

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Revelation Chapter 17

Bible Study Notes on Mystery, Babylon and the Woman Riding the Beast

Preparation

Read – in one sitting, if possible – the following chapters:

Isaiah Chapters 13 & 14

Jeremiah Chapters 50 & 51

Revelation Chapters 17 & 18

As you read, note how the passages in Isaiah and Jeremiah speak of Babylon in its ancient early empire, and of the Babylonian Empire of 626BC to 539BC (Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel being well known in scripture) – and how they speak of the fall of Babylon (Spiritual Babylon) in the end-times

What is the nature of Chapter 17?

Revelation Chapter 17

- *Chapter 17* is an Overview chapter, following on from the narrative about the Seven Bowl Judgements in *Chapter 16*
- This chapter gives an insight into Spiritual Babylon, its impact on the nations today and in the tribulation
- It is thought by some scholars that physical Babylon will be rebuilt by the Coming World Leader as his capital city – so the fall of Babylon will be both spiritual and physical
- This chapter also gives an insight into the events which will follow this chapter... the fall of Babylon (*Chapter 18*) and Heaven's rejoicing at her fall (*Chapter 19: 1-10*)
 - *Chapter 18* resumes the sequential story of the tribulation – the chapter speaks about the fall of both 'spiritual' Babylon and 'literal' or 'physical' Babylon – the culmination of the Lord's judgement on the rebellious earth
 - Babylon in *Chapter 18* is 'the great harlot' of *Chapter 17*

What do we know of the culture of Babylon and its transfer into the nations?

- All forms of occultic practices have had their origins in the original city of Babylon (Babel) – built in the land of Shinar – see *Genesis 10: 8-12, 11: 1-4*
- Babylonian Legend
 - Nimrod founded Babylon – See [Nimrod's Kingdom – Map & Bible References](#)
 - Tammuz, the son of Nimrod and his queen, Semiramis (a high priestess), are identified with the Babylonian Sun God
 - They are worshipped following the winter solstice (December 22-23)
 - Tammuz was said to die at the solstice (when the day is shortest and night longest) – the death celebrated by burning a 'Yule' log – and he was said to be reborn the day following – celebrated by having a trimmed tree in place of the Yule log (Do you recognize this today?)
 - Yule – the Chaldean word for infant
 - Semiramis – the earlier name for Thyatira
 - These pagan practices were absorbed into Christian practices when the Roman Empire adopted Christianity

- As Babylon was conquered by subsequent empires, this entire religious system was transplanted, first to Pergamos (*Revelation 2: 12-17*) and then to Rome
 - Note – the priests always follow the money
 - Pagan Rome was a Latin packaging of Babylonian practices
- As Christianity was established as the official state religion of Rome, many of the religious traditions and practices of the earlier pagan worship were adapted and incorporated, including:
 - Many of our traditions surrounding Christmas
 - The Babylonian worship of Ishtar, the Golden Egg of Astarte, and the fertility rites of spring – giving us Easter
 - The calendar year end, for some of the ancient empires, was October 31 with its associated occultic rituals – giving us Halloween
 - This was related to the worship of Baal (Mars) and may have been stimulated by the perturbations of the orbit of the Earth associated with the planet Mars
- Cyrus captured Babylon in 539BC (without a battle) and the Babylonian Empire fell and was succeeded by the Medo-Persian Empire (itself succeeded by the Greek Empire...then succeeded by the Roman Empire) – see *Daniel 2: 20-45*
 - Cyrus was God's instrument to release the Jews to return to their land and to rebuild Jerusalem (see *Isaiah 44: 24-28, 45: 1-13*)
 - Babylonian culture and practices were absorbed into these successive empires – hence the spiritual aspects of Babylon have perverted true worship in cultures throughout the ages
- Babylon – the city which is the root of all idolatry – stands in contrast to the holy city, Jerusalem the city of God – it is, in a sense, the anti-Jerusalem
- Babylon as a city was not destroyed when Cyrus captured it, but it was gradually superseded and neglected
 - Saddam Hussein spent much money rebuilding it (uncompleted)
 - Scripture suggests it will be rebuilt and again become the focus of all world systems; political, commercial and religious (see *Zechariah 5: 5-11*)
 - The judgement of Babylon will thus be both spiritual (idolatry) and physical (the city itself)

What do we know of spiritual Babylon?

- Babylon is the root of all idolatry
 - It is the worship of idols (false gods) – this includes:
 - Humanism – the worship of man and his achievements
 - Creation – the worship of the created rather than the Creator ...seen today in the 'Climate Change' agenda
 - Money – the worship of wealth by corrupt elites making themselves rich and others poor
 - Sexual Perversion – the worship and practice of sexual sin and perversion – today this would include the 'Trans' agenda
 - Power – the worship and seeking of power and control through war, or the subversion of laws and systems, or the subtle control of media subverting truth and promoting falsehoods
- Idolatry is the fundamental departure of man from obedience to God's first commandment: "*You shall have no other gods before Me.*" *Exodus 20: 3*

- It leads directly to the contravention of the second commandment: “*You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God,*” *Exodus 20: 4-5a*
- It subsequently leads to the failure to obey all the other commandments
- The Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, declares the idolatry and shamefulness of Babylon, both the ancient city and spiritual Babylon – see *Isaiah 47*
- Paul writes to the Romans about the results of idolatry, as God abandons man to its consequences (see *Romans 1: 18-32*)
 - Suppression of Truth
 - Failure to Glorify God
 - Futile Thinking
 - Darkened Hearts
 - Foolish ‘wisdom’
 - Worship of the created
 - Uncleanliness of Heart
 - Vile Passions
 - Debased Minds
 - Filled with Unrighteousness – sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful and approving of such practices
- In *Revelation chapter 17* the focus is on spiritual Babylon and its character
- In *Revelation chapter 18* the focus is on spiritual Babylon and her fall
- Babylon stands in direct contrast with the Jerusalem (The City of God), and the Woman Riding the Beast stands in direct contrast with Israel

See Supplementary Note 57: ‘The Two Cities and the Two Women’

Ch 17 Vs 1-6 The Scarlet Woman and the Scarlet Beast

The Angel’s Invitation to John

Verses 1-2

What is John invited to see and what is he told?

Verses 1-2

- John is once again invited to ‘come and see’ - see *Revelation 4: 1; 6: 1, 3, 5, and 7*
 - This time the invitation is by one of the 7 angels with the 7 bowls
- John is going to see the chief characters (the Scarlet Woman and the Scarlet Beast) and get an insight into their character and their roles in the Tribulation
 - In the next chapter John will see the judgement of the Scarlet Woman
- John is told he to be shown ‘the judgement of the great harlot’ (*verse 1*)
 - A harlot is a whore or prostitute – in scripture ‘harlotry’ is identified with idolatry, the worship of false gods – see *Jeremiah 3: 6-10*
 - Jerusalem was called a harlot because of her idolatry and sin (*Isaiah 1: 21*)
 - Other cities too were called harlots – Tyre (*Isaiah 23*), Nineveh (*Nahum 3*)
 - Israel herself was called harlot for her spiritual adultery, many times in the Bible (e.g. *Jeremiah 3: 1*)

- The great harlot sits upon ‘many waters’ – explained in *verse 15*
 - The picture is of a ruler seated on a throne, ruling the waters, which symbolize the nations of the world
 - ‘Many Waters’ – symbolising the nations of the world (see *verse 15*)
- Drunken Debauchery (*verse 2*)
 - The inhabitants of the earth are made drunk by ‘the wine of her fornication’ – the ‘earth-dwellers’ drink of the anti-Christ ‘wine’
 - This is speaking of idolatry and all its results
 - This pictures the world's people being swept up into the intoxication and sin of a false system of worship (including apostate churches) has happened throughout the ages – and will be especially so in the Tribulation
- She is the great seducer (*verse 2*)
- The kings of the earth commit fornication with her – governments and dictators actively engage with this worship of false gods – see *Revelation 14: 8*
 - The world's political leaders will ally themselves with the great harlot
 - Fornication here does not refer only to sexual sin, but to idolatry generally
 - All the world rulers will be absorbed into the empire of Satan's false Christ – the Coming World Leader (The Beast...from the Sea)
 - Prostitution in scripture frequently symbolizes idolatry or religious apostasy (see *Ezekiel 16: 30-34; Hosea 4: 14-15, 5: 3-4, 6: 7-10, 9: 1*)
- The root of harlotry (idolatry) is the dragon (Satan) and his deception of mankind (see *Revelation 20: 2-3*)

The Woman Riding the Beast

Verses 3-6

In the wilderness, who does John then see?

Verse 3

- John has been carried away ‘in the spirit’ (by the Holy Spirit) into the wilderness to see a woman riding a scarlet beast
 - Wilderness
 - A place of desolation (like the earth in the Tribulation)
 - A place where God leads and meets with His people (e.g. The Exodus)
 - A place where lone voices cry out the Lord's message (e.g. John the Baptist)
- The Woman rides a Scarlet Beast
 - The woman is the ‘great harlot’ mentioned in *verse 1*
 - The woman is revealed, in *verse 5*, to be Mystery, Babylon)
 - She is riding a Scarlet Beast who is revealed, in *verse 8* to be the Coming World Leader (often called the Antichrist)
 - This is somewhat surprising - one would think that the Beast would be riding (controlling) the Woman, not the other way round
 - It is however clear that Spiritual Babylon has been a driver (rider) of many civilisations and societies since the days of Nimrod... it is certainly evident in today's society
 - The Fourth Beast of Daniel's vision (*Daniel 7: 23-27*) is ‘The Beast’
 - The Beast from the Sea (the Antichrist) for a time will support and use the false religious system to effect world unity (*Revelation 13: 4*) – then he will assume political control (*Revelation 17: 16*)
 - Ultimately it will be the Beast who has all power over men as kings and kingdoms bow to him (see *verses 16-17*)

- The Beast, like all worldly leaders, is a worshipper of (controlled by) Spiritual Babylon and Idolatry (false worship)
- John Wesley comments “No wine can more thoroughly intoxicate those who drink it, than false zeal does the followers of the great whore”

How is the Beast described?

Verse 3

- The Beast is Scarlet
 - Scarlet is the colour of luxury, splendour, and royalty
 - It is also the colour of blood
 - It indicates the nature of the Beast – he will be magnificent and a ruler who will bring bloodshed
- The Greek word translated ‘beast’ is *thērion* which means a dangerous animal, a venomous or wild beast
- The Beast is distinguished by ‘names of blasphemy’ (*Revelation 13: 5*) – it is the Beast from the Sea – the Coming World Leader
 - It is because of his self-deification (see *Daniel 7: 25*; *2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4*)
- The Beast has seven heads and ten horns (see *Revelation 13: 1*) – a further identifying characteristic of the Beast from the Sea
 - The heads and horns are like the Beast’s master, the Dragon (Satan) – see *Revelation 12: 3*
 - The terrifying fourth beast in Daniel’s vision of successive empires had a growth of ten horns (kings) and also a little horn speaking ‘pompous words’ (blasphemies) – representing the Beast from the Sea (see *Daniel 7: 23-27*)
 - The heads and horns picture the extent of Beast’s political alliances
- This Beast is clearly identified later on in the chapter (in *verses 7-14*)

How is the Woman described?

Verses 4-5

- The woman’s apparel is described (*verse 4*)
 - Purple - the imperial colour of Rome
 - We live in the era of Rome II which will culminate and end with the Coming World Leader (The Beast)
 - Scarlet – the colour adopted by the Vatican as its thematic colour
 - Scarlet – like the Beast she is riding
 - Scarlet is the colour of luxury, splendour, and royalty
 - It is also the colour of blood
 - Adorned with Gold & Precious Stones
 - Gold – regal
 - Precious Stones – beauty
 - A counterfeit of the heavenly city – but it is Spiritual Babylon
- She carries a Golden Cup – Babylon’s cup (see *Jeremiah 51: 7*)
 - The cup is full of the abominations and filthiness of her fornications (idolatries)
 - It is full of the wine of her fornication (see *verse 2*)
 - This woman is attempting to rule – by intoxicating men and nations
 - Note that the Church doesn’t rule until her Lord rules
- She bears a name – on her forehead (like Beast worshippers – *Revelation 13: 16*)
 - It was customary for Roman prostitutes to wear a headband with their name on it (see *Jeremiah 3: 2-3*), parading their trade and wretchedness for all to see

- The harlot's forehead is emblazoned with a threefold title descriptive of the world's final false religious system.
- The name is in CAPITAL letters in the text – this is very rare in Bible text – the name of the Lord is capitalised in *Jeremiah 23: 6* and *Revelation 19: 16*
- Mystery (Greek: *mustērion*) refers to a secret (iniquity) that is now revealed
 - There is a contrast here with the mystery of the true church - see *Ephesians 3: 3-6* and *Colossians 1: 26-27*
- Babylon the Great – a great city of wickedness – but here meaning Spiritual Babylon (Mystery, Babylon) – its idolatry and its outworking
- Mother of Harlots
 - Greek (*mētēr pornē*) mother of strumpets – all idolatry has its root in Babel (Babylon) ... in the Tribulation it is Spiritual Babylon in all its fulness and depravity
 - Harlots (plural) – she is the mother (root) of many false religions and idolatries and false worship
- Of the Abominations of the Earth
 - Abominations (plural) – Greek: *bdelugma*, meaning detestations, specifically, in context, idolatries
 - She is the root of many types of iniquity and evil
 - Blasphemy – any attempt to add to / change what God has done and said – this woman (Spiritual Babylon) is the root of all blasphemy (*verse 3*)
- This religious system is already apparent today in the apostate church which compromises morally and ethically with the society around it
- This spiritual idolatry is very prevalent today in the world's humanism, creation worship, and its pursuit of money, sex and power
- The woman is portrayed as a prostitute who has plied her trade successfully and become extremely wealthy
 - Prostitutes often dress in fine clothes and precious jewels to allure their victims (see *Proverbs 7: 10*)
 - The religious harlot Babylon is no different, adorning herself to lure the nations into her grasp
 - The Golden Cup is another evidence of the harlot's great wealth; but the pure gold is defiled by the filthiness of her immorality
 - Just as a prostitute might first get her victim drunk, so the harlot system of Babylon deceives the nations into committing spiritual fornication with her

What is the final thing John sees about the Woman?

Verse 6

- The woman is drunk – with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Yeshua
- The nations drink of the cup of the Woman's fornications (idolatries) – but the Woman drinks the blood of the saints and the blood of martyrs (both the followers of the Lord) – and on that she gets drunk!
 - A drunken Woman riding a powerful Beast should make us question...who is really in control?
 - The Beast will feign loyalty and acceptance of the false religious system of Mystery Babylon – but ultimately he desires worship of himself
- Some see the first group as OT saints, and the second as NT saints – an unimportant distinction since this pictures saints of all ages (many of them persecuted) and the martyrs (martyrs throughout the ages, including in the Tribulation)

- The harlot is a murderer and persecutor, drinking the blood of saints and martyrs – it is the blood of believers whose lives have been subject to persecution and reviling in all ages
- It is the blood of the martyrs of the OT age and the church age, and the blood of the tribulation martyrs (*Revelation 6: 9-11*) particularly
- Spiritual Babylon is full, but never satisfied, with the oppression, persecution and martyrdom of the followers of Yeshua
- False religion (both ‘church’ and worldly), has killed millions of believers over the centuries; and the final false system will be far more deadly than any that preceded it
- John is astonished and amazed at the revelation of this mystery
 - He has been given an understanding of what I going on behind the scenes in the end-times
 - In similar manner Daniel was greatly affected by the vision of the four beasts (*Daniel 7: 28*)
- The Woman Rides the Beast – a book by Dave Hunt (recommended by Chuck Missler and many others)
 - Makes a clear link between the Woman who rides the beast and the Roman Catholic Church (the Vatican)
 - The identity of the Woman is not limited to the Vatican – but Roman Catholicism has many of the characteristics of the woman
 - The RC church has murdered more believing Christians than any other organisation in history
 - The RC church is the source of much idolatry and false representation of God and denial of the true gospel
 - No wonder John is amazed – since so much Christian blood is on the hands of the supposed Holy Church

Ch 17 Vs 7-18 The Woman and the Beast Explained

The Mystery

Verse 7

What is the mystery that the Angel will explain?

Verse 7

- The angel asks John ‘Why did you marvel?’ – as though John should have known
 - The identity of the woman was told to John – she is Babylon (*verses 4 & 5*)
 - John would, or should, have known that Babylon is the root of all spiritual idolatry and wickedness
 - Physical Babylon may well be rebuilt in the Tribulation and be a focal point for the false worship of the Beast led by the False Prophet
 - John would know, from earlier in this book (*Revelation 13*), about this end-time character and the idolatry he leads and becomes the focus
 - Both Spiritual Babylon and Physical Babylon are harlotry and idolatry – which should not be a mystery to John
 - The identity of the Beast – the Coming World Leader – and the political and religious system he leads – John would also understand, from the things he had seen earlier in *Revelation 13*
 - John would have recognised the description of seven heads and ten horns (in *verse 3*) as relating to the Beast from the Sea from an earlier vision and encounter (*Revelation 13: 1*)

- So John would understand the Beast as the Coming World Leader
- So what is the Mystery?
 - What probably was mysterious to John would be the significance of the seven heads and ten horns
 - The Beast's origins would be a mystery also
 - It would also be a mystery that the Beast will fully support the harlot and they together exert vast influence over the whole earth
 - It may seem that the woman rides, takes advantage of, uses and controls (to some extent) this Beast – a mystery in the light of who the Beast really is
 - The Beast will ultimately turn and consume her (*verse 16*)
- Hence the focus of the angel's explanations in the remainder of this chapter are on the Beast and his origins, his rise to power, and his end

The Mystery of the Beast

Verse 8

What is the mystery of the Beast's origins?

Verse 8

- The beast – both a ruler and his kingdom are referred to by this term
- The beast... “Was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition” – counterfeit of the Lord (*Revelation 1: 8*)
 - This portrays a political/religious system that existed at one time, then disappeared and then re-emerges
 - Hence Bible scholars associate this with the revived Roman Empire (Rome II) – feet of iron and clay in the image in *Daniel 2*
 - Rome was not conquered but it broke into many pieces
 - Whilst there have been many rulers and nations of power since Rome I. they have all been influenced and reflect the culture of Rome – its politics, its society, and its idolatry – we are living in the days of Rome II
 - It also portrays the Beast himself – it is a reference to his false resurrection (see *Revelation 13: 3-4, 12, 14*)
 - The Beast will ascend out of the bottomless pit; Greek – *abussos* meaning depthless, an abyss
 - The Bottomless Pit is where the demonic locust army (*Revelation 9: 1-3*) came from, whose ‘king’ is named Abaddon (Hebrew) or Apollyon (Greek) meaning destroyer (*Revelation 9: 11*)
 - It indicates that the Beast is demonic (demons often attempt to find a human occupancy)
 - The ‘resurrected’ Beast may be simply a demon from the abyss, or he may be a human resurrected under demonic power and possessed by a demon from the abyss
 - The Beast's end is ‘Perdition’; Greek: *apōleia*, meaning ruin or destruction – indicating eternal destruction (see *Revelation 19: 20*) in the Lake of Fire
- Earth Dwellers will Marvel at the Scarlet Beast
 - The revival of the empire (Rome II) and the appearance of its charismatic leader will cause the world of unbelievers to marvel
 - Those ‘who dwell on the earth’ – earth-dwellers, those whose life and identity are bound to the earth and its systems and idolatries
 - This is in contrast to those whose names are written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world

- These are the Church; Greek: *ekklēsia*, meaning ‘called out ones’
- The Book of Life – the roll of the elect, written in eternity past by God
- Only the elect will escape the Antichrist's deception

The Seven Heads and Seven Kings

Verses 9-11

What is John told about the Beast's Seven Heads and what do we understand from it?

- The Mind which has Wisdom – Greek: *nous echō sophia*, meaning intellect that holds wisdom (wisdom here can mean both worldly and spiritual)
- The Seven Heads and Seven Kings – reveal the mystery of the Beast's Power
- There are Seven Heads – Mountains on which the woman sits
 - The Greek word (*oros*) translated as ‘mountains’ is often used of hills
 - Mountains are idiomatic of governments (see *Daniel 2: 34-35* – God's kingdom – a stone became a mountain filling the earth)
- Many commentators interpret this expression to mean Rome, which sits on seven hills – or more specifically Rome I and Rome II
 - The final worldwide system of false religion includes, but is not necessarily limited to, Rome – so the meaning here is not limited to Rome (the city or empire), thus there are seven governments on which the woman sits (rides or controls)
 - The Idolatry of Spiritual Babylon is a controlling factor in these seven kingdoms
- There are Seven Kings (Greek: *basileus*, meaning sovereign or king)
 - In Hebrew the word for kings and kingdoms are the same – so the context leads us to understand seven kingdoms
 - Five have fallen (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece,
 - One now is (Rome I) – in John's day
 - One is yet to come (Rome II) – the nations today, which are both diverse and one (e.g. the UN) yet all consumed by (ridden by) the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet (spiritual idolatry in all its forms)
 - The Beast (that was and is not) is the eighth – a king that rises up after the seven, in the Tribulation – The Beast from the Sea (*Revelation 13*), the Coming World Leader (often called the Antichrist)
 - He is ‘of the seven’ – he arises out of the previous kingdoms – particularly out of the nations in the end-times (today) where powerful elites control and manipulate peoples and nations
 - He goes to perdition (see *verse 8*) – his doom is declared (detailed in *Revelation 19: 20*)... the same fate as his master, Satan (see *Revelation 20: 1-3, 10*)
 - The Seven Kings / Kingdoms
 - When John wrote; the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Greek empires had gone out of existence
 - Rome (Rome I) still existed - the revived Rome (Rome II) – the days in which we live now – was yet to come
 - The Eighth King / Kingdom – the Antichrist's empire, has not yet come – but when it comes it will be brief (7 years of Tribulation) – see *Matthew 24: 22*

See Supplementary Note 58: ‘Satan's Seven Super-Kingdoms’

What is John told about the Beast's Ten Horns and what do we understand from it?

- The Ten Horns are Ten Kings
 - They have received no kingdom as yet – they had yet to come in John's day
 - They have yet to come in our day – for they are kings who receive their authority from the Beast (the coming world leader)
 - It seems that in the end times the world political map will transform into ten kingdoms under control of the Coming World Leader
 - They receive authority from Satan (the ruler of this world) – via the Beast (Satan's Coming World Leader) for one hour (a short time)
 - It seems there will be 10 kingdoms in the end times
 - It seems, from *Daniel 7: 7-8, 23-24*, that three of these kingdoms will be put down by the beast
 - Ultimately the beast desires complete control and worship for himself – this happens at the mid-point of the 7-year tribulation – hence the 'one hour' relates to the first 3½ years of the Tribulation period
- They have one mind – their purposes, policies and ethos are the same – they are ridden by the whore Babylon
- The Beast is the 'little horn' (*Daniel 7: 8*) which comes up among the other horns
- The 'little horn' has eyes and a mouth speaking pompous words (*Daniel 7: 20*) which is a characteristic of the Beast from the Sea (*Revelation 13: 1, 5-6*)
- These Ten Kings give their power (Greek: *dunamis*) and authority (Greek: *exousia*) to the beast – they received their power as kings from the Beast
 - This indicates that they do not act on their own but are under the authority and direction of the Beast
 - The word translated as 'authority (NKJV) means ability, strength or privilege
- The Beast rises up in the midst of them (the 11th or little horn) and they submit to him (see *Revelation 13: 7-8*)
 - This indicates a possibility that these Kings exist prior to the public appearance of the Coming World Leader (but they act under his control from the start) – giving credence to what we sense today of leaders acting at the behest of hidden power(s) – often called illuminati or dark forces
 - The Coming World Leader comes to prominence at the start of the tribulation when he 'confirms a covenant with the many' (*Daniel 9: 27*)
 - This may mean a covenant with peoples and nations – but I sense it is (as the book of Revelation is after chapter 3) Israel focussed
 - My sense is that, following the war of Ezekiel chapters 38 & 39, the Coming World Leader brings peace by confirming the Land Covenant (see *Genesis 12: 5-9, 13: 14-18, 15: 18-21*) with Israel

What is John told about the Final Battle?

- The kings, kingdoms and the beast make war with the Lamb
 - Although the battle will be in Israel, the nations and the Beast are coming against the Lord

- This is a further description of the battle which rages from Megiddo (they gather at Armageddon) to Bozrah and culminates in a battle in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (see *Revelation 16: 16, 19: 17-21; Joel 3: 1-3; Zechariah 13: 1-9, 14: 1-3; Isaiah 34: 1-8, 63: 1-6; Micah 2: 12-13*)
- The Lamb (Yeshua) will overcome them – Hallelujah! (*Revelation 19: 11-15, 17-21*)
 - He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings (*Revelation 19: 16*)

Who are ‘those who are with Him’?

- There is an army with the Lamb (see *Revelation 19: 14*) – they are:
 - Clothed in fine linen, white and clean – see *Revelation 19: 7-8; Jude 1: 14*
 - They follow Him on white horses – in order to stay with Him, for He rides a white horse – see *Revelation 19: 11*
- Those with Him are Saints, including Tribulation Saints (*Revelation 7: 13*)
- They are described as being:
 - Called – see *Romans 8: 30, Ephesians 4: 4; 1 Thessalonians 2: 12*
 - Chosen – see *John 15: 16; Ephesians 1: 4; 2 Thessalonians 2: 13*
 - Faithful - see *Matthew 25: 21; Luke 12: 42; 2 Thessalonians 3: 3*
- Those with Him in *verse 14* are clearly the redeemed and glorified church
- The Lord will also come with His holy angels (*Matthew 25: 31*)

The Harlot and the Ten Horns

Verses 15-18

What is John told about the Rule and the End of The Harlot?

- The Harlot – Her Rule *Verse 15*
 - The woman (harlot) sits on many waters (*verse 1*) – that is, many peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues
 - Waters are used idiomatically in scripture of the unrest (like a tossing sea) of peoples and nations (see *Isaiah 57: 20-21*)
 - This harlot dominates vast numbers of peoples and nations – the nations follow Babylonian idolatry (false worship) – she is Spiritual Babylon
 - She is reminiscent of Jezebel, who is spoken of in the Letter to the Church at Thyatira – the church which speaks of the Medieval Church (Roman Catholicism and its ‘pagan’ practices)
 - Thyatira is promised that it will go through the great tribulation unless it repents (*Revelation 2: 22*)
 - The spiritual personality of the woman is the ‘harlot’ idolatry of the world which worships idols of many types and natures – see earlier notes on ‘Spiritual Babylon’
 - The religious personality of the woman is the ‘harlot’ apostate church – it seems that at the end the world rulers will turn even on the apostate church
 - We today live in the days of the Laodicean church full of apostasy and false worship (*Revelation 3: 14-22*)
- The Harlot – Her End *Verses 16-17*
 - The ten horns (kingdoms) hate the harlot (whore)
 - The Harlot is called here ‘whore’ (KJV) – a derogatory term for a harlot
 - She is ultimately a competitor to the domination of the nations by these 10 kings / kingdoms

- God puts into the hearts of the ten kings such desires and hatred that will fulfil His purposes (*verse 17*) – His purposes for the Tribulation Period relate to Judgement on Idolatry and Wickedness, and to His purposes for Israel (as set out in *Daniel 9: 24*)
- God is able to achieve His purposes through anyone
 - Cyrus – *Isaiah 44: 28, 45: 1-4*
 - Kings – *Proverbs 21: 1*
- After using the false religious system to unify the world kingdoms and gain control of all, the Coming World Leader (the Beast / Antichrist) – with the help of his ten sub-rulers – will turn against the system, plunder and destroy it, and seize all power and worship for himself
- The End of the Harlot (Spiritual Babylon)
 - She is made Desolate (Greek: *erēmoō*, meaning to lay waste) and Naked (Greek: *gumnos*, meaning nude) – the kings Eat her Flesh and Burn her with Fire – she is totally consumed
- The system of Spiritual Babylon is replaced by the worship of the Beast (a false Christ)
 - Half way through the 7-year Tribulation period the Coming World leader shows his true colours (*Daniel 9: 27*)
 - The Ten Horns give their kingdoms to the beast – the Coming World Leader achieves world dominance and control
 - He will thus be both politically dominant and be the focus of the world's worship (see *Revelation 13: 7-8*) – this is achieved through the False Apostle (see *Revelation 13: 11-17*) – ultimately the words of God are fulfilled – His sovereign purposes cannot be thwarted – see *Daniel 9: 24*

What is John told about the Woman's Identity & Power?

- The Harlot – Her Identity *Verse 18*
 - The Woman Riding the Beast
 - She is not the beast, but she initially exploits the beast, but is eventually destroyed by him through the kings submissive to him (*verses 16-17*)
 - Mystery Babylon, as a false religious system, has been identified with Rome from the early centuries, and still is today
 - Many erroneously associate the Pope with the anti-Christ – he may be one incarnation of the woman riding the beast, but he is not the only type of Spiritual Idolatry; nor is he the beast himself
 - The identity of the woman – she is the great city that reigns over the kings of the earth (the root being Babylon – hence her name Mystery, Babylon)
 - Present tense – this woman ruled in John's day
 - Rome was the ruling power in John's day and was then the current incarnation of the old Babylonian idolatry – it may be that in the end-times Babylon is rebuilt and becomes the seat of the Coming World Leader
 - This woman rules today – she is Spiritual Babylon (idolatry)
 - The World System and Society worship many idols – the influence of Spiritual Babylon is everywhere
 - Governments and Elites are motivated by power and wealth
 - The Roman Catholic Church still today seeks temporal power
 - The Denominational Church is riddled with apostasy

The European Union

It is interesting that the EU has statues depicting the woman riding the beast – could it signify that the EU is a representation of Spiritual Babylon?

One statue is in front of the Louise Weiss Building in Strasbourg, home of the EU Parliament.

Another is in front of the Brussels HQ of the Council of Europe

Depictions also appear on coins of the Euro currency



The Woman Riding the Beast
In front of the Louise Weiss Building in Strasbourg, home of the EU Parliament.



The Woman Riding the Beast
In front of the Brussels HQ of the Council of Europe
The bronze statue of a woman riding a beast, and the beast is depicted riding on waves, just as in Revelation