

I. The Great Harlot (17:1-6)

Verse 1

One

of the seven angels
 who had the seven bowls
 came and said to me,
 "Come, (*deuro*)
 I will show you (*deiknyo*)
 the punishment

- 1) of the great prostitute, (*porne*)
- 2) who sits on many waters.

This is the eight time in Revelations that angels have interpreted a scene for John. The "many waters" = large multitude (Rev. 17:15)

Verse 2

With her

- 3) the kings of the earth (*leaders*)
 committed adultery (*porneuo* = immorality)
- 4) and the inhabitants of the earth (*lovers or earth*)
 were intoxicated (*methyo*)
 with the wine
 of her adulteries." (*porneia*)

Intoxication is an indication that people have lost control after they became dependent upon what the woman promised.

Rev. 14:8 – Babylon the Great "made" all the nations drink of the wine of her adulteries.

Rev. 16:19 – God "gave her the cup filled ...the fury of his wrath"

Verse 3

Then the angel
 carried me away
 in the Spirit
 into a desert. (appears to be on earth)

There I saw

5) a woman

6) sitting on (joined in and being supported)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| The Antichrist
Rev. 13:1 | } | a) a scarlet beast (<i>kokkinos</i> = royal red) |
| | | b) that was covered
with blasphemous names |
| | | c) and had seven heads |
| | | d) and ten horns. |

Verse 4

The woman

- 7) was dressed in purple and scarlet,
- 8) and was glittering with gold,
- 9) precious stones
- 10) and pearls.
- 11) She held a golden cup (*poterion*)
 in her hand,
 filled with abominable things (*bdelygma* = idols)
 and the filth (*akathartos*) of her adulteries.

Signs of
 wealth and
 power

This woman appears to be successful with her wealth and power – but she is a deceiver. Just as God is pouring out his full wrath on the woman, so she is pouring out her full abominations upon the world.

Verse 5

12) This title was written

on her forehead: (*metopon*)

MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT

THE MOTHER

OF PROSTITUTES (*porne*)

AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS (*bdelygma*)

OF THE EARTH.

The name on the forehead is a brand/mark of the owner – she is a harlot used to lead others into immorality by Babylon the Great. Who is Babylon the Great? Rome – Jerusalem – Babylon?

The name Babylon is mentioned 287 times in scripture.

The "concept" of Babylon = The religious/commercial force that carries out the antichrist's agenda.

Verse 6

I saw

that the woman
13) was drunk with the blood
of the saints,
the blood of those
who bore testimony to Jesus.

Here the truth becomes clear – the false religion will be used to
destroy the true religion/faith in Jesus Christ.

When I saw her,

I was greatly astonished. (thumatzo = wonder)

II. The Beast and the Harlot (17:7-11)

Verse 7

Then the angel

said to me:

"Why are you astonished?

I will explain to you

the mystery of the woman

and of the beast she rides,

which has the seven heads

and ten horns.

Why are you astonished? 1) The fact that a “religious”
organization can do such great harm to Christians?

Verse 8

The beast, (antichrist)

which you saw,

once was, (past but ended)

now is not, (currently not)

and will come up (future realization)

out of the Abyss

and go to his destruction. (apoleia = hell)

Appears to refer to a death and resurrection of the beast (Rev.
13:3).

The antichrist came from the bottomless pit and will be cast in
the lake of fire at the end of his time.

The inhabitants

of the earth

whose names have not been written

in the book of life

from the creation of the world

will be astonished (thumatzo – deceived with this)

when they see the beast, (antichrist)

because he once was, (past)

now is not, (present)

and yet will come. (future)

His apparent deception through resurrection will be effective in a
world looking for signs and wonders without truth.

Verse 9

"This calls for a mind

with wisdom. (sophia = spiritual wisdom)

Seek deeper understandings from the Holy Spirit

The seven heads

are seven hills (oros = mountains)

on which the woman sits.

Rome was built on seven hills.



Some say this is absolute
proof that the harlot of
Rev. 17 is The Roman
Catholic Church because
Rome is built primarily
on seven hills.

However, Jerusalem is
built on and around
seven significant hills as
well!

NOTE: The scripture speaks of
seven MOUNTAINS (oros) not
hills. Likely figurative.



Verse 10

They (heads) are also seven kings.

This appears NOT to be figurative, but gives us a timeline of events to consider.

Five have fallen, (pipto = lost power/death)

Five of the seven have already been killed or defeated

one is, (present reality)

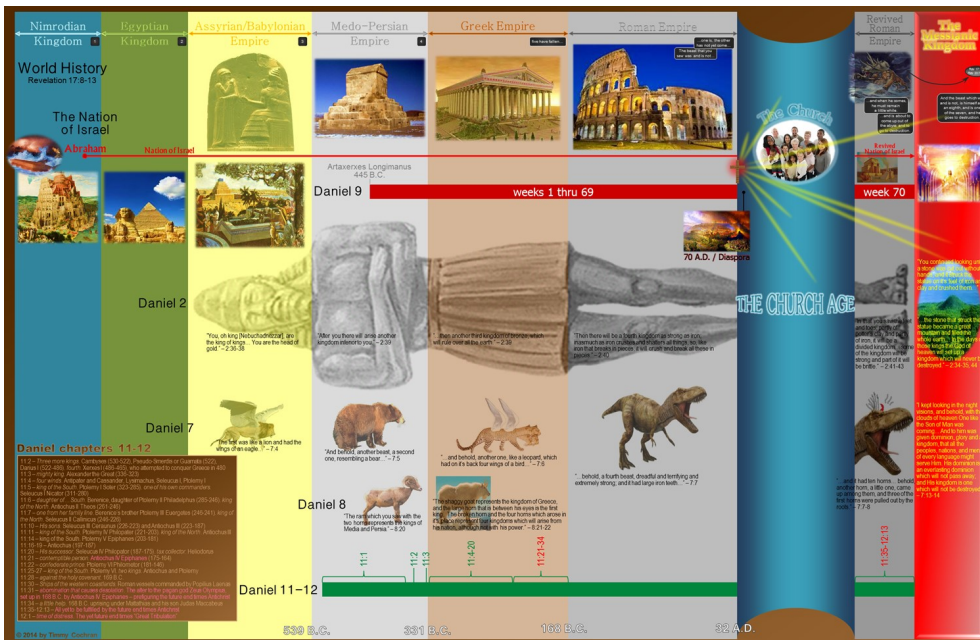
One of the seven is currently in power/control in John's time

the other has not yet come; (future)

but when he does come,

he must remain for a little while. (oligos = briefly)

The seventh king is still coming after the others and will have only a short tenure before number eight shows up.



Verse 11

The beast

who once was, (past)

and now is not, (present)

is an eighth king. (future)

He belongs to the seven (like the previous)

and is going to his destruction.

The antichrist will become the sole ruler and final king of earth prior to the return of Christ. He will have a human form but is bound for the lake of fire.

III. The Ten Kings (17:12-15)

Verse 12

"The ten horns you saw are ten kings

Similar to Daniel 7:7-8 and to the ten toes in Daniel 2 Some say this is the revival of the Roman Empire (EU)

who have not yet (future)

received a kingdom,

but who for one hour (specific time period)

will receive authority

as kings along with the beast.

Verse 13

They have one purpose (gnome = mind – single focus) and will give their power (dynamis) and authority (exousia)

to the beast.

Ultimately puppets of the antichrist. May give the beast the appearance of a democracy but the reality is all power and authority is in the hands of the beast.

These appear to be the kings of the earth that join with the antichrist in the war of Armageddon against Jesus and the saints (Rev. 16:16)

Verse 14

They will make war (polemeo = wage war) against the Lamb, (Jesus – and those with him) but the Lamb will overcome them (nikao)

because he is Lord of lords

and King of kings—

and with him will be his

called, (kletos = invited to a banquet, appointed)

chosen (ekletos = elect of God, selected) and

faithful (pistos = convinced) followers."

Just as Mystery Babylon represents the false religion and is working for the antichrist, "The Lamb" becomes a picture of those who represent and serve Christ.

Verse 15

Then the angel said to me,

*"The waters you saw,
where the prostitute sits,*

*are peoples,
multitudes,
nations and
languages.*

} Worldwide
influence

The harlot 1) sits on "many waters" = worldwide influence with people and people groups and 2) sits on the scarlet beast which has influence over seven kings and kingdoms. It appears that the beast has political influence over political entities whereas the harlot deceives the people themselves.

IV. The Harlot Judged (17:16-18)

Verse 16

The beast
and the ten horns you saw

Heads are generally kingdoms = political power structures –
horns are generally kings or leaders of kingdoms.

will hate (miseo = to persue) **the prostitute.**

They will bring her to ruin (eremoo = desolate)

and leave her naked; (gymnos)

they will eat (esthio = devour) **her flesh**

and burn her with fire.

Earlier in this chapter, the harlot was riding on the scarlet beast showing mutuality, but in the end the antichrist will not have a rival with the people and he and his kings will destroy even this false religious system. **Evil is never a good partner!**

Verse 17

For God

has put (didomi = to grant or permit) **it**
into their hearts

to accomplish his purpose (gnome = mind/goal)

by agreeing to give the beast
their power to rule,

until God's words (logos = written holy word)
are fulfilled. (teleo = finished)

God gives them what they want – freedom to rule for a time, knowing that all things are according to HIS plan and purpose.

Ultimately, the harlot is judged by God through the means of the evil that perpetuates and depends upon the harlot.

Verse 18

The woman you saw (harlot)

is the great city (polis)

that rules (echo = to hold, possess)

over the kings

of the earth."

The great city is a much debated title:

- 1) Is this a real city? Babylon, Jerusalem, Rome, New York*
- 2) Is this an organization or nation? Judaism, America, Islam*
- 3) Is this a new thing? internet, technology, New Age Movement*