

WEEK 17: The Great Prostitute and the Beast..... Revelation 17

• **Last week**

- John saw the pouring out of the first six bowls
- They each come in rapid-fire succession
- And each is targeted at different group or object
 - 1st: Painful sores on worshipers of the beast
 - 2nd: Seas turned to blood and creatures die
 - 3rd: Rivers and springs turned to blood
 - 4th: Sun made to scorch unbelievers
 - 5th: Kingdom of Antichrist plunged in darkness
 - 6th: River Euphrates is dried up
- The river, swollen by ice melt from the extreme heat, will suddenly and miraculously, dry up
- This will be accompanied by the demonic deception of the kings of the earth
 - Isn't the world under Antichrist's control?
 - Then who are these individuals?
 - We'll find out in chapter 17

• **It is done!**

- The seventh angel pours out the content of his bowl
- And a voice from heaven announces, "It is done!"
ginomai – it has come to pass
- This word was used by Jesus Himself
*Your kingdom come. Your will **be done**. On earth as it is in heaven.* – Matthew 6:10 ESV
 - It carries the idea of fulfillment
 - Something anticipated has come to pass
 - Sounds similar to Jesus' words on the cross:

So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. – John 19:30 ESV

teleō – carries the idea of completion

- God's wrath was poured out on Jesus on the cross
- He suffered so that we might not have to

*For **God has not destined us for wrath**, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. – 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 ESV*

*...they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming of God's Son from heaven – Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. **He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.** – 1 Thessalonians 1:10 NLT*

- The judgment of repentant sinners is complete
 - The 7th bowl complete the judgment of unrepentant sinners
- The great city
- As a result of the earthquake...
 - ...the city was split into three parts
 - ...the cities of the world fell
 - ...and Babylon drained the cup of the wine of the fury of God's wrath
 - Are the "great city" and "Babylon the great" the same thing?
 - They seem to be two different cities
 - Remember what happened to the two witnesses

*And their dead bodies will lie in the street of **the great city** which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, **where also our Lord was crucified.** – Revelation 8:11 ESV*

- John is seeing three separate outcomes:
 - Jerusalem is split into three parts
 - The destruction of the cities of the world
 - And God's wrath coming against Babylon the Great
- Jerusalem's fate is **preparatory**, not **punitory**
- God is getting ready to do something
- These are the first of a series of miraculous alterations to the landscape of the city itself
- They will culminate with the return of Christ

*...in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west,
Making a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south. – Zechariah 14:4 ESV*

- God is preparing Jerusalem for the Millennial Kingdom
- Disappearing islands and falling hail
 - What is going on here?
 - Is this literal or figurative?
 - There is no *good* reason to view this as figurative
 - Other than it sounds too far-fetched
 - God seems to be leveling the earth's topography
 - He could be returning it to its pre-flood condition
 - Jerusalem will become the focal point of earth

*All the land from Geba, north of Judah, to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, **will become one vast plain. But Jerusalem will be raised up in its original place and will be inhabited all the way from the Benjamin Gate over to the site of the old gate, then to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses. And Jerusalem will be filled, safe at last, never again to be cursed and destroyed.** – Zechariah 14:10-11 NLT*

- And how do the people respond?
 - Cursing, not confession
 - Railing, rather than repentance
- **The great prostitute**
 - John is given another vision
 - He describes six different entities:
 - The Great Prostitute ← THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE
 - The kings of the earth
 - The dwellers on earth
 - A woman
 - A scarlet beast
 - Babylon the Great, mother of prostitutes
 - God is bringing judgment on the great prostitute because...
 - The kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality with her
 - The people of the earth are intoxicated with her sexual immorality
 - But who is she?
 - Her description:
 - She is arrayed in purple and scarlet
 - She is adorned with gold, silver, and pearls
 - She is holding a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality
 - She has a mark on her forehead: *Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations*
 - She is drunk with the blood of the saints
 - And she is riding a scarlet beast

- **The scarlet beast**

- The beast is full of blasphemous names
- And it has seven heads and ten horns
- But who is this?

*Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw **a beast** rising up out of the sea, **having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.***

– Revelation 13:4 ESV

- This is the Antichrist
- But why would the Antichrist have seven heads and ten horns?
- And why is the woman riding shown as riding the Antichrist?
- Even John “marveled greatly”

- **God’s explanation**

- There are two things going on here:
 - The woman (prostitute) represents a false religion
 - This is the apostate church
 - It will be closely associated with the Antichrist
 - The beast is the Antichrist
 - But John has already been shown that the world will ultimately worship Antichrist
 - So, where does this apostate church fit in?
- This describes the political/religious landscape of the last days
 - Antichrist will come to power at the beginning of the Tribulation
 - But he will be part of a confederation of world leaders
 - John is told that the Antichrist represents 7 kings or kingdoms

...the seven heads are...seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come... – vs 9-10

The fallen five: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece

The one that is: Rome (at the time John wrote Revelation)

The one not yet come: Antichrist’s kingdom

- The beast represents the 7th kingdom
- But his kingdom will “remain only a little while”

...he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. – Revelation 13:5 ESV

- Antichrist is described as:

...the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction

- This refers to his death and resurrection (13:3)
 - He comes back to life and reigns a second time
- The ten horns
- These are ten kings who form an alliance with Antichrist
 - They are not past kings or kingdoms because they:

...have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. – vs 12

- In an attempt to consolidate power, the ten kings will turn on the prostitute (false religion)

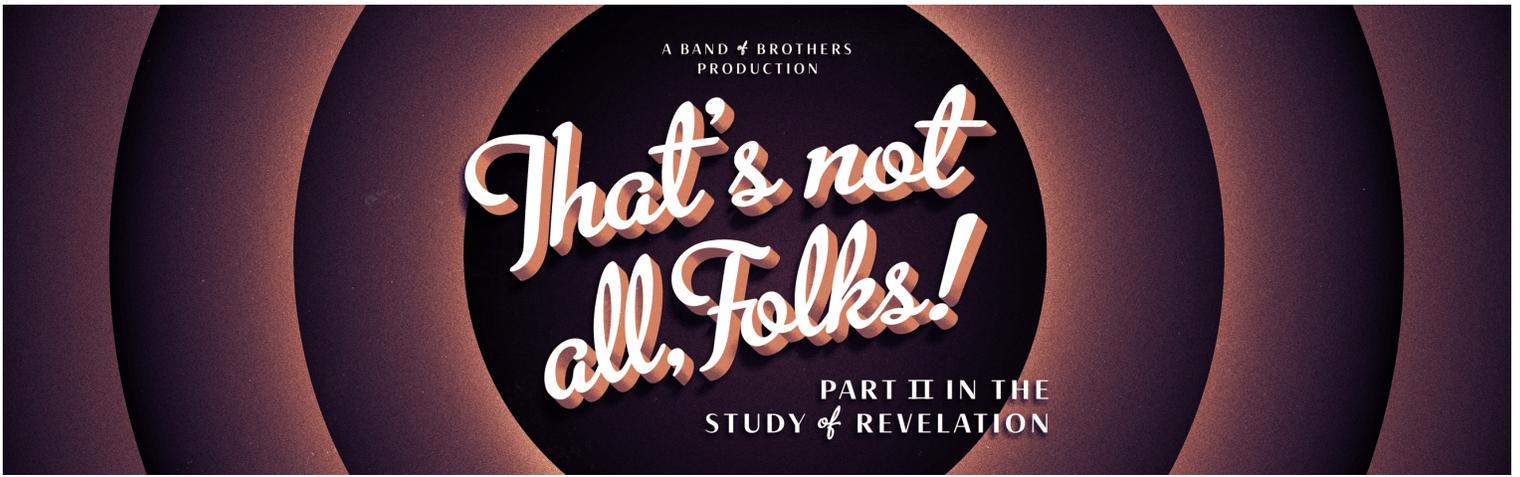
...these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire... – vs 16

- Antichrist will share his power with nothing or no one
- This take place at the midway point of the Tribulation
- Antichrist will set himself up as god
- There will be no place for the apostate church
- But all of this is part of God's divine plan

...for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. – Revelation 17:17 ESV

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When John writes, "For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose," what should those words tell us about the sovereignty of our God? How should it impact our faith?
- We have seen the battle that can take place between the government and religion. Why do you think Antichrist will bother to use an apostate religion to accomplish his agenda?
- What is the significance of John describing the kings and the people of committing sexual immorality with the apostate church? What does that look like in our day?



Week 18 Homework: Mighty Is the Lord Our God. – Revelation 18

- Read Revelation 18. Also read pages 155-166 of the Devotionary™ study on Revelation.
- What reasons do verses 1-3 give us for the fall of Babylon the great?

What will be the ramifications or outcome of her fall?

Verse 3 of chapter 18 is a recapitulation of verse 2 of chapter 17. What exactly is it that the kings and the people of the earth are guilty of? What does it mean for them to be drunk on her sexual immorality?

- In verses 4-8, God calls His people to come out of Babylon. What are the reasons that He gives?

And what reasons does God give for the fall of Babylon?

Take a few minutes to read Isaiah 47. Then write down all the indictments God levels on Babylon through His prophet. Keep in mind that most of these have yet to be fulfilled.

- Look back at Revelation 18:9-19. What are the reasons given for the mourning of the world's kings, merchants, and sailors when they hear of the fall of Babylon?

How do these individuals describe the fall of Babylon?

But according to verse 20, what should be the response of the righteous to the fall of this great city and why?

- Review verses 21-24. What does God say is going to happen to this once great city, the capital of Antichrist's global empire?

Read Jeremiah 25:1-11. This is a message of warning to the people of Judah? What similarities do you see?
