:1-6)
  - 1. Even though on the outside everything about this system seems wonderful and desirous her golden cup of happiness and wealth is filled with abominations and acts of harlotry against God.
- C. John is overcome with awe and marvels at the greatness of this system that has infiltrated the religion, government, commerce of the earth and persecutes and kills the saints of God.

## **II. Babylon gains world wide influence (Rev. 17:7-11)**

- A. The angel informs John that he is going to explain how the harlot Babylon system grew to hold such a stunning degree of influence over the inhabitants of the earth. He is also going to explain how this system causes individuals to rage against God. (Ps. 2:1-3)
  - 1. The angel tells him that not only will he answer the questions John has concerning the woman but he is also going to answer his questions concerning the beast that carries her. Even though the beast and the harlot are not the same they are deeply connected and work with each other to deceive the earth. (Mat. 24:12-21; 2 Thes. 2:6-10; Rev. 17:7)
- B. As we embark upon these next few verses we are going to cover some very highly debated scriptures in the book of Revelation. It is critical that we focus on the major clear themes in this passage and not get side tracked by one particular word or line. We must also understand that we are talking about the doctrine category of opinion as we attempt to properly exegete this particular portion of (Rev. 17).

C. The first highly debated topic in these verses is the identity of the beast. Is the beast a person, nation, or is it both? Most of the research I have done concerning this question seems to be split down the middle between the two opinions of man or nation.

1. The Beast that you saw (Rev. 17:8) – There is very little room for doubt that the beast referred to here is the same beast referred to in (Rev. 13:1-10) the symbolic language used to describe the beast is identical. The thing that throws everyone off is the piece of information at the conclusion of the verse. This beast was, is not, and yet is?
  - a) Proper use of hermeneutics (method of exegeting biblical truth) tells us that we must consider all passages that make reference to the beast in the book of Revelation first and then analyze other passages in the scripture with similar language. (Rev. 11:7, 13:1-18, 14:9-13, 15:2, 16:2, 10, 13, 17:3, 7-17, 19:19-21, 20:4; Dan. 8:23-26, 9:23-27, 11:36-38; Mat. 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:3-12)
  - b) When you consider these passages as a whole it is very hard to interpret the beast as anything but an individual human king and even though he surely will have a nation that he came from he will have dominion over many nations.
2. The question then remains if the beast is a man how could be one “who was, is not, and yet is”? The best thing I can offer you on this puzzling question is the following 2 explanations concerning the Elijah who is to come mentioned many times in the scripture, and the possibility that we are talking about a resurrection from the dead. The biggest clue we have is that this “was, is not, and yet is” reality causes the earth to marvel and worship.
  - a) First Possibility (A type or foreshadow) - We know that a real individual human man named Elijah lived served as a prophet to the people and kings of Israel in the book of Kings. However it was prophesied that he would return to the earth before the coming of Jesus. Jesus then tells us that John the Baptist was a type of Elijah and that Elijah was still coming. John was a type of Elijah just as the Antiochus Epiphanies was a type of Antichrist. You could easily say of Elijah that he was, is not, and yet is coming. (1 Ki. 17-21; 2 Ki. 1-2; Mal. 4:5; Mat. 11:14, 17:10-12; Lk 1:17)
  - b) Second Possibility (Resurrection from the dead) – It is very possible that the Antichrist will be killed and miraculously and very publicly raised from the dead. This would also fit the “was, is not, and yet is”. (2 Thes. 2:9-10; Mat. 24:24; Rev. 13:12-13, 17:8)
3. Seven Heads are seven Mountains – We have already seen this symbolic imagery speak of seven nations who Satan raises up to attack and destroy God’s people.

Israel, in Joshua's day, had to defeat seven nations in order to obtain the promised land. It is important to understand that all seven of these nations valued and promoted the Harlot Babylon ideological system.

4. There are also seven kings – Here we get another very important detail, the seven heads are nations but they are also ruled by kings and the seven heads represent the individual kings who lead those nations. An example of this would be King Nebuchadnezzar over the Babylonian Empire.
  - a) We know that five of these kings who celebrated and promoted the Harlot Babylon ideological system have already fallen by the time the vision was given to John. One was currently alive and operating when the vision was given and one was still yet coming. (Rev. 17:10)
  
5. The beast is of the seven and is also the eighth – There is debate about whether or not the “is of” is to be understood as he is one of the seven kings or if he is like or cut from the same cloth as the seven kings. I personally believe it is the former, that he is one of the seven kings in which the Harlot System sits or rules over and that he promotes the spirit of Babylon. However the story is about to take an interesting twist in a few verses to reveal that the Antichrist will destroy the Harlot. That would make him the 8<sup>th</sup> king that Satan raises up but he is now removed from the seven because the Harlot no longer sits over him. (Rev. 17:16-17)
  - a. The angel reminds John over and over that this beast will not continue very long and also informs us multiple times of his eternal fate. (Dan. 7:11, 26; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 17:8, 11)
  
6. The ten horns are ten kings with the beast – God who raises up kings and tears them down will in the final days raise up 10 kings who will support and share world wide governmental power with the beast. They will all participate in and promote the Harlot Babylon. They will rise to power at the exact moment and for the duration that God wants them to in His perfect timing. (Mat. 24:36; Jhn. 2:4, 4:23, 7:30, 8:20; 1 Jhn. 2:18)
  - a. We are told that these ten will kings will have primary responsibility in convincing and leading the world to wage war on Jesus. I believe this refers to the spiritual ideological war and to the physical war against Israel and of Armageddon. (Ps. 2:1-3, 46:6, 83:1-8)
  
7. The Harlot will rule over peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues – I have heard various bible teachers say that in the last days there will be battle between two

worship movements. The worship of Satan vs the worship of Jesus. The Harlot will have influence (sits) over many peoples (family groups or social groups), multitudes (groups gathered together without order), nations (ethnic groups), and tongues (national identities). (Rev. 7:9)

8. The ten kings will destroy the Harlot in order to transfer the worship of the earth to the beast – These ten kings will eventually see that a world wide system of tolerance and relative truth is not conducive to the desire they have to dominate the earth and to destroy Israel. Through the Harlot system these kings will cause the nations to be dependent upon their leadership and the financial security and absence of conflict. Then they will destroy the system and the central city from which it stems. They will then present the beast as the true savoir and leader of the earth.
  - a. The language of making her desolate and naked means that they will expose the flaws in the system and strip her of her influence and power. Then they will devour any trace of her influence and ideology and replace it with beast worship. They will burn the capital city of the Harlot with literal fire. (Rev. 18:8-10, 18, 19:3)
9. God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose - The rise of the beast is attributed to Satan and the spirit of lawlessness that he produces in the earth. Ultimately however God is over all things and even though the inhabitants of the earth along with Satan and his kingdom have free will we cannot escape his orchestration of the events of the future. He is leading the destiny of this planet even when evil seems to be prevailing He uses it all for His purposes and for His glory. (1 Sam. 2:7-8; Pro. 8:15-16, Jer. 27:5-7; Dan. 2:20-21)
10. The Harlot Babylon system is a great city – This system will have a locus or central city as a base of influence over the political, economic, and religious arenas of the earth. As we will see in the coming chapter this city is unmatched in splendor, influence, luxury, wealth, and glory. It will be the greatest city the world has ever seen. (Gen. 11:4; Dan. 4:48-30)

Book of Revelation Study  
Mystery Revealed

Sunday Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> 2018  
(Rev. 17:7-18)