

The Book of Revelation

25. The Destruction of Babylon



Revelation 17 - 18

Introduction

When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, Satan usurped the right that God had given man to rule the earth. Genesis 1:26. From that time on Satan has ruled over the kingdoms of the world. During the final years of this age, Satan will know that his time is short, and there will be tremendous conflict on earth. However his fall and the complete destruction of his kingdom are foretold in the book of Revelation. In Revelation 14:8 an angel announces its' fall, and we now read about it in more detail in chapters 17 and 18.

Scripture Reading: Revelation 17:1 – 18:24



In this vision the apostle John sees a 'beast'. This is the same 'beast' that we read about in chapter 13. What can you learn about this 'beast' from Revelation 17:3, 9-11? Look carefully to find the meaning of the 7 heads in v9-10 and the 10 horns in v12-13.

Riding upon this 'beast' is a woman, called 'the great prostitute or harlot'. What can you learn from the following verses about this wicked woman? What do you think this represents? Revelation 17:1-6, 15, 18, 18:24



Why do you think false worship is described as adultery or prostitution? Revelation 17:4. What is the meaning of abominations (or detestable things)? See Jeremiah 3:20, 3:9; Deuteronomy 7:25, 26
What sins has this woman been responsible for? Revelation 17:2, 6; 18:3, 7, 23-24

The 'beast' has supported this prostitute, but we see later that he attacks and destroys her. Why do you think the 'beast' hates the prostitute? Revelation 17:16-18, 13:12, 2 Thessalonians 2:4



There is a warning given to God's people – that is not just for a future time, but for today. Read Revelation 18:4. In what ways are many of the people of God entangled in these worldly systems? Discuss.

We have discovered that the vision of the woman riding on the 'beast' represents the worldly systems of religion and commerce that control this present age. God has already declared that they will be destroyed, and He will establish His Kingdom that will rule forever. Hallelujah! And so God warns His people to 'come out of her'.



What will be the response of those who love the things of this world when this happens? Revelation 18:9, 11, 14-15, 19. One of the greatest challenges we have is to be 'in the world' but not 'of the world'. Why is this so difficult? What steps do we constantly need to take to make sure that we are not drawn back into the world? Discuss.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the book of Revelation we are told that we will be blessed if we study this book. When we read the Gospels we see Jesus as our Savior, but when we read Revelation we see Him as King. This book gives us hope and encouragement to continue following the Lord, even when we face the temptation to go back to the world. Remember Jesus is praying for us: *“My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” John 17:15-16*