

Revelation Chapter 17 — Babylon is Fallen, is Fallen!!

The Destruction of “Religious” Babylon

Isaiah 21.9 *And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen**; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.*

Revelation 14.8 *And there followed another angel, saying, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen**, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

Revelation 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

Revelation 17:2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Revelation 17:3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

Revelation 17:5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Revelation 17:6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Revelation 17:7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Revelation 17:9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

Revelation 17:10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

Revelation 17:11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

Revelation 17:12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

Revelation 17:13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

Revelation 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and **the Lamb shall overcome them**: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful.

Revelation 17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Revelation 17:16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

Revelation 17:17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

Revelation 17:18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

INTRODUCTION¹

As a reminder, **Chapters 17 and 18 are an amplification of one of the main features of the Tribulation, the place, function, and final judgment of Babylon**, described in detail. Seeing and understanding this dual concept of Babylon—the religious and politico-economic—is the key to understanding chapters 17 and 18.²

These two chapters do not follow the seven bowls. In fact, nothing follows the seven bowls except the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the judgments associated with His return.

- Chapter 17 is the **destruction of religious Babylon**, which will happen at the midpoint of the Tribulation when the beast is finished using her as a means to his rise to power.
- Chapter 18 is the **destruction of political (economic or commercial) Babylon** as it is embodied in the city of Babylon, the headquarters of the beast, which will happen at the end of the Tribulation, in conjunction with the seventh bowl and the Second Coming.³

Babylon is fallen, is fallen is the theme of the next two chapters we are looking at in the book of Revelation. We're looking at the **ultimate destruction of evil**: and [in Chapter 17] we deal more specifically with the **destruction of all false religion**.

C. S. Lewis wrote a book entitled *The Screwtape Letters*, in which Screwtape, an older wiser demon is giving advice to his nephew, a younger demon named Wormwood. The final section of the book, "*Screwtape Proposes a Toast*," ...includes these words from Screwtape:

*All said and done, my friends, it will be an ill day for us if what most humans mean by religion ever vanishes from the earth. **Nowhere do we tempt so successfully as on the very steps of the altar.***

Lewis' point in that poignant quote is that **false religion in all of its forms is inspired by and is used by the devil like no other weapon in his arsenal. False religion has always been Satan's greatest tool.** It's not lust: that's part of the world system he created. **His greatest deception is to deceive the minds of people from the truth.**

2Corinthians 4.4 *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

How does he *blind eyes*? He does that through **religion**; ...through **false religion**.⁴

During the coming seven year tribulation, false religion will have its greatest day.

So, let's start as we begin our study tonight by looking at the Destruction of Religious Babylon.⁵

I. The Lord will unveil what I need to know about what *His position* is on things coming to pass in judgment, telling me ***before it come[s] to pass, that, when it is come to pass***, I might ***believe***,⁶

opening my eyes **to be able to do the will of Him that sent me and finish His work,* and not be found sleeping** but stay **wide awake (alert, watchful, cautious, and on guard)** and **sober (calm, collected, and circumspect), loving the Truth and not being deceived.**⁷

1Thessalonians 5.5-6 ⁵*For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we do not belong either to the night or to darkness.* ⁶*Accordingly then, let us not sleep, as the rest do, but let us keep wide awake (alert, watchful, cautious, and on our guard) and let us be sober (calm, collected, and circumspect).*

***John 4.34** Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

1Corinthians 3:1-3 *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.* ² *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* ³ *For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

Hebrews 5.13-14 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But **strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

His work is found in the next few verses:

John 4.35-38 ³⁵*Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, **Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.***

³⁶ ***And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.*** ³⁷ *And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.* ³⁸ ***I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.***

Revelation 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore* that sitteth upon many waters:**

Revelation 17:2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.***

Revelation 17.3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ****

Revelation 17:4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: ☀

Revelation 17:5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. †

Revelation 17:6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus;†† and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. †††

* One of the seven angels then who had poured out the seven bowls of wrath that we just read about and studied in chapter 16, came and spoke with John. We aren't told which of the seven angels so we can't be certain. However, I think it's reasonable to assume that there's a decent chance that it

was the seventh angel whose bowl actually included judgment on Babylon (according to Revelation 16.19). This is the very first time in the book of Revelation of what will be several times moving forward, when an angel will explain a vision to John.

The angel “spoke with [John] saying, ‘*Come here, I will show you,*’ and [then] describes to John thus to us, the false religious system that will blanket the earth during the Tribulation period. He understandably describes that religious system **as a harlot or as a prostitute**.

Those words are exactly the same words that an angel will later use.

Revelation 21.9: *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, [sounds almost identical. And watch this:] ‘Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.’*

Note that even as the Lord is unveiling the truths of Revelation to John, He is doing so immediately preceding the events that will happen... Everything is revealed *progressively*... Now that the 7th trumpet has been blown, as seen in **Revelation 11.15**, an *Interlude* occurs in Chapters 12-14 where the Lord prepares John for what He is even going to **tell him** about when the bowls will be poured out, which in Revelation are in Chapter 16.2-21. Even after the *Interlude*, Revelation 15 picks up chronologically but gives John a complete view of what is going on from heaven’s perspective. This is all to **pre-pare** him for the dispensing of the 7 bowls of wrath.

We need to get ahold of the fact that the Lord will prepare us for what we need to know **when we need to know it**.

It is obvious that the Lord intended ...an intentional contrast here between this harlot representing all false religion and the Lamb’s bride, or the true church.

[What is the] angel [going to] show John? **“...the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.”** The angel invited John to come with him so John could witness the judgment. The Greek word for “**judgment**” means both the “**verdict**” and “**the sentence**” **carried out**. The angel wants John to see, and hold onto the **judgment** and **verdict** of the harlot so that he realizes that God is in control and God is Victor.

Note that this harlot is not an actual person. ...In Scripture, the word “harlot” or “prostitute” is often used as a metaphor for *false religion*; for *idolatry*; and even for *apostacy*, that is, **those who have turned from the true faith to some aberration or departure from it**. See Endnote ⁸ for Scriptures that show that the kind of harlotry or prostitution he is talking about is **spiritual—it’s idolatry**.

** Notice she’s described here as “sitting on many waters.” In the ancient world, cities, especially great and influential cities, were always located near a perpetual source of water. The ancient city of Babylon itself was located on the Euphrates River, many canals and irrigation streams. In **Jeremiah 51:13**, Jeremiah describes that ancient city and its inhabitants as “*you who dwell by many waters.*” The angel here explains its meaning.

Revelation 17.15: *And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

This idea of the harlot sitting on the many waters, says that her influence will blanket the planet in the same way that our oceans blanket the planet. **The entire world will be under the power and influence of this final false religious system and her power and influence will dominate all levels of society.**

*** **This harlot, this prostitute, seduces the entire world into false religion.** It includes both **pagan idolatry**, that will be existing in the time of the Tribulation, **as well as a perverted apostate Christianity** which will also exist during the time of the Tribulation period. In fact, seven times in this chapter, John uses words related to prostitution. Here's the angel's point to John: the final ecumenical world religion, the uniting of all the world's religions into one will be a spiritual prostitute.

"With whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality." As has often been true with false religions throughout history. This final world religious system, this ecumenical amalgamation/**merging** of religions across the world will exercise immense political influence. The kings of the earth, the leaders of the world's nations, **will be willing for politically expedient reasons to join, to align themselves with it.**

Verse 2 goes on to say that not just the kings, but **"those who dwell on the earth."** That expression is used throughout Revelation for all unbelievers. All unbelievers living at that time will join themselves, **either for personal advantage or out of passionate faith, to Antichrist's false religious system.** And **they will be so committed to it, they will be so enamored with it, that it will seem as if they are drunk on it—intoxicated with it.**

**** How will this happen? **How can an entire planet of people be convinced?** Well, notice in verse 3 the **source** of the harlot's power. *"And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness."* At this point, the scene in John's vision suddenly changes and he finds himself in a wilderness, a deserted desolate place. **There** John says, "I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast." **The woman here is clearly the prostitute the angel had been talking about in verses 1 and 2. In this case, in verse 3, she is "sitting on" which implies being supported by "a scarlet beast."** Now the description of this beast, as it unfolds, makes it very clear that we are talking about the Antichrist, the political world ruler who will dominate the Tribulation period. If you doubt that, go back to Revelation 13.1, describing him.

Revelation 13.1 *Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads. [Note: All of these things are identical to what we are going to see in chapter 17.] And on his horns were 10 diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.*

We are talking about that beast—we are talking about the Antichrist who will be **bestly in his character and rule.**

The color of this beast is seen here for the first time: he's **scarlet**. In Scripture, **scarlet** has some interesting associations. It is associated most often with luxury and royalty. But it is also associated with sin.

Isaiah 1:18, *"Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow."*

It is associated as well with bloodshed. ...[A]ll of those things are likely implied here. **Antichrist will a king. He will be royalty but royalty that is characterized by sin and luxury and brutal violence.** John goes on to describe the beast in other ways. He's *"full of blasphemous names."* We just read in Revelation 13.1: *"on his heads were blasphemous names."* **Here, they cover his entire body.** Why is he described as being full of blasphemous names?

- Because of the names and titles of deity which he claims for himself.

2Thessalonians 2.4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

We are told that when he destroys the worship in the Temple in Jerusalem in the middle point of the Tribulation period, he will set up an image of himself and he will display himself as god.

- Because of the arrogant words he will speak against the true God. He not only claims to be God himself, but **he denigrates/defames the true God**. Back in Daniel when we were studying through Daniel, we saw what he will do.

Daniel 7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

Daniel 11:36 And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

...The scarlet beast on which the harlot sits as, is described here as “*having seven heads and ten horns*.” **This describes his political power and his alliances.** We will look at that further as we progress in this chapter, and discover that the seven heads are described as seven mountains on which the women sits, likely seven kingdoms as well as seven kings. In Revelation 17.12-13, the ten horns are explicitly described as ten kings who will rule in the last days under Antichrist. **Understand this: under Antichrist, there will be no separation of church and state.**

Verse 3 is describing here **the fact, listen carefully, that for a time, Antichrist and this false religious system will co-exist supporting one another.** For the first three-and-a-half years of the Tribulation, Antichrist will support this false religious system where all of the false religions of the world come together into one wonderful, “let’s shake hands, let’s all be friends” kind of one-world faith. He will use that to his advantage to build his empire, to build his kingdom.

However, eventually Antichrist will change his tune:

Preview **Revelation 17.16 (AMP) And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will [be the very ones to] hate the harlot (the idolatrous woman); they will make her cheerless (bereaved, desolate), and they will strip her and eat up her flesh and utterly consume her with fire.**

That’s pretty descriptive. They are going to turn on this false religious system and say, “Okay, you helped us build the empire, we are done with you.”

Likely during the first half of the Tribulation **Antichrist will align himself with and support this false religious system made up of all of these different world religions.** First they are going to still be here. They come together. They finally get it together and they unite as they always have in their hatred of the true God and of the Saints.

They will support each other. The harlot rides around on the beast. He supports her. Gives her power. **But at the mid-point of the Tribulation, when Antichrist appears to have been killed and resurrected, he turns against all other false religions in the world, and he destroys them, and he has one final great world religion—and it is himself. He refuses to allow any other worship but the worship of himself.**

Revelation 13:11-15 *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. ¹² And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast (that is, the Antichrist) before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³ And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, ¹⁴ And*

deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. ¹⁵ And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

There is this bizarre amalgamation of false religions in the first three-and-a-half years. The Muslims, and the Mormons and you name it, all the false religions will join together into one great happy family and Antichrist will use them to build his empire. But at the mid-point of the Tribulation, when he appears to suffer a fatal wound and he is resurrected, then he and the false prophet will say, “*Enough with those people.*” And he will set up an image of himself in the temple: 2 Thessalonians talks about it, Daniel talks about it, Jesus refers to it as the “*Abomination of Desolation.*” **He will do away with all other false worship, and he alone will be the object of false worship.** But until he turns against this religious system, verse 3 tells us, “***He will be the source of its power.***”

☀ In verse 4 we see the symbols of the harlot’s prosperity. Prostitutes often dress to draw attention to themselves and the same will be true for the harlot Babylon. “*The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet.*” Because of the difficulty of dyeing fabrics and dark colors, **there were very few ways to get that kind of color in a garment:** it was a difficult process. The materials were hard to come by, particular berries or particular snails were the only ways you could dye certain fabrics those colors. As a result, those colors were the colors worn by royalty. Purple and scarlet. They represented prosperity, nobility, wealth and she is decked out in purple and scarlet.

In the **Supplement to Revelation Bible Study Babylon**, we studied more extensively the fact that the colors of *purple, scarlet, gold*, and jewels also **mimic and mock the furnishings and building of the Tabernacle.**⁹

Verse 4 goes on to say she was “*adorned with gold.*” Literally “**made gold with gold**” is what the text says. She wore so much gold that she appeared golden. In addition, *she adorned herself, notice, with “precious stones and pearls.”* We saw in the **Supplement** how gold and fine gemstones were also copying the materials used for the tabernacle reflecting the true Temple of God in the heavens:

Gold—Represents Deity (Highest value on earth)

Jewels—The dedication of jewels to the Tabernacle reflects the Israelites’ devotion and willingness to offer their most valuable possessions for the service of God. This act of giving was not merely a physical contribution but a spiritual one, symbolizing the heart’s dedication to God. The use of jewels in the Tabernacle also points to the beauty and majesty of God’s presence, as well as the richness of His covenant with Israel.¹⁰

Exodus 28.17-21 [describing the breastplate] *Place on it a setting of gemstones—four rows of stones: The first row shall be a ruby, a topaz, and an emerald; the second row shall be a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; the third row shall be a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row shall be a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. Mount these stones in gold filigree settings. The twelve stones are to correspond to the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes.*

The external splendor hides inward corruption. The gold cup that the woman wields is full of abominations, suggesting that her true essence is found in idolatry and moral filth. This

economic system—wealthy and attractive on the outside—apparently lures nations into materialism and self-serving indulgence.

That is not the only thing these adornments indicate though. Fine jewels [also] indicate her desire to make herself attractive and alluring to her victims, [while] also imply[ing] that she has been very successful in her evil trade and has become incredibly wealthy. Compare that to the simple clothes of the Bride of the Lamb.

Revelation 19.8 *It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

John notes this woman “*having in her hand a gold cup.*” That gold cup again underscores her wealth and royalty. If you were a normal person living in the first century, you didn’t have a gold cup. You had a clay cup and you had to replace it often because you often broke it. **She has a gold cup.** Notice it’s disgusting contents: this cup is “*full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality.*” In other words, **idolatry and all of the acts of worship associated with idolatry are unclean things and abominations to God.** In other words, **this religious system, will engage in literally everything that God hates. But it will be wealthy.** This future false religious system will be no different than all false religion throughout history. **It will use its power and influence over the souls of people to enrich itself.** We saw in the **Supplement ...Babylon**, that this economic system—wealthy and attractive on the outside—apparently lures nations into materialism and self-serving indulgence. That Revelation 18:13 mentions “slaves and human lives” as part of what the woman markets, we can presume that human trafficking and exploitation is bought and sold like candy or beverages. We can see that this economic system has become so powerful that it manipulates leaders, even the beast. From Revelation 13:17, we can see that this economic system plays a key role in persecuting those loyal to God, as those unwilling to take the beast’s mark are not able to buy or sell in the economic system.¹¹

That’s true whether you think of the scribes and the Pharisees in the first century or whether you think of [false religion] today. ...False religion in the Tribulation will be no different than false religion today. It will be very prosperous.

For an idea: (In 2025) Catholic Church \$2.5 Trillion, LDS Church \$100 Billion, Islamic Awqaf \$1.5 Trillion, Jehovah’s Witnesses \$100 Billion, Anglican and Seventh Day Adventists each \$30 Billion, Hillsong \$50 Million, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York \$25 Billion, United Church of Christ \$12 Billion, and Orthodox Church \$10 Billion.¹²

✚ The secret of the harlot’s name is covered extensively in **Supplement to Revelation Bible Study Babylon**. So we will not cover it here redundantly. Suffice it to ask as a reminder, though, that when God decides to give a name to the final world religious system where all of the false religions that exist at that time are brought together into one great ecumenical mass, what name makes the most sense? Babylon the Great. Just as the ancient city of Babylon spawned all false religion throughout history, this future Babylon will be the mother, the source and sustainer of every false religion that exists during that time.

✚✚ Sadly, then and now, prostitutes are often marked with substance abuse, either alcohol or drugs. But this prostitute representing all false religion at the end of the age, will be drunk, **not with**

alcohol but with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. The expression “*drunk with blood*” implies that she will have an insatiable thirst and lust for blood and violence. She will carry it out on a vast worldwide scale. And those who are involved in this, those who engage in this worldwide slaughter of believers, will be irrationally out of control. They will be like they are intoxicated—like they are drunk with blood.

There is a great irony here: this harlot will accept everyone into her ecumenical fold except all genuine Christians.

In other words, ***she persecutes true believers.*** So the name of this future, false, worldwide, united and uniform religion is ***Babylon.*** Just as the ancient city of Babylon spawned all the false religion that has unfolded throughout history, from the tower of Babel throughout history, **this future Babylon will be the mother, that is the source and the sustainer, of every false religion that exists during that time.**

When the verse reads *...with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus...*, it is probably not referring to two separate groups of people, but rather two descriptions of the same group. **It is talking about true believers.** False religion persecutes and murders believers in the true God for both of these reasons: **because they are saints and they live holy, Godly lives,** and because **[this world is not their home and they would rather lose the world than lose their souls** (Mark 8.36; Matthew 16.26).

2Timothy 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

Mark 8:36 *For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*

Matthew 16:26 *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

The reason that unbelieving religion hates believers for those reasons is because they can never manifest that. They persecute true believers because they see true witnesses of Jesus. They faithfully share the true Jesus and the biblical gospel which constantly confronts the evil in the lives of those in false religion. This description shouldn't surprise us. Remember, Satan is according to Jesus a **what? A murderer.** He has always been a murderer. **So, everyone under his control is a murderer.** Our hearts break with the violence we see in our world, and we need to understand that violence **does not originate in God.** Violence originates in Satan whom Jesus said was a “**liar and a murderer from the beginning.**” Satan is a murderer. God is the giver of life, and He is the only One who has the right to take it. But Satan, as he does with so many things, attempts to usurp God's position and to **take and destroy life. Under his direction, the propagators of false religion have killed countless believers through the centuries and in the Tribulation period, they will be the greatest massacre of believers that has ever been in human history.** ¹³

This image highlights the *harlot's* direct involvement in persecuting and killing believers by portraying her as *drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.* Scripture signifies her satisfaction in violence. This is a chilling reminder that worldly systems—if fully corrupted—do not merely ignore God's people but gain great satisfaction from violently opposing and destroying them. This can be historically observed under tyrannical rulers.

Within the Roman Empire, under emperors like Nero (AD 54-68) and Domitian (AD 81-96), Christians faced state-sponsored persecution, often losing their lives in brutal spectacles such as gladiator games or mass tortures. Many of these emperors demanded absolute allegiance, tolerating no rival worship. This provides one of many foreshadowings of the kingdom of the beast.

The *harlot*, who represents an economic infrastructure, conspires with the *beast* to root out faithful witnesses. Yet, from Revelation's overarching message, the saints ultimately "**overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb**" (Revelation 12:11). Their faithful witness, even unto death, is an example of what it means to be one who overcomes even as Jesus overcame (Revelation 3:21). Those who overcome (those who are victorious over sin and temptation) will gain immense rewards, including the reward of reigning with Christ in the new earth.

Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Revelation 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Revelation includes the ultimate irony that those who suffer as faithful witnesses and lose their lives for Jesus at the hands of a world tyrant will be given the reward to reign over the earth.

Revelation 20.4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

John **wondered greatly**. This is understandable, this horrifying portrayal would astonish anyone devoted to God. John was already familiar with Rome's brutality. He was exiled on Patmos and being persecuted for his own witness (Revelation 1:9). That he was astonished at this image indicates that this end-times brutality will make ancient Rome's cruelty pale in comparison.

But in times of extreme darkness, the call does not change—believers are to maintain their testimony, rely on God's power, and refuse to fear rejection, loss, or death.

Luke 12:4-7 *⁴And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. ⁵But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. ⁶Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? ⁷But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.*

Even the mightiest earthly powers cannot thwart God's redemptive plan.

All of these unfolding events remind us that we should keep our eyes on God, who is ultimately in control. When worldly systems seduce and then devour, **we can know that God is neither surprised nor overwhelmed. He is always on His throne.** Nothing transpires in this book of Revelation [or otherwise] that He does not first authorize.

God's throne room is referenced repeatedly in Revelation, constantly reminding us that God is in control. **This is difficult to remember when the world is spiraling into such chaos.** But final justice belongs to God, and He will make all things right. For those who remain faithful, not fearing death, and giving testimony of Christ's love, there is the promised blessing made by God in the opening verses of Revelation.

Revelation 1:3 *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

The events of Revelation call us to watchfulness and perseverance in resisting the world, confident that Jesus, the King of kings, will triumph in the end and greatly reward those who endure as faithful witnesses.¹⁴

✠✠✠ When I saw her,” this is John, when I saw this false religious system, “I wondered greatly.” The Greek word for wonder contains the concepts of both being appalled by dismay and fear, and being confused. John is appalled and confused. Verse 7, “And the angel said to me, ‘Why do you wonder?’” The angel says, there’s no reason to be dismayed and confused. “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.” John apparently didn’t understand the relationship between the false religious system here, and the Antichrist, since that’s where the angel focuses his explanation moving forward.¹⁵

There will be wide-spread preaching of the gospel, but genuine believers will be extremely persecuted. The reason for this is that other religious systems won’t pose a threat to the harlot’s system, they will all be eventually amalgamated, but true genuine Christianity will not join their ranks and will pose a threat; they will therefore be persecuted. The same is true today and we will face greater and greater pressure.¹⁶

Application Questions:

1. When I hear a messenger of the Lord saying unto **me**, “*Come hither; I will show unto you...*” do I follow the leading of the Lord to take the time to see what the Lord is trying to show me? How can I improve in this area?
2. How have I allowed God to **pre-prepare me** for what is ahead (*prepare = To cut off, or shave off, the superficial substance*)?
3. Am I positioning myself to get the *living Word* from the Lord by getting my *manna daily*? I believe God was showing the Israelites something that the bread had to be sought **daily** and was good only for that day, and anyone trying to hold onto the bread for successive days would find the bread was *rotted* for use on days after which it was given for specifically.
4. How has what is *wealthy and attractive on the outside* lured me into materialism and self-serving indulgence, and how have I taken steps against that lure in my life?
5. Am I *clothed in fine linen, bright and clean* (the *righteous acts of the saints*) (Revelation 19.8) or is my confidence in *looking good on the “outside”*?

Matthew 23.27-28 ²⁷Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. ²⁸ Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

1Samuel 16.7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

6. It is *times of extreme darkness...* am I *answering the call to maintain my testimony, regard God’s power and refuse to fear rejection, loss or death?* How does my life demonstrate that? How do I need to grow in that?
7. As the Lord unveils the Book of Revelation to me, do I see Him *more clearly*, and hear from Him directly, knowing *He is in charge, fixing my eyes upon Jesus as I run my race, reading, and hearing the words of this prophecy* and *keeping the things written therein*, knowing *the time is at hand?*

Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

II. John **wonders** (he *marveled* in amazement and horror, surprised—by something so *novel*, with *disapprobation*.) leading him closer to heavenly places to see and *be in a position to have revealed to him spiritually* the wisdom that *comes from above* and the mysteries of heaven explained to him; the earth dweller's **wonder** (reverence and admiration of the *beast* because of his worldly power) results in their continued allegiance to him and their names not being written in the Lamb's Book of Life; the mind that has **wisdom** can be shown that the harlot sits on 7 mountains: there are 7 kings: 5 fallen, 1 is, the other is not yet come, and when he comes must continue *a short space*; the beast (that was, is not) is the 8th king and is *of the 7th* and goes into **perdition**; the 10 horns (on the beast: v. 3) are 10 kings which haven't a kingdom as yet but receive power as kings *one hour with the beast* and these all have one mind and will give their power and strength unto the beast.

Shorter: *What makes you wonder aligns you with your destiny: "one hour" or eternal.* Wonder leads John closer to heavenly places to seek **wisdom from above**; while earth dwellers' *wonder* solidifies their **earthly, devilish wisdom**; the *mind with wisdom* can be shown that the harlot sits on 7 mountains: there are 7 kings: 5 fallen, 1 is, the other is not yet come, and when he comes must continue *a short space*; the beast (that was, is not) is the 8th king and is *of the 7th* and goes into **perdition**; the 10 horns (on the beast: v. 3) are 10 kings which haven't a kingdom as yet but receive power as kings one hour with the beast and these all have one mind and will give their power and strength unto the beast.

	Alignment with the Beast	Alignment with the Lord
What kind of <i>wonder</i>	Reverence/admiration of the beast and his worldly power.	Horror and amazement with disapprobation (moral disapproval/condemnation)
Shown by	<i>Earth dwellers</i>	John
Demonstration of	Lining up with the world	Lining up with the Lord
Receiving <i>wisdom</i>	From <i>beneath</i> (earthly, sensual, devilish, where envying and strife <i>is</i> , there <i>is</i> confusion and every evil work.)	From <i>above</i> (pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.)
Leads to	Name not written in Lamb's Book of Life	Positioning to hear mysteries of heaven explained
Seeking	Power for an hour with the beast	Eternity in heaven with the Lamb
Eternally...	Perdition	Heaven

Revelation 17:7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

*

Revelation 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and **go into perdition**: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that **was, and is not, and yet is.** **

Revelation 17:9 And here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. ✨ The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. ✨ ✨

Revelation 17:10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. †

Revelation 17:11 And the beast **that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven,** and **goeth into perdition.** † †

Revelation 17:12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. † † †

Revelation 17:13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. ❤

* The angel asks John: (17.7 AMP) ***Why do you wonder? I will explain to you the [secret symbolic meaning of the] mystery of the woman, as well as of the beast having the seven heads and ten horns that carries her.*** ...By the angel's question and description of the woman, he is almost assuring us that we don't need to wonder: we can trust the Lord to give us whatever we need for whatever we are going through. It is also reminding us that we should ***not marvel*** at the woman which appears in such pompous and religious attire. The Word of God has told us repeatedly to beware of those who *appear appear beautiful outwardly but inside are full of dead man's bones and uncleanness* (Matthew 23.27) and we already know that Satan *masquerades as an angel of light* (2 Corinthians 11.4).¹⁷

2Corinthians 2.1 (AMP) ...keep Satan from getting the advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his wiles and intentions.

Discernment shows the harlot to be empowered by Satan: ***destructive and deceptive. We should never be deceived by outward form or religiosity no matter how outwardly attractive or influential or powerful as is the case with this ecumenical and godless system.***¹⁸

** The scarlet beast on which the harlot rides has to be Antichrist, it basically briefly reviews the more detailed account we studied in Revelation 13:1-10, when we learned about the faked death and resurrection of Antichrist.

Revelation 13:3, "I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. ***And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast.***"

Revelation 13.12 refers to the second beast, the false prophet, "***He exercises all the authority of the first beast,***" that's Antichrist, "***in his presence. And he [the false prophet] makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast [Antichrist], whose fatal wound was healed.***"

...[A]s a result of this supposed death and resurrection of Antichrist, the False Prophet will then go on to deceive the world into worshipping Antichrist.

Revelation 13:14-15: ***And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on***

the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

That's what is condensed in our text:

Revelation 17:8a *"The beast that thou sawest was,"* that is he existed, *"and is not,"* that is for a time it seemed he did not exist, that he was dead, *"and and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit..."* (that is, *he is going to come up out of the Abyss (the bottomless pit)* [AMP])

This refers to his staged miraculous resurrection. We learned back in chapter 13 that **a demon who comes from the abyss where demons are imprisoned will indwell Antichrist, and he will become a massive, spiritually-demonically inspired ruler.** The revival of the last ruling empire is no natural phenomenon. Behind its rise is Satan himself.¹⁹

But Antichrist's story doesn't end with his temporary apparent success. Instead, verse 8 continues, *"... and go into perdition:..."* The word *perdition* is #684. ἀπώλεια *apoleia*, ap-o'-li-a; ...ruin or loss (physical, spiritual or eternal): — damnable(-nation), destruction. As we will learn, Christ himself will send Antichrist to the lake of fire.

Revelation 19.20 *"And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone."*

Now let's look at those verses through the eyes and hearts of the **earth dwellers**, who are going to be **amazed** at what appears to be the Antichrist's miraculous recovery. **The earth dweller's wonder was reverence and admiration of the beast because of his worldly power**, which we saw began back in Revelation 13.8 at the beginning of their allegiance and worship of the beast... This is the progression of their faith in the beast.

The earth dweller's wonder and amazement results in their names never being written in the Lamb's book of life as shown in **Revelation 13.8, 14.9-11, 17.8 and 20.15** below:

Revelation 13.8 *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

This was a defining moment for the earth dwellers.

Whose names **have not been written** is οὐ γέγραπται τὸ ὄνομα οὗτοῦ [ou gegraptai to onoma outou], perfect tense: *it has not been written, the name of him.* Unlike those who lacked faith in Sardis and would be **blotted out** of the Book of Life (Revelation 3:5), *these were never written in the book to begin with.* Therefore, their destiny in the Lake of Fire is guaranteed (Revelation 20:15) since their names are not written in the Book of Life.

An angel in Revelation 14.9-11 describes those that *worship the beast... their choice indicates an allegiance, which is sealed by them taking the mark of the beast.* They are forever lost. Even though they have not yet died, they are **irredeemable.**

Revelation 14.9-11 *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, ¹⁰ The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: ¹¹ And the smoke of their*

torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Revelation 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall **wonder**, #2296. **θαυμάζω *thaumazo*, thou-mad´-zo; from #2295; to wonder; by implication, to admire: — admire, have in admiration, marvel, wonder.** whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

The **end result** of their **faith in the beast**.

Revelation 20.15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Incredulous Disbelief of such Wickedness or In Awe of Worldly Power: What Makes Us WONDER?

It is interesting that a few verses earlier, in Revelation 17.6, John *wondered*, and in v. 7, the angel asked John why he *marveled* (#2296 same word as *wonder* that *those that dwell on the earth* did in Revelation 17.8. When **John** *marveled*, it was in *amazement and horror, surprised—by something novel*, with *disapprobation*, at seeing such a sight as the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Such *wonder* and *marvel* were directed at his incredulous disbelief of such wickedness, which he may or may not have directed at the Lord, and the angel may or may not have been prompted to give him spiritual insight as to what God was doing.

Revelation 17.6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered #2296. **θαυμάζω *thaumazo*, thou-mad´-zo; from #2295; to wonder; by implication, to admire: — admire, have in admiration, marvel, wonder.** with great 3173. μέγας *megas* admiration #2295 [the root of #2296]. θαῦμα *thau-ma*, *thos´-mah*; apparently from a form of 2300; wonder.

ADMIRA'TION, *noun* ... a compound emotion excited by something novel, rare, great, or excellent; applied to persons and their works. It often includes a slight degree of surprise. Thus, we view the solar system with *admiration*. *It has been sometimes used in an ill sense, denoting wonder with disapprobation* (moral disapproval; condemnation).

Your boldness I with admiration see. [Dryden]

When I saw her I wondered with great admiration Revelation 17:6.

<https://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/admiration>

Revelation 17:7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou **marvel?** #2296. **θαυμάζω *thaumazo*, thou-mad´-zo; from #2295; to wonder; by implication, to admire: — admire, have in admiration, marvel, wonder.** I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

This kind of *wonder* led John closer to heavenly places to see and ***be in a position to have revealed to him spiritually*** the wisdom that comes from above. See Endnote ²⁰ for Proverbs 2 to that end.

John's wonder and amazement results in godly wisdom:

Revelation 17:9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

Luke 7.35 (AMP) Yet wisdom is vindicated (shown to be true and divine) by all her children [by their life, character, and deeds].

✳ Having reviewed the crucial episode of the staged “resurrection” in the life of the Beast [with what we saw back in Chapter 13], the angel continues by explaining Antichrist's seven heads in this vision. When verse 9 states, “**Here is the mind which has wisdom**,” it is with an expression telling us that **what follows is going to be difficult to understand**, it's going to require wisdom to interpret. [Note: **Where** will that wisdom come from? **Above!** As we just saw above, let your wonder and amazement and horror, surprise—by these *novel occurrences*, with *disapprobation* (condemnation at what is wrong), **such as** seeing such a sight as *the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus* **look to God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and His Word for answers!** Such wonder and marvel should be directed at our **incredulous disbelief of such wickedness**, directed at the Lord, *keep on asking, keep on knocking, and keep on seeking spiritual insight as to what God is doing.*

Matthew 7.7-8 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: ⁸For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

1Cor 3.19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

When you don't know the answers, trust in what you **do know**. ***In fact, know that it could be frankly possible that only those living at the time of these events will fully comprehend them.***

Back to verse 9, letting us know that **what follows is going to be difficult to understand**, it's going to require wisdom to interpret. “*The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.*” If you're familiar with Revelation and you've heard *any teaching*, you know that ***many commentators, especially older commentators, tended to associate these seven mountains with the seven hills of Rome.*** They point out that a number of ancient writers refer to Rome as the city on seven hills, writers such as Cicero, Virgil, and so forth. *And they go on to argue that the harlot in this chapter, therefore, must be the Roman Catholic church.* **Now obviously, the Roman Catholic church teaches a false gospel, but ...this [cannot be] solely about the Roman Catholic church.** After all, the need for wisdom to understand this passage would be unnecessary if the seven mountains are a simple geographical reference to the city of Rome. In addition, it's interesting in the text, the harlot sits on the hills, but the seven hills actually belong to the Beast, not to her. *I think it's far more likely that when Antichrist's false religious system is described as sitting on seven mountains, it is metaphorical, in the same way that her sitting on the waters back in verse 1, and her sitting on a scarlet beast in verse 3 are also metaphorical.* (Reminder: we looked at the possibilities more extensively in the **Supplement to Revelation Bible Study Babylon**.

The statement, “**Here is the mind that has wisdom**” **is a warning**. *Only those who know this truth and accept it will be prepared to recognize and stand against the deception of this future system.* We saw the earth dweller's wonder was amazement and veneration directed toward the *power of the beast*, resulting in demonstrating their allegiance to him. It was a *different kind of “wisdom”* than the “wisdom from above” as shown clearly in Scripture.

James 3.13-17 (AMP) ¹³Who is there among you who is **wise** and intelligent? Then let him *by his noble living show forth his [good] works with the [unobtrusive] humility [which is the proper attribute] of true wisdom.* ¹⁴But *if you have bitter jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry, selfish ambition) in your hearts, do not pride yourselves on it and thus be in defiance*

*of and false to the Truth. ¹⁵This [superficial] wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual (animal), even devilish (demoniacal). ¹⁶ For wherever there is jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry and selfish ambition), there will also be confusion (unrest, disharmony, rebellion) and all sorts of evil and vile practices. ¹⁷ But **the wisdom from above is first of all pure (undefiled); then it is peace-loving, courteous (considerate, gentle). [It is willing to] yield to reason, full of compassion and good fruits; it is wholehearted and straightforward, impartial and unfeigned (free from doubts, wavering, and insincerity).***

Understanding God's truth always gives us the capacity, if we will use it, to recognize the enemy as the enemy.²¹

✳️✳️ But what **is** the metaphorical meaning? What **are** these “seven mountains?” John tells us in verse 10, “**And they are seven kings.**” That is not surprising, since the Old Testament sometimes uses mountains as a metaphor for rule or power. In this passage then, the seven mountains represent seven kings. But that raises another question, and that is, **who are these seven kings** in **Revelation 17:10**? There are several common interpretations of what or who these seven kings could be.

1. There are some commentators who argue that it's talking about the first century, and it's a chronological series of Roman emperors in the first century. And, wow, you should read how creative they can get in trying to identify which of the seven it should be.
2. Another group of commentators say, no, it's not all the Roman emperors, it is a *selection* of Roman emperors; those who especially persecuted believers. **Both of those explanations fail to fit our text, however, because verse 11 clearly says that the Beast, the Antichrist, will be both the seventh king and the eighth. He wasn't a Roman emperor in the first century, so that doesn't fly.**
3. A third view is that these seven kings are actually kings or rulers who are contemporaneous with Antichrist, and will rule during the Tribulation. But that appears to conflict with verses 12 and 13, and the ten horns, which clearly describe rulers who are contemporary with Antichrist.

So ...who **are** these seven kings? Well, *it's impossible to know for sure*, but [the writer leans] toward an interpretation that's very common: that is, **that it really represents seven Gentile world empires**. Most likely, these seven kings symbolize seven Gentile world empires, because notice how the angel goes on to describe the seven kings in verse 10, “*Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come.*” By the time of John's vision at the end of the first century, **five great gentile world empires had arisen and fallen: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece**. Now of course, there have been other empires throughout human history such as India, China, the Incas, but the five just named are the ones who dominated the Mediterranean world and who had the greatest impact on God's people, Israel. And so, often, that's where the focus is.

✚ “*Five have fallen, one is.*” At the time John wrote, that one was Rome, “*and the other has not yet come.*” That is a reference to Antichrist's final world empire. It really fits, and fits well. This seems the most likely interpretation: that these seven heads, who are seven kings, are in fact seven representative Gentile empires. Notice how he describes the one who has “*not yet come,*”

Antichrist's final world empire, "and when he comes, he must remain a little while." When Antichrist arises, he will remain for a little while. It is said that he will come to power shortly after the beginning of the Tribulation, and he will be destroyed 7 years later at the second coming. But in any event, "for a short space" is clearly an expression denoting that it will be for a **short time**. (Note: Consequently, the fall of Babylon could easily be an extended event played out at multiple levels. Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry, according to **Revelation 18:10: "Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come."** The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for a "short space" will receive authority as kings along with the beast, who will be destroyed **in one hour**...

We will be looking at Revelation 18, which is also about the judgment of Babylon the Great. So **when** does *Babylon* fall? *Is it in one single moment, or will it be a progressive and multi-staged event?* Revelation 18:10 might give us the impression that it is a single sudden event because of the use of the phrase "in one hour." But consider the use of the same phrase, "in one hour," in the context of the ten horns in **Revelation 17:12**. In the passage about the ten horns one hour is clearly an expression denoting that it will be for a short time. Consequently, the fall of Babylon could easily be an extended event played out at multiple levels.²²

†† "And the beast **that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.**" This is again a reference to his staged miraculous resurrection, "." Now there's a riddle for you: **How can he be both the eighth and one of the seven?** Well, with his supposed death, his kingdom, the seventh, appears to come to an end. But with his supposed resurrection, he returns to an eighth, and to another three and a half year reign. But his apparent victory will be short lived because after just three and a half years, verse 11 adds, "**goeth into perdition.**" We saw in 17.8 above, the word *The word perdition* is #684. ἀπώλεια *apoleia*, ap-o'-li-a; ...ruin or loss (physical, spiritual or eternal): — damnable(-nation), destruction. If these seven mountains representing seven successive Gentile empires is right, then why? Why is this metaphor used? Henry Morris explains it in his commentary on Revelation. He says,

*"All six of these were not only legitimate heirs of political Babel, but also of religious Babel as well. **Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece, and Rome** were all strongholds of the world religion of evolutionary pantheism and idolatrous polytheism. Thus, they appropriately are represented as six heads on the great beast that supports the harlot."*

In other words, think of it this way: Antichrist's empire, when it comes during the Tribulation, **will be the culmination and the final manifestation of both the political and religious evil of all of the world empires, and all of the rulers that have spanned human history. He will be the coup de grace; there we have his seven heads.**²³

††† "The ten horns which you saw..." (back in verse 3, where the beast is described as having ten horns) **"... are ten kings..."** Here the angel explains that these are **contemporaneous** with Antichrist. **These ten kings are not from the past, they're not even from John's time, the first century, these ten kings will not exist, will not come to power, until the time of Antichrist.** Look at verse 12, "**which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with**

the beast.” It’s clear then that these ten kings will be part of the future empire of Antichrist. They will receive authority, by God’s permission, to rule as kings with the beast, with Antichrist, for one hour; that is, their power and influence will be extremely short-lived. But while they rule, they will be allies and under the control of Antichrist himself.

♥ “These” (*that is these ten kings*) “have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast.” **They will be entirely devoted to the person and plan of Antichrist.** ...In **Daniel 7:24**, Daniel talks about these rulers and gives us more details. There we learn:

- Antichrist appears on the scene after these other ten kings have come to power, after the empire (or the federation) has been established. He comes on the scene and quickly surpasses them in power.
- Three of these ten kings will resist his rise to power, but he will conquer them by force. He’ll start small, but he will grow to subdue three of the ten nations and then to lead the other seven, so in reality, he ends up leading all ten. And, of course, in the three that he captures by force, he will install puppet leaders who will join the other seven, apparently gaining control over this entire federation/empire.
- Antichrist and these ten kings who will rule under him as his *lackeys*, as his *puppets*, will **establish, promote, and protect the great harlot, a worldwide false religious system organized and run by the False Prophet.** It will seem completely unstoppable and untouchable. ...These leaders may think they’re *untouchable*, but they’re **touchable**.²⁴

Application Questions:

1. When I wonder at what I see in the world or in the Word, do I let that *wonder* bring me to seek the Lord and His Word to see *His perspective and Wisdom*?
2. How do I *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.* ⁶*In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* (Proverbs 3.5-6), even when I don’t understand everything and really can’t expect to since I need *His wisdom and timing and revelation*?
3. Does my *wonder* lead me to *heavenly places* for revelation to see and *put me in a position to have answers* I seek *revealed to me* spiritually by the wisdom that *comes from above*?
4. Is God’s Wisdom in my life shown to be *true and divine* (as in **Luke 7.35 [AMP]**) by my *life, character, and deeds*?
5. When I don’t know the answers, do I trust in what I **do know**, and trust God’s timing for the rest as I seek Him?
6. Do I *wonder* and am I *amazed* by the power of the Devil? Have I taken or allowed *his mark* on/in my life **in any way** through **any of his devices** that can be used in my life, or am I **not ignorant** of *any of his devices which he wants to use to steal, kill and destroy* (John 10.10) from me, resulting in my name not being written or being blotted out from *the Lamb’s book of life*? Do I realize that Satan *masquerades as an angel of light*? What is my safeguard against that?

2Corinthians 2.9-11 ⁹**For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.** ¹⁰**To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;** ¹¹**Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.** (Why did he forgive? To not let Satan get an *advantage* over him, because he *knows how that compromise works*.) Do I do the same with all Satan’s devices, not *giving place to the devil*...

²⁴And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Ephesians 5.25-32 ²⁵Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. ²⁶Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: ²⁷**Neither give place to the devil.** ²⁸Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. ²⁹Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. ³⁰And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: ³²And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Galatians 5.19-21 ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that **they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

7. Do I understand God's Truth as He intended: so that I can **recognize the enemy as the enemy?**

8. Do I in any way seek to *reign on this earth*, even though Jesus told me it's not His kingdom (John 18.36)? Do I ever compromise who Christ is or "sell Him out" for position/status/wealth as a *friend of the world* and thus the enemy of Christ (James 4.4)? Do I ever try to serve both God AND mammon, which God told me is not possible in Matthew 6.24?

III. War is waged against the Lamb, and the Lamb **overcomes** (He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and we with Him are *called, chosen and faithful!*); the entire world will be under the power and influence of a final false religious system that will dominate all levels of society, which will ultimately be *divided against itself as Satan's kingdom always is, God using the final end of sin to demonstrate His power over it and the hearts of those that follow the beast* (which reigns over the kings of the earth and the temporal trappings of this world) *to choose their power for an hour on the world and sell out their birthright for a morsel of meat with the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.*

Revelation 17:14 **These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them:** for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him *are called, and chosen, and faithful.**

Revelation 17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. **

Revelation 17:16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. ***

Revelation 17:17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. ****

Revelation 17:18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth. †

* The gist of the matter is laid out clearly here. “These” that is Antichrist and his ten minion kings as cited in Revelation 17.12-13, “will wage war against the Lamb.” We see the end result: **and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.** The Greek word overcome is the word from which we get the word **Nike: conquer**. The Lamb will **conquer** them, He will **destroy** them. Christ's victory, only mentioned here in verse 14, is explained in much greater detail in Chapter 19, at the Second Coming. **It won't be a battle: the battle of Armageddon is falsely named: it will be a slaughter.** And what guarantees His victory? **...for He is the Lord of lords, and King of kings.** You remember this is the name that Christ will wear at the Second Coming.

Revelation 19.16 *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

He is the Lord of all other lords, no one above Him; and he is the King of all other kings. Earlier in this chapter, John described the allies of Antichrist, those ten kings who will support him. **Now he describes the allies of the Lamb. ...and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.** At the Second Coming, all believers who have died to that point in history will return with Christ, and that will include every one of us who are in Christ. And I love that the angel says we will be with Him. Pay attention when that expression occurs, I absolutely love it.

John 14:3, *Jesus said to His disciples and to us, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, **that where I am, there you may be also.**”*

1 Thessalonians 4:17-18 *¹⁷Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: **and so shall we ever be with the Lord.***

¹⁸ Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

The point of these passages ... isn't to build your eschatological theme, although there's a lot there about eschatology and the future... But the point is, **that where I am, there you may be also** (John 14.3) and (in 1Thessalonians 4.17-18) **and so shall we ever be with the Lord**. But notice how the angel describes all true believers here: **they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.** [Those] who will come back with Christ at the Second Coming, first of all, are called, “**called.**” You are, along with all believers, **called. God called you to Himself.**

Why did God effectually call us through the gospel to Himself? Notice it's because we are “**chosen.**” Our word **elect** comes from this Greek word. In fact, in Greek, when it says we are **chosen**, says we are the “**eklektos**”. We are the **elect**, we are the “**eklektos**.” He called us because He chose us in eternity past.

Ephesians 1:4-6 *⁴ According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: ⁵ Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

...That means it wasn't because of anything in us. Just think about that for a moment, believer, God called you to Himself and here's why: because in eternity past, He set his love upon you and predestined you for adoption. That's the one I'm going to adopt.

Romans 8:29-30 *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰Moreover whom*

he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Here's what's called the golden chain of redemption: "*And those whom He predestined,*" to be like Christ, "*He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.*"

Philippians 1.6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:...*

We are called, we are chosen, and we are faithful. God chose us that we would be holy and blameless before Him and that we would be remade in the image of His son as we just heard. And that means that all of those God chose and all of those He called, all of those who have true saving faith, will persevere, will endure in faith through the power of the Holy Spirit who sealed us, Ephesians 1. And when Christ comes at the Second Coming, don't miss this believer, when Christ comes at the second coming, we, the called, the chosen, the faithful will come with Him.²⁵

When Babylon arrogantly wages war against the Lamb at Armageddon, at the end of the tribulation, the end is totally predictable: it will be a slaughter.

Revelation 17.14 ***These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them:*** for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him *are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

** Now we considered this verse when we looked at the religious system of Babylon in the [Supplement to Revelation Bible Study *Babylon*], but here's the point: the harlot's influence (that is this false religious system that Antichrist will create) will blanket this entire planet like the world's oceans do. ***It will be universal, it will be everywhere.*** The entire world will be under the power and influence of this final religious system, it will dominate all levels of society. Again, *it will seem unstoppable, untouchable, so how will such a system be brought to an end?* Go to verse 16.

*** ***And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore...*** During the first three and a half years of the tribulation, Antichrist, his political allies, these ten kings, and the false prophet, will gladly partner with and will use all of the existing world's false religions who have come together into one great ecumenical force. [However,] after the Antichrist's *supposed death and resurrection*, somewhere near the midpoint of the tribulation, ***everything changes.*** He will then set up an image of himself in the temple in Jerusalem (what Daniel and our Lord called *the abomination of desolation*), and from that point on, he will demand that all other worship ceases and that he himself be the sole object of worship.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* He "*opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.*"

That's what we're reading here, these ten kings, allies of Antichrist and Antichrist himself, will turn on the world's false religions that have come together into one great ecumenical force. And they will destroy every other religion to make Antichrist alone the sole object of worship.

As Robert Thomas notes, *"In the end, Satan's kingdom will be divided against itself, signaling that its demise is near."*²⁶

Mark 23.24-26 ²⁴ **And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.**

²⁵ **And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.** ²⁶ **And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.**

Notice how the angel describes the destruction of the false system : ***And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.*** That language is used in the Old Testament to mean they will plunder the incredible wealth accumulated by the world's religions. ...False religion is always finding a way to squeeze money out of poor, hopeless people. The idea in the expression make her "*naked*" again the concept [is that] **the ten horns on the beast will fully expose these false religions**: they will expose their hypocrisy and they will expose all the corruption connected to these false religions.

It is again reminding us that *God is in control* as He *uncovers* what people thought they could conceal in their darkness.

Hebrews 4.13 *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

Luke 8.17 *For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be made known and brought to light.*

"...And they will eat her flesh and burn her up with fire" graphically portrays the destruction as exceptionally hostile and extremely violent. That powerfully pictures that when Antichrist and his allies finish with the world's religions, there will be absolutely nothing left. They will wipe them off the planet. Why? Why will Antichrist and these ten kings destroy religious Babylon? Well, in part because sinners naturally hate one another.

Titus 3.3 *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*

Also, it **serves their ends**. They are about to set Antichrist alone up [to be worshiped]. And what does Antichrist [mean]? **Antichrist** is not only one who is against the real Christ, but one who sets himself up **instead of** the real Christ. **HE has to be the only one, instead of Christ.** It just doesn't work to have all of these other religions. In his rebellion against God, **coexistence** is not possible.

In other words, Antichrist and these ten kings will do this because it's what they most want to do, but **that's not all of the story**. As one commentator puts it, **"Antichrist's self-serving, satanically inspired actions are, however, precisely in the scope of God's sovereign plan."**

****...Here's why they'll do it, ***"For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose."*** God says **enough. Enough**, I am done with the false religions that Satan has established on this planet, they are done. Now don't misunderstand, this doesn't mean that God will tempt them to sin or will make them sin.

James 1:13 *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:...*

Instead, what we learn here *once again* is what is at the base of theology about God's interaction with evil, and that is that **God has chosen to permit evil and to direct evil acts, to an end unforeseen and unintended by the sinner**. It's like Joseph said in Genesis 50 to his brothers: *...you meant it for*

evil, **but** God meant it for good. Or read Acts 2 and 4 where they're talking about the crucifixion of Christ, and they say, 'Evil men did this to Christ, sinners did this to Christ.' At the same time, they say, 'But this was to fulfill the sovereign plan and purpose of God.' God permits evil, and He directs evil acts to ends that are unforeseen and unintended by the sinner, and that's exactly what He does here. These ten kings and Antichrist will do exactly what they want. They hate these false religions, they've used them to their own ends in the first three and a half years, and when the time comes, they will destroy them because they want to destroy them. But **why** is clearly stated in Verse 17; God wants us to know He is in control: "For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose." What exactly do these ten kings do of their own choice? Well, clearly, they destroy the false religions that are on the planet.

Revelation 17.17 *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.*

Until God's promised plans are fulfilled. Again, I love this: we're reminded that human history is not random. **God has a plan and all things are following that plan until the culmination of His plans are fulfilled and completed.** [You can **count on it.**] When you hear the news sources, don't be dismayed, don't be appalled, don't be afraid, don't be confused: **God is on His throne, He has a plan and He's marching that plan out in human history. Evil people will do what they want, and they are acting of their own accord, but God is greater than that, and He is using and directing their choices to ends unintended by them to accomplish His eventual plan.**²⁷

The divine judgment inflicted **follows a pattern and principle.** Ancient Babylon was used to bring affliction upon the people of Israel as were Assyria and Egypt, but eventually these same nations that God used were themselves the objects of judgment because they did not act for God, but for themselves.

The plan of the ages unfolds majestically, and Scripture shows that God permits the increasing increments of wickedness until the cup of iniquity overflows, then judgment comes.

In the declaration "**God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose,**" verse 17 reminds us of the principle that God uses the blasphemous actions of world religions and governments to fulfill His own purposes.

Jeremiah 25:9-14 *Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.* ¹⁰ *Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.* ¹¹ *And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.* ¹² *And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.* ¹³ *And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.*

¹⁴ For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

Luke 20:18 *Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*

Nothing will distract them from their united effort to destroy the prostitute until God's purposes given through the prophets are fulfilled.²⁸

Revelation 10:7 *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

Revelation 11:18 *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.*

✚ This chapter concludes with several points summarizing what we know of Babylon:

- The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. (v 15)
- The ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. (v 16)
- God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. (v 17)
- The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth. (v 18)

Why is it called Babylon? We considered many *postulations* in the **Supplement to Revelation Bible Study Babylon**. There are good points that can be made for several different deductions, and people I respect take a stand for different sides of those opinions.

When all these references are reviewed, it seems more likely that we are looking at a composite image with multiple levels—hence the mystery. Therefore, I want to keep an open mind about what I'm looking for, while considering the following possibilities: 1) Things that represent the spirit of Babylon in the world. 2) A large global "Babylon" government. 3) A false and pervasive religious system, like Islam or apostate Christianity. 4) A specific city that is the focal point for the Beast's rule. 5) Any city that exhibits the spirit of Babylon worldwide. 6) A world leader symbolized by the woman who rides the beast. And finally, I think there is a very important warning for the saints to flee Babylon that is wrapped up in the description of its destruction.

Hopefully, the discussion about Babylon the Great has given you some direction and a broader context for understanding it. Time will reveal the full mystery of how all these things will be fulfilled; until then, we should watch and pray for the wisdom to recognize it when God does bring these things to pass.²⁹

...But regardless, this false religious system will, for the first three and a half years, be married to Antichrist and his political empire; their base of operations will be in the very same capital city. **And then they're gone.**

What possible implications or lessons can there be for our lives from after [this incredible study]?

1. **You were made to worship, and you are worshipping. Never stops.** You were made to worship by God, and you are worshipping. If you are not worshipping the true God, you are worshipping something else. It may be something God made. It may be yourself. But you are worshipping something because you were hardwired to worship, and nothing will ever change that. You are either worshipping Jesus Christ and you belong to Him, or you are engaged in some form of idolatry and spiritual prostitution and you belong to the spiritual harlot described in this passage and you are an idolater. Those are the only options. So be clear about this and be clear about the people in our world. You know, we can get a little sentimental in our thinking when we see somebody who appears to be seeking God. Now God may be at work in somebody's heart, drawing them to Himself through the truth of the Gospel but most often when that expression "seekers" is used, it refers to somebody who is engaged in some false endless pursuit that says that they are "seeking God." They are not seeking God. They are running from God. But Jesus is seeking them.

Luke 19.10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

They were made to worship, and they are worshipping something other than the God who has revealed Himself even in creation.

Application Question: What do I *worship* (show *worth* to, bend my knee to, reverence, honor) with the time, talents and money entrusted to me?

2. **In every generation, including ours, the wide gate and the broad road that lead to destruction** (referred to at the end of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7) **are easier to find and more heavily travelled than the narrow gate and path that lead to heaven and eternal life.** It's true during the Tribulation, and don't be discouraged that it is true now. We have learned this in lessons prior, and we will talk about this again when we get to Chapter 20, but there is a fresh push among believers of post millennialism that we are going to bring in the Kingdom. Things are going to get better and better, and more people are going to be saved and we are going to get everything [in order], and [we are going to give the world 'back' to Jesus for our dowry, then Jesus is going to walk into a Kingdom that was the "dowry" for His "bride." At this point, suffice it to say that until Jesus returns, most people will find the **wide gate and the broad road that leads to destruction.**

Application Question: What do I do and how do I think and what do I seek in my life that demonstrates that I have chosen the *straight gate and narrow way* that leads to life?

3. **False religion is generally more powerful, wealthy and influential than the true church.** Don't be concerned about that. Don't look at [or *for*] the glitz and the glamour. Don't walk into some cathedral where an aberration and apostate form of true Christian faith is worshipped and celebrated and be impressed by the smoke and mirrors. Don't be impressed by the gold and the wealth and the opulence. Don't be deceived by what looks impressive.

Application Question: What impresses me? What do I *wonder* about and where does that *wonder* lead me?

4. **False religion often works with fallen governments to persecute true believers in the true church.** False religion working with fallen governments involve two of the greatest persecutors of believers down through the years and they often work together. Don't be surprised.

Application Question: What persecution have I experienced for Christ? Am I *surprised* when persecution comes, or when it *doesn't* come?

5. **Jesus Christ is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and He will one day destroy all who have abused His people, dishonored His Father, slandered His name and rebelled against His rightful authority.** Notice, He will do it against religious Babylon.

Application Question: Does my *relationship* with Christ show in my heart being *aligned with His*? Is my life an *overflow* or the *outward* conformity to rules and seeking of status like the Pharisees/Sadducees? Do I *war against systemized religion* as Christ does, knowing He will one day destroy it?

Revelation 17.16-17 (AMP) ...And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will [be the very ones to] hate the harlot (the idolatrous woman); they will make her cheerless (bereaved, desolate), and they will strip her and eat up her flesh and utterly consume her with fire. [*Where does this come from?*] ***¹⁷For God has put it into their hearts to carry out His own purpose by acting in harmony in surrendering their royal power and authority to the beast, until the prophetic words (intentions and promises) of God shall be fulfilled.***

Christ will also destroy political Babylon and He will do that all by Himself.

Revelation 17.14 (AMP) They will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will triumph over them; for He is Lord of lords and King of kings—and those with Him *and* on His side are chosen and called [elected] and loyal *and* faithful followers.

Don't be discouraged. Jesus wins.³⁰

So what are the lessons for us? ...It's interesting to learn what God is going to do and how all of this will unfold, but what is the point? What are the lessons for us?

1. **First of all, all false religion is satanic, Satan is always its ultimate source.**

Ephesians 2:1-2 *AND YOU [He made alive], when you were dead (slain) by [your] trespasses and sins In which at one time you walked [habitually]. You were following the course and fashion of this world [were under the sway of the tendency of this present age], following the prince of the power of the air. [You were obedient to and under the control of] the [demon] spirit that still constantly works in the sons of disobedience [the careless, the rebellious, and the unbelieving, who go against the purposes of God].*

Satan is the prince of all false religion and human philosophy and every ideology set against God: ***he's the source of it all.*** Everything you read about that stands opposed to God ***ultimately traces back to Satan.*** If it is offered in exchange for the worship of the true God, it stems from Satan himself.

2. **Secondly, related to that, not only is Satan the ultimate source of false religion, but demons create, energize, and are worshiped through all false religions.** False religions

are demonic. Demons energize those religions, and ultimately when people worship those false gods, **they're worshipping demons**. It's what the scripture teaches.

Deuteronomy 32:16-17 (AMP) says of Israel: *They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations they provoked Him to anger. ¹⁷They sacrificed to demons, not to God—to gods whom they knew not, to new gods lately come up, whom your fathers never knew or feared.*

Did you notice the swap there? He says, when they worshipped gods, they were in fact worshipping demons. The New Testament makes the exact same point.

1 Corinthians 10:20, 20 (AMP) *No, I am suggesting that what the pagans sacrifice they offer [in effect] to demons (to evil spiritual powers) and not to God [at all]. I do not want you to fellowship and be partners with diabolical spirits [by eating at their feasts].*

They don't do it knowingly, it's deception. They think they're worshipping a god, and they're worshipping a demon.

3. **Thirdly, related to this false religion being satanic, is that false teachers and false prophets are the human instruments that propagate that demonic religion.**

1 Timothy 4:1-2 (AMP) *BUT THE [Holy] Spirit distinctly and expressly declares that in latter times some will turn away from the faith, giving attention to deluding and seducing spirits and doctrines that demons teach, ² Through the hypocrisy and pretensions of liars whose consciences are seared (cauterized),...*

Listen and understand this: all religions except the true religion of Biblical Christianity have far more in common with each other than not. **They are all satanic**, whether you're talking about Islam or Buddhism or Hinduism or the false forms of Christianity like Roman Catholicism, the cults like Mormonism, and Jehovah's Witnesses, **they are all propagated by Satan and inspired by demons. And in reality, they're not worshipping gods, they're worshipping demons.**

4. **Not only is all false religion satanic, but God hates all false religion, and He will destroy it.** We saw in number 5 above the ten horns will consume the harlot. Every false religion on the planet will be destroyed. Why? **"For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose." God hates all false religion, and He will destroy it.**
5. **God will not share His glory with any other object of worship.**

Isaiah 42:8, *"I am Yahweh, that is my name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images."*

Here is an application of that to us who are Christians. In the beginning of **Matthew 6:1-2** it is talking about *practicing our righteousness before men to be noticed by them*: *"When you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men."* You know what that really reads like in the Greek text? *"So that they may be glorified by men."* **When we seek to attract attention to ourselves rather than to God and His work in our lives, we are really setting ourselves up as replacement objects of worship. We want to be honored rather than God, and God will not share His glory with any other object to worship.**

6. **One day, God alone will be worshiped and glorified.** This is how this book ends.

Revelation 21:3 (AMP) *Then I heard a mighty voice from the throne and I perceived its distinct words, saying, See! The abode of God is with men, and He will live (encamp, tent)*

among them; and they shall be His people, and God shall personally be with them and be their God.

Revelation 21.8 (AMP) *But as for the cowards and the ignoble and the contemptible and the cravenly lacking in courage and the cowardly submissive, and as for the unbelieving and faithless, and as for the depraved and defiled with abominations, and as for murderers and the lewd and adulterous and the practicers of magic arts and the idolaters (those who give supreme devotion to anyone or anything other than God) and all liars (those who knowingly convey untruth by word or deed)—[all of these shall have] their part in the lake that blazes with fire and brimstone. This is the second death.*

Revelation 21.22-23 (AMP) ²²*I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Omnipotent [Himself] and the Lamb [Himself] are its temple. ²³And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon to give light to it, for the splendor and radiance (glory) of God illuminate it, and the Lamb is its lamp.*

In other words, **God and the Lamb will be the sole objects of worship.**

Revelation 22.3 (AMP) *There shall no longer exist there anything that is accursed (detestable, foul, offensive, impure, hateful, or horrible). But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall worship Him [pay divine honors to Him and do Him holy service].*

Revelation 22.15 (AMP) *[But] without are the dogs and those who practice sorceries (magic arts) and impurity [the lewd, adulterers] and the murderers and idolaters and everyone who loves and deals in falsehood (untruth, error, deception, cheating).*

Outside of heaven, outside of the new heavens and the new earth, in hell and the lake of fire, “are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.”

God will ensure one day that all false objects of worship are destroyed, and He alone, as He deserves, will be worshiped.

7. **God controls and directs even the evil self-serving actions of Satan, of demons, of human rulers, and of every human being to accomplish His sovereign purpose.** Look back at 17:17, “***For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose... until the words of God will be fulfilled.***” That's our hope.

Our God reigns; He has a plan, He has an end, and everything on this planet is marching to that end, that's our God.

Subject sentence (paragraphs!) The Lord unveils what I need to know about **what His position is** on things coming to pass in judgment, telling me ***before it come[s] to pass, that, when it is come to pass, I might believe;**** ***He opens my eyes to be able to do the will of Him that sent me and finish His work, and not be found sleeping*** but stay ***wide awake (alert, watchful, cautious, and on guard)*** and ***sober (calm, collected, and circumspect), loving the Truth and not being deceived;*** ...as I see things ***never seen before***, I must ***direct my wonder to lead me closer to the wisdom of God*** and examine whether in my actions and thoughts I am seeking *one hour of power with the beast on this world and eternal perdition* (whether I am of ***one mind with the beast***) or whether I am

seeking eternal life with the Lamb of God (have the mind of Christ); I must seek **wisdom from above**; and not the **earthly, devilish wisdom**, with my life: not being engaged in the war waged against the Lamb, but engaged in abstaining the fleshly lusts which war against my soul (1Peter 2.11); (living **with Him as one called, chosen and faithful**);

... when the entire world will be under the power and influence of a final false religious system that will dominate all levels of society, (which will ultimately be divided against itself as Satan's kingdom always is), I must have the **mind of Christ, one with Him and faithful until the words of God shall be fulfilled**:

... for sin comes here to its ultimate fulfillment in destruction, and righteousness comes to its ultimate fulfillment in the reign of Christ when all things have been put things under His feet, to the glory of God.

Shorter subject sentence: The Lord unveils what I need to know about **what His position is** on things coming to pass in judgment, telling me **before it come[s] to pass, that, when it is come to pass**, I might **believe**;^{*} **He opens my eyes to be able to do the will of Him that sent me and finish His work, and not be found sleeping** but stay **wide awake (alert, watchful, cautious, and on guard)** and **sober (calm, collected, and circumspect)**, **loving the Truth and not being deceived**; ... for sin comes here to its ultimate fulfillment in destruction, and righteousness comes to its ultimate fulfillment in the reign of Christ when all things have been put things under His feet, to the glory of God.

1Corinthians 2.14-16 ¹⁴ But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. ¹⁶ For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the **mind of Christ**.

Philippians 2.4-8 ⁴ Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. ⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

1Peter 2.11 *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;...*

^{*} **John 16:4** But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

John 14:29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

John 2:22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

John 13:19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

Aim: This passage would cause me to **do the will of Him that sent me and finish His work, not being found sleeping** but staying **wide awake (alert, watchful, cautious, and on guard)** and **sober (calm, collected, and circumspect)**, **loving the Truth and not being deceived**; ... trusting

in what the Lord unveiled to me about **what His position is** on things coming to pass in *judgment* (***before it*** even came ***to pass, so that, when it is come to pass, I believe*** for sin to come to its ultimate fulfillment in destruction, and righteousness to come to its ultimate fulfillment in the reign of Christ **when all things are put things under His feet, to the glory of God.**

¹ This Introduction is repeated in both Revelation 17 and 18, and also in the ***Supplement to Revelation Bible Study—Babylon.***

² <https://bible.org/seriespage/babylon-seen-scripture-introduction-rev-17-18>

³ <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

⁴ Much of this Chapter is taken from <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

⁵ <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230514p-168902>

⁶ **John 16:4** But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

John 14:29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

John 2:22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

John 13:19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

⁷ **Luke 21:8** And he said, ***Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.***

Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

1John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2Timothy 3:13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

Ephesians 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Matthew 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

2Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Matthew 24:4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, ***Take heed that no man deceive you.*** ⁵ ***For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.***

2Thessalonians 2:10 And with all ***deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*** ¹¹ ***And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:...***

2Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

1Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;...

⁸ In fact, other cities in the Old Testament are called prostitutes or harlots because of their false religion.

- In Nineveh, Nahum chapter 3, Nineveh is called a harlot because of her idols.
- The city of Tyre on the Mediterranean coast is referred to the same way in Isaiah 23.

- Even Jerusalem is referred to as a harlot. Here's **Isaiah 1:21**, "How the faithful city has become a harlot, she who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her, but now murderers."
- Even of the nation of Israel as a whole, Jeremiah 3.8-9 : "And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also. Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees."

<https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

⁹ <https://my3bc.com/the-old-testament-tabernacle-lesson-1-the-pattern-and-materials/>

¹⁰ https://biblehub.com/topical/naves/j/jewels--dedicated_to_the_tabernacle.htm

¹¹ <https://thebiblesays.com/en/commentary/rev+17:1>

¹² <http://campuscybercafe.com/blog/post/richest-churches-in-the-world-and-their-net-worth/>

¹³ <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

¹⁴ <https://thebiblesays.com/en/commentary/rev+17:1>

¹⁵ <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

¹⁶ <https://bible.org/seriespage/judgment-religious-babylon-rev-17-18>

¹⁷ **2Thessalonians 2:9** *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, ¹⁸ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Matthew 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

1Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

2Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

2Corinthians 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

1John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

1Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

2Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

¹⁸ <https://bible.org/seriespage/judgment-religious-babylon-rev-171-18>

¹⁹ <https://bible.org/seriespage/judgment-religious-babylon-rev-171-18>

²⁰ **Proverbs 2:1** My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; ² So that thou **incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;** ³ Yea, **if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;** ⁴ If thou **seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;** ⁵ Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. ⁶ For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. ⁷ He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. ⁸ He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. ⁹ Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path. ¹⁰ When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul: ¹¹ **Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:** ¹² To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things; ¹³ Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; ¹⁴ Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked; ¹⁵ Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths: ¹⁶ To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words; ¹⁷ Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. ¹⁸ For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. ¹⁹ None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life. ²⁰ That thou mayest walk in the way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous. ²¹ **For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.** ²² **But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.**

²¹ <https://bible.org/seriespage/judgment-religious-babylon-rev-171-18>

²² John Price. The End of America: The Role of Islam in the End Times and Biblical Warnings to Flee America (Christian House Publishers, 2009): 41-86.

²³ <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

²⁴ <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

²⁵ Vincent Cheung, an intellectual Bible scholar and teacher, in his riveting exposé on Christian Soteriology, writes:

First, we must distinguish between human freedom and human responsibility – they are two different things. Many people assume that human responsibility depends on human freedom – that is, they think that humans are responsible because they are free, and that if they are not free, then they cannot be responsible. But by what biblical, theological, or philosophical argument do they establish this? It is almost always assumed without argument, but I reject this unjustified premise. Instead, I affirm that although divine sovereignty contradicts human *freedom*, and that Scripture never teaches human freedom, divine sovereignty does *not* contradict human *responsibility*, and that Scripture indeed teaches human responsibility.

Second, MacDonald fails to understand the nature of a contradiction. He says that if the Bible affirms two contradictory doctrines, then we must affirm both of them. According to MacDonald, the Bible affirms divine sovereignty, and then it also affirms what seems to him the contradictory doctrine of human responsibility. Since the Bible affirms both, we must also affirm both. What he does not realize is that if these doctrines are really contradictory, then to affirm one is to deny the other, so that it is impossible to affirm both at the same time.

If these two doctrines contradict each other, then when you read about divine sovereignty in the Bible, you are not reading only an affirmation of divine sovereignty, but also a denial of human responsibility. Likewise, a biblical affirmation of human responsibility is tantamount to a denial of divine sovereignty. Therefore, if the two doctrines contradict, it will be just as easy to say that the Bible *denies* both divine sovereignty and human

responsibility. To say that these two doctrines only *appear* to be contradictory to the human mind is irrelevant, because even if it is true that they only *appear* to contradict each other, it remains that no human mind can affirm both doctrines, even if God can affirm both of them.

Unless MacDonald charges the Bible with error, he must either deny one of the two doctrines as unbiblical, or he must admit that they do not contradict. The real problem is that many commentators refuse to admit that they do not have the subtlety of thought or the intelligence to harmonize the two doctrines – that is, if they need to be harmonized in the first place. Instead, it is as if they think that if they cannot harmonize the two doctrines, then surely no human mind can! On other hand, I affirm that the Bible teaches both divine sovereignty and human responsibility, and I affirm that the two doctrines do not contradict – there is not even an apparent contradiction.

MacDonald and many others like him think that there is a contradiction between divine sovereignty and human responsibility because they assume that human responsibility requires man to have freedom of choice, or free will; however, if God has absolute control, then man is not free, and therefore divine sovereignty and human responsibility contradict each other.

But this process of reasoning is fatally flawed. A large part of the problem results from an imprecise definition of "responsibility." What does it mean for a person to be "responsible" for his actions? The first definition for "responsible" in *Webster's New World College Dictionary* is, "expected or obliged to account (for something, to someone); answerable; accountable."¹² Regardless of whether or not man is free, is man "expected or obliged to account" for his actions to God? Yes, because Scripture says, "For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14). God will reward the righteous and punish the wicked; therefore, man is responsible. What seems to so many as an "irreconcilable conflict" is hereby resolved.

This is a fascinating study on the omnipotence of God. I have quoted from a 2004 version of *Ultimate Questions* by Vincent Cheung, but here is a link to the updated version:

<https://www.vincentcheung.com/books/Ultimate%20Questions.pdf>

This is full of great answers to questions commonly asked to attack the Word of God, but the section referring to Soteriology (doctrine of *salvation*) starts on page 28.

²⁶ As cited in <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

²⁷ <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230618p-173314>

²⁸ <https://bible.org/seriespage/judgment-religious-babylon-rev-171-18>

²⁹ John Price. *The End of America: The Role of Islam in the End Times and Biblical Warnings to Flee America* (Christian House Publishers, 2009): 41-86.

³⁰ <https://countrysidebible.org/sermons/20230514p-168902>