

# - The Woman on the Beast -

## **OPENING**

Previously we studied Chapter 16 and learnt of the seven bowl judgements that culminated in the War of all Wars – the Battle of Armageddon – where the Antichrist will lead the kings of the earth and an innumerable army to fight against the King of kings, Jesus Christ who returns to earth with the church, the bride of Christ.

Tonight's study is Chapter 17 which gives us insight into two symbolic figures called the Harlot that rides the Beast. An understanding of this 'harlot' will help you see just how involved she is throughout all of history. Let's examine this in greater detail:

## **DISCOVER – The Woman on the Beast**      **Read Revelation 17:1-7.**

### **What are the two main symbolic characters described in this chapter?**

There is an adulterous prostitute female and she was sitting on a scarlet beast over many waters.

### **Describe each of them.**

The woman is dressed in purple and scarlet, was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand filled with filth. She had an interesting title tattooed upon her forehead. She was drunk with the blood of true Christians. All the kings of the earth had dealings with her which affected every inhabitant of earth. The beast is scarlet in colour and is covered with blasphemous names. It had seven heads and ten horns.

### **EXPLAIN THE WOMAN (v.18)**

A City or more? (v18)..... The woman is a reference to the city that reigns over the kings of the earth...this is Rome, which was the political, economic, and religious centre of the world at the time. But this woman is more than just the city of Rome.

Babylon (v5)..... The woman is called, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth". There is a mystery to her identity however we can get a partial glimpse of who she is...mystery also denotes spirituality. "Babylon" comes from Babel (Gen. 11) where people decided to build a tower that would reach God through their own wisdom and strength. And then God interfered and caused them all to speak different languages, or to 'babble'. However, Nimrod, the ruler at that time, and his wife and child originated a false religion where people worshipped a mother and a son. It's from this place of Babylon that originated the beginnings of all paganism, idol worship, and all false approaches to God, all erroneous religion and faith. Babylon is an anti-God mentality that has two sides to it... the religious side and the commercial side.

False Religious System..... Remember, Satan always will counterfeit the genuine. In the Bible, Israel is spoken of as a woman in Rev. 12, belonging to God... and the church is spoken of as the bride of Christ. This woman is the counterfeit false religious worship system of the world and is an abomination to the heart of God.

### **EXPLAIN THE BEAST (v.8-15)**

The Beast..... The beast has seven heads and ten horns and is the same beast from Revelation 13 – the Antichrist.

Seven Heads (v9-10)..... These represent seven mountains. Rome was known as the city on seven hills. But v.10 also says it represents seven kings, five have fallen, one is, and the other is to come: Egypt,

Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia, and Greece.... Then Rome.... Then the one to come, a revived Roman Empire in the Tribulation Period which is the Antichrist's Government.

The Ten Kings (v12-13).... These are ten world power nations that in the tribulation will rally right behind the Antichrist giving their full support. Many believe this may be the European Economic Community. Daniel prophesied about this also.

War is coming... (v14) this alludes to the battle of Armageddon in chp.16 and the pouring out of the sixth and seven bowl judgements.

#### **WHAT IT MEANS.....**

This false religious system is closely knit with the beast at first (v3) like teammates. She is politically involved (v2), and possesses great wealth (v.4), and will also be guilty of persecuting Christians (v6). Have you ever read of false wealthy religious systems that have persecuted Christians in history??? False religion will dominate the world in the tribulation period. Many identify this harlot as the Roman Catholic Church, but false religion is not limited to any one church.

A Means to an End (v16-17)..... During the first half of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will be using a one-world religious system to 'bring the world together in peace and harmony'. Once his power has been consolidated, the Antichrist will no longer need the help of religious Babylon and will turn on her (v.16-17). He will then set himself up to be worshipped in the rebuilt Temple of Jerusalem.

Similarities to the Roman Catholic Church.... Many teachers of eschatology (last days) show how this woman is the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), however you need to understand that 'Mystery Babylon' is operating within the RCC however it is much bigger than that. **Mystery Babylon is every false apostate religious system since the time of Babel...wherever there is greed, materialism, a false representation of the gospel, God is entertained, and the Biblical message of repentance from sins and walking in holiness to Jesus is not proclaimed!!** The RCC teaches doctrines that are not in Scripture:

- \* *Immaculate Conception (Mary's perpetual virginity)*
- \* *Mary's Bodily Assumption (Mary raptured to heaven like Jesus)*
- \* *Mary the "co-mediatrix" (Jesus is the mediator and Mary is the co-mediatrix)*
- \* *Mary the Queen of Heaven (the worship of a mother and a son, rooted in many pagan religions)*
- \* *Revised Ten Commandments (2<sup>nd</sup> command removed, 10<sup>th</sup> command divided into 2)*
- \* *The Dark Ages, Popes involved in criminal activities, sexual immorality rampant, the selling of indulgences*
- \* *During the Inquisition, Pope Sixtus IV was given the heads of 2000 Christians as a gift by Tomas de Torquemada, "The Inquisitor General"*
- \* *In 1986, Pope John Paul II invited the world's religious leaders for a prayer summit in Assis, Italy – a representation of all religions asking God to give peace. It was a peace they all asked for as long as it had nothing to do with Jesus Christ!*

#### **CLOSING THOUGHT:**

**READ REVELATION 17:b...** "until God's words are fulfilled". These are important words to remember. We are reading about a God who fulfils His word. Let this be a reminder in our study of what will take place in the last days, that God is fulfilling His word. We are reading it now even before it all comes to pass.... But don't forget, that all these things **MUST** come to pass. Do not be discouraged, or doubtful, or faithless. Nothing occurs without the Father's preordained plan. Let your faith continue to be in Christ who is our salvation from all these things that are coming.