

**I. Review (Rev. 17)**

- A. We have spent the last few sessions looking at a major theme in the vision that John received concerning the events leading up to the return of Jesus to the earth. That major theme is a religious, political, and economic system that will cover the entire earth known as the Harlot Babylon.
  
- B. There are multitudes of opinions offered to explain who or what the Harlot Babylon is and there are a host of books and blogs dedicated to this topic. There is very little agreement among scholars upon the actual identity of the Harlot, however there is much agreement concerning the clear truths about her.
  - 1. The Harlot System has worldwide influence with an emphasis on influencing national and world leaders. (Rev. 17:1-2,15,18)
  - 2. This system promotes and celebrates loving self, human accomplishment and glory, and worshiping idols or an idol other than God. (Rev. 17:4-5, 18:2-3,9, 19:2)
  - 3. Abiding in this system results in some form of intoxication of the soul and renders individuals unable to think or see truth and righteousness clearly. (Eph. 4:17-19; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; Rev. 17:2,3,)
  - 4. This system is responsible for persecuting and killing massive amounts of saints (believers before the first coming of Jesus) and the martyrs of Jesus. (Rev. 17:6)
  - 5. A foundational value of this system is producing wealth and security and is heavily involved and influential in the worldwide financial markets and economy. (17:4; 18:3,7,12-16)
  - 6. This system has been and will be carried and promoted by 7 different nations 5 of those nations were gone by 90 AD and one existed in 90 AD and one was yet to come. (Rev. 17:9-10)
  - 7. There will be 10 national or world leaders who will form a union with the Antichrist and together they will use the Harlot system to position the earth to receive the Antichrist as the main leader over the whole earth. (Rev. 17:12-13)
  - 8. The Harlot System flows from a central city in the earth much like Hollywood or Wall Street controls media and finance. (Rev. 17:18, 18:10,18-19)

9. At the opportune time this union of leaders will destroy the central city of the Harlot system along with the system itself and replace it with an Antichrist dictatorship. (Rev. 17:16-17, 18:8, 18)

## II. Prophetic Warnings and Messengers (Rev. 18:1-8)

- A. After John receives the initial vision and interpretation of the Harlot and her world wide power and influence he then is given understanding of how the Lord will lead His people during this time. As John marveled at the overwhelming ability of the Harlot to influence, seduce, and intoxicate the earth he surly wondered if the church would be able to resist this system and keep themselves devoted to Jesus.
- B. Jesus shows John that He is going to release powerful and clear angelic prophetic messaging not only to keep people from the Harlot but also to lead individuals out of the system who find themselves in it. Once again we are given rest and peace from fear in our hearts when we see His intentional merciful leadership of His bride in the last days.
  1. Another angel coming down from heaven – The clear pattern of this vision (the book Revelation) and the rest of scripture is that when prophetic pictures are given of future events it is always followed by the impartation of understanding of the leadership of Jesus in and through those events. (2 Chron. 36:15; Jer. 7:13; Amos. 3:7; 2 Pet. 2:5; Rev. 13-14)
  2. Having great authority and the earth was illuminated with glory – The prophetic messages that will come forth from Heaven warning the earth concerning the Harlot Babylon system will carry great authoritative weight and will cover the earth. This will not simply be a message warning people about the dangers of the Harlot it will also be a message that reveals the surpassing glory of God.
  3. He cried mightily with a loud voice – Not only will the prophetic message be world-wide and authoritative it will also be unavoidable to hear and meant for all the world to understand.
- C. I believe there will be one primary prophetic burden concerning the Harlot Babylon system however there seems to be 2 very clear points to the message. The full destruction of the Harlot system including the city in which she finds her strength, and the need for the church to remove herself from the system. (Rev. 18:2-4)

1. Babylon the Great is fallen is fallen – This is the same declaration as is given in (Rev. 14:8) and is given in the Greek proleptic tense meaning that the angel is talking about a future event as though it has already happened.
2. The double repetition is also significant in ancient languages to bring added importance and authority to what is being said. The prophetic unction given to the church concerning the destruction of the Harlot System will be so powerful it will be as it had already been destroyed. (“truly, truly I say to you” or “most assuredly, I say to you”)
  - a) We will see in a few verses that this city becomes the greatest city the world has ever seen. It will be unparalleled in its glory, wonder, and wealth. It will be the destination city of the world and the pinnacle of human accomplishment. (Gen. 11:4; Dan. 4:28-30)
3. It has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison for foul things – The soon future destiny of this city will become a prison for demons and foul spirits. Birds that love death, decay, and darkness will live and thrive in its ruins.

*“This is a prophetic picture of absolute destruction and eternal desolation where the pinnacle proud achievements of man become demonic haunts of unclean and horrible creatures.” (Mounce)*

4. Come out of her my people, lest you share in her sins and receive her plagues – The second clear point of the prophetic burden against the Harlot system will be a call for the church to come out and refrain from her ideology. I believe that there will also be an actual time when the Lord tells all his people who dwell in this city to vacate it before He destroys it as in the days of Lot. (Is. 52:11; Jer. 51:6-7,45)

### III. Seduction of Luxury and Security

- A. The Harlot economic, governmental and religious system will provide three incredibly intoxicating wants for the fallen human heart. These wants will be provided in excess and unimaginable levels through this system. Even for the saved individual these three worldly and materialistic desires pull heavily upon us and we must continually give ourselves to the truth that Jesus is the only one who can truly satisfy our longings in order to resist them.

*“For she says in her heart, “I sit as queen (self indulgence, luxury, wealth), I am no widow (I have need of nothing, pride), and will not see sorrow (avoidance and lack of suffering).” (Rev. 18:7)*

1. Self-Indulgence – The mention of this system being luxurious and that it positions individuals to be wealthy is extensive. The only parallels we can find in scripture to match the living condition for those involved in this system are passages that refer to the conditions of plenty and prosperity of the earth under the rulership of Messiah. With this kind of excessive wealth generally comes the pursuit unending self-indulgence.

*“You are a thirst in the flesh, an incarnated thirst. You yearn for endless beauty and joy, endless love and delight, endless security and happiness. We may differ in how we seek to slake our thirst. Some go up blind alleys. Others go to the Fountain. But all seek.” Tomas Dubay*

- a. A system promoting world wide self-indulgence stands in direct opposition to the values of love and selflessness of the Kingdom of God. (Luk 8:14; Luk 12:15-31; 16:14; Luk 21:34; Jos 7:21; Job 31:24,25; Psa 10:3; Psa 62:10; Psa 119:36,37; Pro 23:4,5; Pro 28:16; Jer 6:13; Jer 22:17,18; Mic 2:2; Hab 2:9; Mar 7:22; 1Co 5:10,11; 1Co 6:10; Eph 5:3-5; Col 3:5; 1Ti 6:7-10; 2Ti 3:2; Heb 13:5; 2Pe 2:3,14)
2. Pride – Participating in this system will give individuals an intoxicating sense of control over their lives and destiny's. They will feel very little need for anyone to help them, especially God. Not only will they glory in themselves but they will glory in the great system and city that humanity has created.
  - a. The second thing this system produces in the hearts of men is pride. It should not surprise us that this is another state of the human heart and mind that stands in direct contrast to the nature, presence, and leadership of Jesus. (Pro 11:2; Pro 17:19; Pro 18:12; 4:30-37; Dan 5:22,24; Oba 1:3,4; Mat 26:33-35,74; Rom 11:20; 1Ti 3:6)
3. Avoidance of Suffering – The final and possibly most intoxicating thing the last days harlot system will offer humanity is a sense of a life with very little or no suffering or hardship. As a Pastor I believe the area of hardship has caused more people to walk away or question their faith than any other thing. Under hardship people generally remove themselves from church community and many times walk away from their faith. It is rare to find a church culture who truly embraces suffering and hardships and considers it all joy. (Jas 1:12; Mat 5:10-12; Luk 6:22,23; Act 5:41; Rom 8:17,18,35-37; 2Co 12:9; 2Co 12:10; Phl 1:29; Phl 2:17; Col 1:24; Heb 10:34; Heb. 11:36-38; 1Pe 1:6-8; 4:13-16; 2 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 2:10)

- B. Our glorious Savior did not create us or leave us powerless against such a seductive system. He created us with a longing in our souls that is only satisfied by the superior pleasure of encountering and beholding Him. In his fierce desire and jealousy for our love he fashioned us and put His Spirit in us so that we would overcome these lesser desires and find our rest in Him. We are overcomers by Him and through Him in so much as that this world and the things in it do not hold any power over us and we are equipped to put such things to death. (Song 1:2-4; Ps. 16:11, 27:4, 36:7, 63:3-5, Is. 55:1-2; Jhn. 6:68; 2 Cor. 10:3-6; Jde 1:24)