

## Behold | Sermons through the Revelation

Sermon #35 | Revelation 17:9-18 | The Judgment of Babylon, part 2

### Revelation 17: 8-17 | The Meaning of the Beast

- In verse 7, the angel promises that **I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast.** Beginning in verse 8, the angel delivers!
- Verses 8-10 – The presentation of the beast.
  - The beast is the antichrist.
  - *At the time of this vision, he was, and is not; and shall ascend...* (v. 8). We interpret this to say that *at this time* the beast will be *between* his “first coming” and his “second coming.” That is, he is currently dead (by assassination?)
  - If this is accurate, it places the timing of verse 8 at the midpoint of the tribulation.
  - The resurrection of the antichrist will cause great **wonder**.
  - The beast has **seven heads which are seven mountains** (v. 9). These are not literal mountains (just as the waters are not literal), but rather are **seven kings** (v. 10, were **there are seven kings** can be understood as *they are seven kings*).
    - Five of these kings **are fallen** *in the day of the vision*, not in John’s day. These are *future kings whose identity is unknown*.
    - One of these kings **is** reigning in that coming day.
    - One of these **is not yet come** in that day.
  - Logic says that the antichrist must be the sixth king. He will overcome kings 3,4, and 5 (Daniel 7:8). Number 7 will come after the midpoint, but we are not told of his identity, and he will only **continue for a short space** (the King of future Babylon, perhaps?)
- Verses 11-12 – The reign of the beast.
  - There is an **eighth** king who is **of the seven** (v. 11). This is perhaps a reference to the antichrist being raised from the dead, and thus having two lives.
  - There are also **ten kings** who have **no kingdom as yet** (v. 11). These surely represent the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision.
  - Since they have no kingdom, these 10 kings must arise at the end of the seven years. Indeed, they reign for **one hour**. Literally the Greek is *the same hour*, thus likely equated with the second half of the tribulation. These kings are alive to the very end and thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:19-20).
- Verses 13-14 – The power of the beast.
  - The ten kings, along with the resurrected antichrist, **have one mind** and work together as a unified force (v. 13).

- The ten kings will engage, along with the antichrist, in the Battle of Armageddon (v. 14). Thus the kings of Revelation 16:14 are these ten kings plus the Antichrist.
- Verses 15-17 – The enemy of the coalition
  - One of the most shocking things to most people is that *Babylon is the enemy of the Antichrist and his system*. Notice that the ten horns **hate the whore**.
  - As we previously studied, future Babylon will be a sensuous, self-indulged city. Sensuous self-indulgence is not compatible with a totalitarian regime.
  - God is going to use ten wicked kings who foolishly give their kingdom to another king in order to destroy the godless city of Babylon. In other words, God is going to use *totalitarianism* to kill *godlessness* and then He is going to cast *totalitarianism* into the lake of fire!

### Revelation 17:18 | The Meaning of the Woman

- The identity of the woman is crystal clear. She is **that great city** Babylon.
- She **reigneth over the kings of the earth** because, in the end, she is the one that rebels against totalitarianism and does her own thing.

### Thoughts on Babylon

- Babylon is going to be rebuilt as a result of the Ezekiel 38-39 war which decimates the Middle East as we know it.
- The world has often rebuilt places it destroyed; it will do the same in the future.
- The history of humanity under her own devices is always excessive freedoms (libertine, no personal restraints) swinging to totalitarianism. Even though the human heart hates both of these, history has always tended toward these.
- Perhaps the reason history tends to the extremes is that the middle ground requires *personal restraint amidst personal freedom*.
- Only societies with strong systems of faith-values have been able to avoid the extremes of excessive freedom or excessive government control.
- Our society is currently in danger of welcoming totalitarianism.
  - We accept curfews by our local governments
  - We call upon the government to mandate behavior
  - We find it acceptable to report non work-related social activities to employers
  - We are comfortable with mandated closure of business so long as government sends a check
- There is a freedom in Christ that our society desperately needs to discover. If it does not, it will find a bondage under government.