

Revelation 17

17:1- 'great prostitute' NIV or 'great harlot' NKJV

See 17:18 for a clue to her identity _____.

'sits on many waters' Identified in 17:15 as 'peoples, multitudes, nations and languages'.

17:4- 'purple and scarlet' both identified with Rome.

From the beginning, "Babylon" has been attempting to defy God.

"Babylon" is God's name for the world system of the "Beast", the entire economic and political organization by which the Beast rules.

17:9- 'seven heads are seven hills' The city of Rome was famously founded on seven hills.

17:16- Even though the prostitute has led people into idolatry/falsehood, the beast hates her.

Note that in 17:3 the woman/prostitute was riding on the beast. Then in 17:16 the beast devours her.

Readers in John's day would identify "the harlot" with the Roman Empire. Readers in the Middle Ages might identify it as the Roman ecclesiastical system. Today, some believers see "the harlot" and the Babylonian system in an apostate "world church" that minimizes doctrinal truth, rejects the authority of the Word, and tries to unite professed believers on some other basis than faith in Jesus Christ.

The Anti-Christ/Beast will use the apostate religious system to accomplish his own ends, attaining world power. But then he will do away with her and establish his own religious system.

Throughout history, political systems have "used" religious bodies to further their political causes. At the same time, church history reveals that religious groups have used politics to achieve their purposes. The marriage of church and state is not a happy one.

READ 17:17-18

READ I John 2:15-17

Revelation 18

18:13- 'bodies and souls of men'

It has been estimated that one third of Rome's population was enslaved in the first century.

Human trafficking is a major and growing concern today.

But there is also a sense in which employees can be considered as enslaved by employers.

And people who are deep in debt are enslaved to the economic system.

Revelation 19

In Rev. 18:20 the command was given in heaven, "Rejoice over her."

What we read in Chapter 19 is the response to that command.

19:7- 'the bride' is the church

At a wedding, much attention is given to what the bride wears.

The Lamb's bride is dressed "in the righteous acts of the saints."

Regarding the "Judgment Seat of Christ":

When we use the word *judgment* it is generally in a punitive context in which someone who has done something wrong is called to account for his wrong deeds. However, such is not the case at the judgment seat of Christ. Its purpose is not punitive, that is, to punish believers for any sins that they have not previously taken care of. In the Romans 5 and 2 Corinthians 5 passages when Paul uses the terms *we, us, every one, etc.*, he is referring to believers. At the judgment seat of Christ there will be only believers present. Unbelievers will appear at the great white throne judgment, which will occur one thousand years later. The subjects of the judgment seat of Christ, then, are only those who have believed in Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior. This is a time when they will appear before their Savior "that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).¹

¹ McDowell, J. (1997). *Josh McDowell's handbook on apologetics* (electronic ed.). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

19:14- 'armies of heaven' Who are they? Angels but also saints.

"at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints." I Thess. 3:13 ESV

19:15- The image of the winepress must be associated with the judgment at Armageddon (14:14-20).

That is what the rest of Chapter 19 is about.

READ Revelation 20:1-3

Notes from Be Victorious, by Warren W. Wiersbe.