

A Study of the Book of Revelation

Revelation's End Time Babylon

Chapter 17

REVIEW:

During our study in Revelation Chapter 12, we learned about a "... woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (Rev. 12:1). We learned that in Bible Prophecy, a "woman" is symbolic of a church, and that this woman of Revelation 12 was symbolic of God's true church. During our Revelation 12 study, we also referred to the "OTHER WOMAN" of Revelation - as presented in Revelation Chapter 17. In this study, we will learn about this "other woman" of prophecy in greater detail, and identify who she represents. We also will look at the Beast that she is riding.

THIS STUDY

WHO IS THE WOMAN OF REVELATION 17?

Revelation 17:1-6

"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: 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. 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. 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: And upon her forehead [was] a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 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"

"admiration" in the Greek is "thauma," which means great wonder or amazement

"one of the seven angels which had the seven vials" - This is one of the angels that pour out the "seven last plagues" of the wrath of God - (Reference Rev. 15 & 16).

Revelation 15:7

"And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever."

Revelation 16:1

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth."

There are Fourteen Points that Identify the Great Harlot:

Point #1 - A Harlot Is A Symbol of an Apostate Religious System.

A Church system with false doctrine or teachings. They are not following God's true teachings from God's word alone.

APOSTASY: n. "An abandonment of one's religious faith" - The American Heritage Dictionary.

Isaiah 1:1, 21 -

*“The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw **concerning Judah and Jerusalem** in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.” ... **“How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.**”*

Hosea 4:7-12 -

*“As they were increased, so **they sinned against me**: therefore will I change their glory into shame. They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity. And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings. For they shall eat, and not have enough: **they shall commit whoredom**, and shall not increase: **because they have left off to take heed to the LORD. Whoredom and wine** and new wine take away the heart. My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them: **for the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God.**”*

Point #2 - The Harlot Sits over Many Waters. This represents a God-like authority.

Revelation 17:1 - *“...the great whore that sitteth upon many waters”*

Genesis 1:2

*“And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the **Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.**”*

Psalms 29:2-3

*“Give unto the **LORD** the glory due unto his name; worship the **LORD** in the beauty of holiness. The voice of the **LORD** is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: **the LORD is upon many waters.**”*

Point #3 - The Harlot Sits over Many Waters. These waters represent the nations of the world.

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**”*

Point #4 - Wine is a Symbol of Spiritual and Moral Apostasy

Revelation 17:2 - *“...with the wine of her fornication”*

Isaiah 28:5-7

*“In that day shall the **LORD** of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate. But they also have **erred through wine**, and through **strong drink** are out of the way; the **priest** and the **prophet have erred through strong drink**, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; **they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.**”*

Proverbs 20:1

*“**Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.**”*

Proverbs 31:3-5 –

“Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings. It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.”

Point # 5- The Harlot Is Pictured as A False Priestess

Notice the description of the Priest’s garments and the colors contained within them. Compare these descriptions to the description of the clothing (colors) represented in the Great Whore’s clothing:

Revelation 17:4 - Great Whore

*“... the woman was arrayed in **purple** and **scarlet** color, and decked with **gold** ...”*

Exodus 28:4-5 - God’s Priest’s

*“And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And they shall take **gold**, and **blue**, and **purple**, and **scarlet**, and fine linen.”*

Num 15:37-41 - God’s People

*“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of **blue**: And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: **That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.**”*

Key Point:

What color of the priest’s robes does the Great Whore not have? BLUE.

What was the color “Blue” supposed to represent to the People of God? GOD’S LAW, AND ALL HIS COMMANDMENTS.

What we see is the symbolism that the Great Whore represents a false priestly role, that is lacking God’s Law. They do not believe in or practise all of God’s 10 Commandment Law.

Point #6 - The Harlot has committed fornication with the Kings of the Earth. Fornication is identified as the Union of Church with the Political Kingdoms.

By “*joining herself*” to the kingdoms of the world, she (the apostate church) has spiritually committed herself unto the world in place of staying committed to Christ. Remember, the Church is likened unto the bride, and Christ as unto the bridegroom. By going after the world, and the idolatry of the worldly systems, she has committed spiritual adultery.

Deuteronomy 31:16

*“And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and **this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them.**”*

Jeremiah 2:26-3:3

*“As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets, Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face: but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us. But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble: for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah. Wherefore will ye plead with me? **ye all have transgressed against me, saith the LORD.** In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction: your own sword hath devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion. O generation, see ye the word of the LORD. Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness? **wherefore say my people, We are lords; we will come no more unto thee?** Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number. Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways. Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these. Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned. Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? **thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria.** Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head: for the LORD hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them. They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? **but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD.** Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and **thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.** Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.”*

Key Point:

The Bible Portrays the Harlot's Sin as fornication with a Beast - (in a spiritual sense)

Revelation 17:2,3

“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. 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.”

Daniel 7:17

*“These great **beasts**, which are four, **are four kings**, which shall arise out of the earth.”*

Leviticus 18:23

*“Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is **confusion.**”*

The Hebrew Word for "Confusion" in Verse 23 is "TEBEL." It is a Hebrew Noun Derived from the Hebrew Root for **Babylon**.

Point #7 - The Harlot Rides the Beast in the Wilderness. The Harlot is a Church that is portrayed as a rebellious Israel who will never enter the Promised Land.

Revelation 17:3 - “...into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored **beast...”**

Revelation 17:4 - “...decked with gold and precious stones and pearls ...”

Revelation 12:6-7

“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels”

Point # 8 - The Harlot is Guilty of Blasphemy.

Revelation 17:3 - *“full of names of blasphemy...”*

We learned in our Revelation chapter 13 study that one of the Characteristics of the Beast was that of Blasphemy, and now we see it also as a characteristic of the Harlot. We learned that the Bible defines blasphemy as:

A. A man claiming to be equal with God.

John 10:33

“I and my father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of these works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that you, being a man, maketh thyself God.”

B. A man claiming to forgive sin.

Mark 2:5-7

“When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of palsy, son, thy sins are forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only.”

Point # 9- The Harlot has the Mystery of the Beast Written on Her Forehead. The Number of this Mystery is 666.

Revelation 17:5 – *“upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY...”*

Revelation 13:16, 18

“And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:” “Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.”

We learned in our study of Revelation 13 what it means to have the MARK OF THE BEAST written on ones forehead-to mentally ascribe to and agree with the BEAST (Papal Rome), in keeping Sunday worship as their sign of authority.

Point # 10 - The Harlot is Named BABYLON. This is a cryptic name for Rome.

Babylon is a code word for Rome. It is used that way six times in the last book of the Bible [four of the six are in chapters 17 and 18] and in extra biblical works such as *Sybling Oracles (5, 159f.)*, the *Apocalypse of Baruch (ii, 1)*, and *4 Esdras (3:1)*.

Eusebius Pamphilius, writing about 303, noted that *“it is said that Peter's first epistle...was composed at Rome itself; and that he himself indicates this, referring to the city figuratively as Babylon.”* Karl Keating, *Catholicism and Fundamentalism*, page 200.

Point #11 - The Harlot is the Mother of Many Daughter Churches that have followed in Her Sin.

Revelation 17:5 - "...THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS..."

Remember, women, in symbolic Bible Prophecy, represent Churches. Thus the "Mother Church" has other churches that have come out of her, that have her characteristics still in them -- the "Mother Church" has lead her "daughters" to also become harlots -- to apostatize from their proper relationship to Christ (God) - becoming guilty of whoredom with the world and idolatry.

Point #12 - The Harlot is Guilty of the Murder of the Martyrs.

Revelation 17:6 - "...drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus..."

Remember the persecution of God's people during the 1260 years by the Roman Church, and by the Political Powers under Her authority -- some examples follow:

"The horrid conduct of this Holy Office [Inquisition] weakened the power and diminished the population of Spain by arresting the progress of arts, sciences, industry and commerce, and by compelling multitudes of families to abandon the kingdom; by instituting the expulsion of the Jews and Moors, and by immolating on its flaming shambles more than three hundred thousand victims."

Jean Antoine Llorente, Secretary of the Spanish Inquisition, 1790-92.

"Through the influence of Gratian... and unwearied activity of the Popes and their legates since 1183, the view of the Church has been...[that] every departure from the teaching of the Church, and every important opposition to any ecclesiastical ordinances, must be punished with death, and the most cruel deaths, by fire...."

J.H. Ignaz von Dollinger, The Pope and the Council, page 195.

Clement V's Rebuke of King Edward II. -

"We hear that you forbid torture as contrary to the laws of your land. But no state law can override [the Church's] canon law, our law. Therefore I command you at once to submit those men to torture."

Will Durant, The Story of Civilization, Vol. 4, page 680.

Pope Martin V (1417-31) Commanded the King of Poland to Exterminate the Hussites. -

"Know that the interests of the Holy See, and those of your crown, make it a duty to exterminate the Hussites. Remember that those impious persons dare to proclaim principles of equality; they maintain that all Christian are brethren, and that God has not given to privileged men the right of ruling nations; they hold that Christ came on earth to abolish slavery; they call the people to liberty, that is to the annihilation of kings and priests. While there is still time, then, turn your forces against Bohemia; burn, massacre, make deserts everywhere, for nothing could be more agreeable to God, or more useful to the cause of kings, then the extermination of the Hussites."

R.W. Thompson, The Papacy and Civil Power, page 553.

A Popular American Catholic Weekly in 1938, stated -

"Heresy is an awful crime against God, and those who start a heresy are more guilty than they who are traitors to the civil government. If the state has the right to punish treason with death, the principle is the same that concedes to the spiritual authority [Roman Catholic Church] the power of life and death over the archtraitor [heretic]."

The Tablet, November 5, 1938

Revelation 17:7-9, 18

“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. 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. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.” “And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

Point #13 - The Harlot and the Beast are Portrayed Together as the Antichrist.

Revelation 17:7-8

“... mystery of the woman, and of the beast..” “...beast that was, and is not, and yet is...”

Revelation 1:8

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

Key Point:

Jesus, at the beginning of Revelation, declares Himself to be the one “*which is, and which was and which is to come*”. In direct opposition, the Beast power (as we learned about during our study of Revelation Chapter 13), is claimed to be the “*beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*”

Point #14 - The Harlot is Identified as a Great City with Global Influence.

Revelation 17:18 - *“the woman ... that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”*

Revelation 17:9 - *“seven heads are seven mountains upon which the woman (the great city) sitteth”*

“It is within the city of Rome, called the city of seven hills, that the entire area of Vatican State proper is now confined.” The Catholic Encyclopedia (Thomas Nelson, 1976), s.v. “Rome.”

Conclusion:

The Roman Church is the Only Power that Meets the Description of the Harlot that Rides the Beast.

UNRAVELING THE MYSTERY OF THE BEAST WITH SEVEN HEADS -

Revelation 17:7-12

“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. 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. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 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. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. 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.”

Three Concepts Necessary to Unravel the Mystery of the Beast.

Concept #1 - The Beast Was, Is Not, And Is Coming. This represents the healing of the Papacy's deadly wound.

The beast that was is Papal Rome from 538 A.D. thru 1798 A.D.

The beast that is not is Papal Rome from 1798 A.D. thru 1929 A.D. [political power taken away]

The beast that is coming is Papal Rome from 1929 A.D. thru today. [political power re-established]

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 13:3, 8

“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” “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.”

Concept #2 - The Seven Heads on the Beast Represent Seven Kings. These seven kings are seven world empires.

Revelation 7:9, 10 - *“... the seven heads are seven mountains.... and there are seven kings”*

Jeremiah 51:24-25

*“And I will render unto **Babylon** and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD. Behold, I am against **thee, O destroying mountain**, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make **thee a burnt mountain**.”* A mountain is another symbol for a kingdom or nation. Therefore, the mountains and kings or kingdoms are the same.

Concept #3 - The Beast Itself is an Ancient Eighth Who has lived throughout the reign of the Seven Kings. This is the figure for Satan.

Revelation 7:11

“And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition”

Key Concept #1 –

The Beast of Revelation 17 is RED. It represents the merging of the beast of Revelation chapter 13 (Rev. 13:1-3) and the Red Dragon of Revelation chapter 12 (Rev. 12:3, 9).

Key Concept #2 –

The Beast of Revelation 13 represents the Roman Church that ruled during the 1260 years from 538 to 1798. (Rev. 13:4,5)

Key Concept #3-

The Red Dragon of Revelation 12 represents Satan. (Rev. 12:3, 9)

CONCLUSION:

The Red Beast of Revelation 17 Represents the Satanic Phases of the Roman Catholic Church, both before the wound and after it is healed.

The Key To Identifying the Seven Heads:

The Beast of Revelation 17 is a composite of the Red Dragon of Revelation 12 and the Seven Headed Beast of Revelation 13. Therefore, connecting the work of Satan through the kingdoms of the world to attack Christ and His people.

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**”*

The Five Fallen Heads and Kings:

The First Head	= Egypt
The Second Head	= Assyria
The Third Head	= Babylon
The Fourth Head	= Medo-Persia
The Fifth Head	= Greece

The One That Is:

Pagan Rome which ruled from 168 BC to 476 AD was in rule during the time that John was writing Revelation. It was a Roman governor that crucified Christ. It was Rome that beheaded the Apostle Paul. It was Rome that exiled John to the isle of Patmos, where Jesus gave him the message of Revelation.

The Seventh Head = The Woman Riding the Beast. The Seventh Head is the Papal Roman Church, both before the wound, during the dark ages [538-1798], and after the wound was healed in 1929, as it Seduces the Kings of the Earth to Persecute the Remnant People. (Rev. 17:12-14)

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.**”*

The only beast that was connected to each kingdom was the “*prince of this world*” Satan. We see him described this same way in Revelation 12:3.

Revelation 12:3

*“And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great **red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.**”*

Satan will ultimately go into perdition or eternal ruin.

Revelation 17:12-14

“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. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. 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.”

Here is pictured the ten kingdoms that would arise after the collapse of the Pagan Roman Empire. It says that they would “*Receive power as kings **one hour** with the beast.*” The Greek word for hour is Hora, meaning a season

or short time. As we look back at history we see that these ten kingdoms only had power for a short time. While Papal Rome was rising to power it tolerated these separate kingdoms, but when they reached their full strength, **they were the power!**

Revelation 17:15-18:

*“And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 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. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and **give their kingdom unto the beast**, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the **woman** which thou sawest **is that great city**, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”*

In verses 16 -17, we see the 10 horns - 10 kings, give their power to the Beast, just as stated in verses 12-13. Thus, it appears that before the final battle when the Beast and the 10 kings make war with the Lamb, and are defeated, that the 10 kings will rebel against the Great Harlot, and will kill her.

Verse 18 says, *And the **woman** which thou sawest **is that great city**, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”* Which church do you know has its own city? Papal Rome owns the Vatican City. They are their own sovereign nation.

Conclusion:

The Bible is warning us about churches that uphold doctrine that is tied to Papal Rome. It wants us to be aware of this power so we can make an intelligent decision to serve Jesus. There are many sincere Christian people who do not know what you have just learned. They are worshiping God the best they know how. God is reaching out to them also, with the truth of His word, calling them all out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

My prayer is that you will choose to honor God and not man, believing His word, and not the voices of those around you. Study the Bible, praying for understanding and the courage to stand faithful to God, in following His Ten Commandments, including the seventh day Sabbath.

1 John 1:6-7

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: **But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”**

For us to “walk in the light,” we need to abide in Christ and let Him abide in us. This will help us to stand faithful in these last days with peace in our hearts.