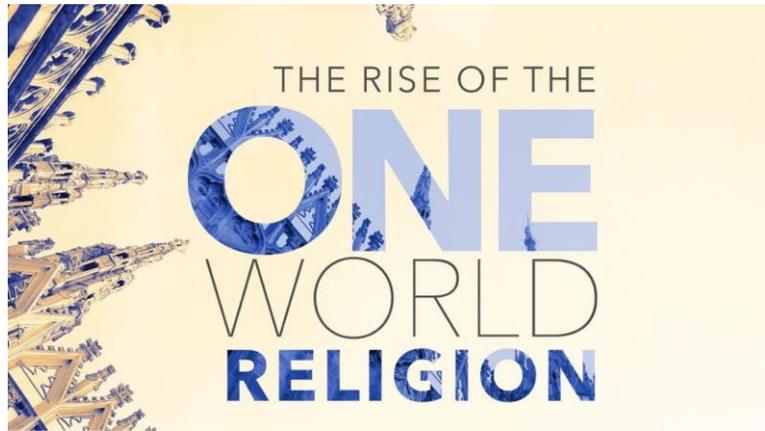


What Must Take Place After This (The Destruction of the Final World Religion)

During the Tribulation the world will be united around a one world religion, one world government, and one world currency. Because of all of the catastrophes in the world with the wrath of God being poured out on the earth, they will seek help through religion. While the politics and currency somewhat unite the world, it will be the false worship of the beast and



this one world religion that will truly unite the world. People are drawn to religion and have a desire to fill their hearts with a knowledge of God. However, because of the fallen nature of man, the world will be unwilling to submit to the one true God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. They will however be enamored and deceived by the words of the False Prophet compelling the world to worship the Antichrist and the statue that the False Prophet built (Rev 13). The world will turn to the antichrist to be their savior during the devastation on the earth. This one world religion is known as Babylon the great. This one world religion began in Genesis 11:1-9. The new world after the flood in a humanistic way built a monument for itself. Led by a proud man by the name of Nimrod, he led the people to rebel against God. As a result, God scattered these descendants and they took their false religion around the world with them. Babylon remained and was indeed the center of idolatrous worship. During the Tribulation, Babylon will return where it started. The devil who deceived the people at Babel will once again deceive the world. The destruction of the final world religion is the theme of chapters 17-18, personified as a harlot.

Revelation chapters 17 & 18 are somewhat of an interlude or intermission. Once chapter 16 is complete with the pouring out of the 7th bowl of God's wrath, Christ will return and end the world in the battle of Armageddon (chapter 19). So, chapters 17 & 18 are a digression to describe particularly the judgment of the one world system set up by the unholy Trinity. These chapters describe this world system that is led by the unholy Trinity and particularly the destruction of it. These chapters describe the target of God's judgment.

Text: Revelation 17

Main Idea: The one world religion, and world system at that time known as Babylon will be destroyed when Jesus returns to the earth to set up His Kingdom.

1. **The Depiction of the Harlot:** The Great Harlot is a metaphor for false Religion, spiritual defection, idolatry and religious apostasy that is promoted by the unholy trinity. (v. 1-6, 15)

One of the seven angels who poured out the seven bowls now speaks to John and tells him the purpose of the bowls, namely to bring judgment upon the great prostitute.

The major question of this section is “Who is the Great Prostitute?” The harlot is not an actual prostitute. In the Old Testament there are many cities which are designated as harlot cities because of their idolatry and pursuit of false religion (Nineveh, Nah 3:1,4, Tyre, Is 23:15-17 & sadly Jerusalem, Is 1:21).



- **The Authority of the Harlot:** The false religious system of the Antichrist will have dominion over the whole unredeemed world. (v. 1b, 15)

The harlot “sits on many waters.” Verse 15 interprets this phrase for us telling us that the waters are “peoples, and multitudes and nations and languages.” Jeremiah 51:13 also gives us insight into this phrase describing Babylon as “dwell[ing] by many waters.” The metaphor seems clear. The harlot doesn’t simply have influence, but rather dominates all the unredeemed peoples and multitudes and nations of the world during that time. The one world religion of the Antichrist will be universal, and the entire world will be committed to the false worship of the Antichrist and the Babylonian system. In this manner, the authority of the harlot will be universal. The false religious system will have total domination over the world. It will truly be the greatest deception and the greatest rebellion against God that the world has ever seen.

- **The Alliances of the Harlot:** The kings of the world will be totally deceived, passionately drunk with the wine of the false religion of the Antichrist. (v. 2-3)

The scope of influence of the one world religion will be extensive. Verse 2 teaches us that the Kings of the earth, those who are the leaders and have the greatest authority in the world will be totally consumed with this religion. In a metaphorical way, they will “commit sexual immorality” with this religion. It is inappropriate to relate the nations to Israel in the Old Testament and call this “spiritual adultery” (Ez 16, 23). These kings and the nations of the earth do not know God and are never pictured as the “wife” of God.

Those who “dwell on the earth” (unbelievers, see Rev 3:10, 6:10, 8:13, 11:10, 13:8, 12, 14, 14:6, 17:8) will be in alliance with the harlot and will be so captivated that the vision metaphorically says they will drink the wine of the Antichrist and be passionately intoxicated with the Antichrist’s false world religion (see Jer 51:7). Chapter 13:8 tells us that “all who dwell on earth will worship [the Antichrist].” The world’s leaders will join themselves with the harlot, religiously, economically, politically, & militarily.

Who is the woman? Who is the scarlet beast?

A new vision appears in v. 3. John is carried away in the Spirit into the wilderness, most likely where the city of Babylon exists. There John sees a woman who is certainly the harlot described in v. 1-2. This woman is sitting on a scarlet beast whose description identifies the beast as the Antichrist (13:1,4, 14:9, 16:10). The fact that the harlot is being carried by the Antichrist reveals their cooperation and support. The Antichrist will be supporting and propagating this false religion in the world. At yet at the same time, the harlot will be in a dominant role and at least outwardly controls and directs the Antichrist. This relationship will continue for a while until the Antichrist will begin hating the harlot and will “make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire” (v. 16).



The scarlet color of the Antichrist reminds us of the splendor royalty that the Antichrist will have in the world. He will also be “full of blasphemous names.” The Antichrist will claim to be God and in arrogance will speak horrible things against God (Dan 7:25, 11:36).

The fact that this beast has seven heads and ten horns once again reveals the alliances that the Antichrist has made in the world at that time. Verses 9-10 reveal that the “seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings.” The ten horns are “ten kings” (v. 12). These symbols represent the alliances & governments who will submit to the Antichrist at that time. The Antichrist along with the harlot, the false religion of Babylon, will overcome the entire world encompassing kings and rulers from all over the earth.

- **The Apparel of the Harlot:** The false religion of the world will be very attractive hiding the death that it promotes. (v. 4a)

Just as prostitutes adorn themselves to make themselves attractive, so this harlot does as well in order to attract her victims. She is adorned with purple and scarlet, gold and precious stones and pearls. This false religion which deceives the world is very attractive. This harlot has no trouble trapping and tempting the world to believe in her.



- **The Abominations of the Harlot:** The false religion of the world will cause the whole world to be drunk with her idolatry and immoral activities. (v. 4b-5)

Just like every harlot, this false religion will not only deceive but will be desirous to destroy and take everything from her victims. Being wealthy, with a golden cup full of

abominations and impurities she will intoxicate the whole world, making them drunk and enticing them to follow her unclean and immoral activities. Just like ancient Babylon in Jeremiah 51:7, this false religion will “make all the earth drunken” to a state where all the nations will be “mad.” The false religion of the world at that time will be the worse ever.

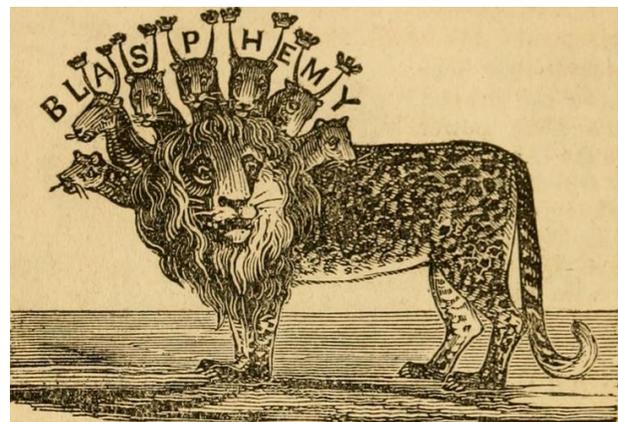
It wasn't uncommon for harlots to name themselves in the Roman world. This harlot also has a name on her forehead: “**Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations.**” John says that this is a “mystery.” Some believe this is a part of the actual title indicating clearly that this is not a reference to a geographical area, but a secret reality to be revealed in the end times. The title reveals much about this false religion. It will be characterized as Babylon, the great resister against God. It will be great because of its far-reaching influence. It will be so influential that it will be called the mother or the source of all harlotry, adultery, abominations, and false blasphemous worship on the earth.

- **The Accusation of the Harlot:** False religion not only during the Tribulation but throughout history has had & will have a murderous lust for violence against God's people. (v. 6a)

The harlot, false religion, is seen as drunk, not from wine, but from the blood of God's people throughout the history of the world. Both the Saints of the old covenant, and the witnesses of Jesus in the new covenant have been and will continue to be the recipients of the harlot's hatred. Throughout history countless numbers of God's people have been murdered by false religion. In the Tribulation, this false religion will lead the world to hate God and anyone who follows the Lamb. Countless numbers will be martyred for following Jesus Christ and rejecting the Antichrist and his religion (Rev 6:9, 13:7).

2. The Description of the Harlot & the Beast: (v. 6b-14, 18)

When John saw the vision, he was greatly perplexed and marveled (v. 6b). But the angel responded and implied that there was no need to wonder because the mystery of this beast with seven heads and ten horns and the harlot would be explained to him. In these verses, the angel explains to John the mystery. It is possible that John understood who the individuals were, but was possibly perplexed at the connection between the two figures. It is clear that the whole world is going to worship the Antichrist (13:4, 8, 12). But how this woman who is carried by the beast fits into the picture may have been perplexing.



- **The Identification of the Harlot:** The woman, the harlot, is the great city of Babylon which reigns over the kings of the earth. (v. 18)

The great city has been viewed as a symbol of the Antichrist's religious empire. Some view it metaphorically, but it is most likely also a literal city during the Tribulation. Some have identified it as Rome, others as Jerusalem. But it is most likely a new city that the Antichrist will build. Chapters 17-18 refer continually to Babylon on the Euphrates. It will most likely be built by the Antichrist near the Euphrates in the middle east and will become an epicenter where all of the Antichrist's teaching, power and influence will flow out. Allusions can be compared to Old Testament prophecies (see chart). Also, the description of the cities destruction in chapter 18 suggests that it is a literal city (see also Is 13:1-14:27, Jer 50-51). This city will be the epicenter of the Antichrist's reign. All of his power and influence will come out of that city and impact the entire world. That city will be representative of the false religion of the world and will have such influence that it will reign over the kings of the earth.

Compare the following similarities:

Rev 17:1	with	Jer 51:13,
Rev 17:2-4	with	Jer 51:7,
Rev 18:7	with	Is 47:5,
Rev 18:2	with	Is 13:21 & Jer 51:8,
Rev 18:4	with	Jer 50:8 & 51:6, 45;
Rev 18:5	with	Jer 51:9;
Rev 18:6	with	Jer 50:15 & 51:24;
Rev 18:21	with	Jer 51:63-64

- **The Identification of the Beast:** The beast is the Antichrist who will be the most influential satanic ruler the world has ever seen.
- **The Origin & destruction of the Beast:** This beast is described as one who “was, and is not, and is about to come again” rising out of the abyss, the bottomless pit who will ultimately go into destruction. (v. 8a)

The Antichrist's Description

- Intellectual genius (Dan 7:8)
- Outstanding orator (Dan 7:20)
- Greatest military leader (Dan 7:23)
- Shrewd, calculating, manipulating politician (Dan 8:25, 11:21)
- Ultimate religious charlatan (2 Thes 2:4)

This is a description of the Antichrist's fake death and resurrection (see 13:3, 12). That alleged miracle which mimics the true resurrection of Jesus Christ, will be used by the False Prophet to convince the world to follow the Antichrist and worship him (see 13:14). The Antichrist is one who comes out of the abyss, the place where the demons are incarcerated (see 9:11, 11:7, 20:1,3, Lk 8:21). This literal man will be indwelt by a powerful demon. His power will arise from the place of Satan. He will lead the whole world to worship him alone. No one will be able to be strong enough to come against the political, religious or military power of this leader (see 13:4). The masses of humanity on the earth will be convinced and will follow this overwhelming satanic power of the final political empire of the world. The Beast will be sent to destruction, eternal damnation in the lake of fire. (19:20, 20:10). This is a description of the ultimate reality of the antichrist. He will be crushed by Jesus and sent to eternal damnation.

- **The Followers of the Beast:** Those who dwell on the earth who are unregenerate followers of the Antichrist (“earth dwellers”), whose names are not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world will be enamored by the Antichrist and

deceived. They will be amazed at the recovery and healing of his “mortal wound” (13:12). Only the elect will not be deceived by the Antichrist’s deception (v. 8b, Matt 24:24).

- **The seven heads of the Beast:** The vision calls for wisdom which is an expression used to introduce a difficult and complex idea. It may be that only those who live during the time of this fulfillment will truly understand the vision. The first part of the vision is explained. The 7 heads of the beast are figuratively seven mountains on which the woman sits. All speculation is dispelled because the angel tells us that the seven mountains are seven kings (v. 10). It is very unlikely that the mountains represent _____ **Rome** _____ (interestingly built on 7 hills) and the woman represents the Roman Catholic Church. This is much too narrow of an interpretation since this Antichrist will have a worldwide empire and influence. Rather the mountains are metaphorically used to represent powers, particularly world empires embodied in their rulers.

Particular details are also given about these seven kings. Of the seven kings, “five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come” (v. 10). The five world empires that had already fallen when John had written this letter are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia & Greece. The one that existed during that time was most likely Rome. And the other one to come is certainly the Antichrist’s final world empire. And when he comes, the Antichrist and his reign, “he must remain only a little while.” His empire will be very short lived. Chapter 13:5 tells us that he will only be given authority for forty-two months to reign (the second half of the Tribulation).

Revelation 17:10-11

“they are 7 kings”	{	1 st - Egypt	Exo 1:1
		2 nd - Assyria	Jer 50:17
		3 rd - Babylon	Jer 50:17
		4 th - Medo-Persia	Dan 8:20
		5 th - Greece	Dan 8:21
“5 have fallen”	{	6 th - Rome	Luk 19:44
		7 th - ?	Rev 17:11
“1 is”	{	8 th - Beast	Rev 17:11
		“the Beast that was & is not, it is an 8 th but it belongs to the 7”	“that was but is not”

“the other has not yet come, & when he does come he must remain only a little while.”
 “the Beast that was & is not, it is an 8th but it belongs to the 7”



The Antichrist will be the seventh king, but also the eighth for “it is an eight but it belongs to the seven.” This is a confusing statement but is best understood as the Antichrist is going to be one of the seven powerful kings of the earth, but once he “was and is not” and resurrects he will become an eighth powerful force. In other words, he will be one of the seven kings prior to his supposed death and resurrection, only to be “raised” as an eighth king to rule the world. Of course, as before, the Antichrist will go to “destruction” or damnation in the eternal lake of fire (as in v. 8b).

- **The ten horns of the beast:** Furthermore, the angel describes these ten horns as kings who have not yet received a kingdom or royal power. This is a description of the rising of ten kingdoms who will have power during the Tribulation. They will in the future

receive power and authority from the Antichrist. They will be a part of the Antichrist's empire which appears to be divided into ten regions, or commonwealths where these kings will rule under the oversight of the Antichrist. But this reign will be short lived, but for "one hour." Whether this is literal or not, it is certainly a figure of speech to designate a short time. During this reign, these ten kings will be "together with the beast." They will be of "one mind" and "they will hand over their power and authority to the beast" (v. 13). These kings will be totally devoted to the Antichrist and his will.

- **The slaughter of the kings:** These kings, like Satan and the Antichrist, have one agenda, to make war on Jesus when He returns. But gloriously the Lord Jesus Christ will conquer them at the Battle of Armageddon. The spirit of the unholy Trinity (3 spirits like frogs, demonic spirits) will deceive and motivate these kings to gather at the place called Har-Magedon where they will be crushed by Jesus (see Rev 16:13-14, 16). The battle will not really be a battle, but a slaughter, as Jesus, the Lord of lords and King of kings will destroy them. This battle is described in Revelation 19. Here it simply says that Jesus will "conquer them." (see Rev 19:11-21)
- **Those with Christ:** Returning with Christ will be the ones who are "called and chosen and faithful." These are believers who come with Christ from heaven in their glorified bodies. Believers are those who are called in time (Jn 6:44), but chosen in eternity past (Eph 1:4), and those who demonstrated faithfulness by the power of the Spirit (Rom 8:9, see also Rom 8:29-30). When believers return they will simply watch Jesus effortlessly crush the greatest armed force ever assembled. Jesus will have both His elect and the holy angels with Him (Matt 24:30-31, 2 Thess 1:7).



3. **The Destruction of the Harlot:** The Antichrist's alliance with the false religious system will be destroyed. (v. 16-17)

Eventually the ten kings who rule under the Antichrist along with the Antichrist will come to hate the Harlot, the false religious system. The Harlot will only be used by the Antichrist to gain power and the worship of the world. But in the end, the Antichrist will want to be solely worshiped and unwilling to share any glory. Therefore, he will turn and "make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire" (v. 16).

All of this will be according to ___ **God's** ___ 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." The one world government will be destroyed by God and His word will be fulfilled completely as Christ sets up His rule on the earth. The false religion of the world, the empire of the Antichrist, will be destroyed.