

Message #44**Revelation 17:14-18**

We are in a section in Revelation that deals with the subject of the destruction of Babylon. This is a very significant moment in the prophetic plan of God, specifically as it relates to Israel.

In the New Testament, other than here in Revelation, there are only six mentions of Babylon:

- 1) Matthew 1:11 - In lineage of Jesus Christ Jewish pedigree is given before captivity in Babylon
- 2) Matthew 1:12 - In lineage of Jesus Christ Jewish pedigree is given after captivity in Babylon
- 3) Matthew 1:17 - In lineage of Jesus Christ Jewish generations given from David to Babylon
- 4) Matthew 1:17 - In lineage of Jesus Christ Jewish generations given from Babylon to Christ
- 5) Acts 7:43 - Stephen testifies that Israel's idolatry brought about Babylonian judgment
- 6) I Peter 5:13 - there does appear to have been a true church in Babylon

So the judgments God will pour out on Babylon specifically have to do with her connection to Israel and not the church.

This is a critical prophetic moment just before Jesus Christ returns. God wants us to realize He will settle Israel's score and pour out His wrath on Babylon. This issue is so important that there are four major chapters in the Bible devoted to this very prophetic issue:

- 1) Jeremiah 50;
- 2) Jeremiah 51;
- 3) Revelation 17;
- 4) Revelation 18.

When we track the subject of Babylon in the Bible, God holds Babylon responsible and accountable for at least three major evil things, which did affect Israel:

(Evil #1) - She is responsible for initiating and promoting the worship of false gods which is idolatry.

God holds Babylon accountable for causing His people to worship something other than Him. Babylon introduced horrible idolatry into religion and the world. She pulled Israel away from the true God of the Bible. Some of the idols she introduced went by various names:

- 1) Bel - Jer. 51:44
- 2) Marduk - Jer. 50:2
- 3) Nebo - Is. 46:1
- 4) Succoth - benoth- II Kings 17:29-30
- 5) Tammuz - Ex. 8:14

(Evil #2) - She is responsible for promoting intoxicating immorality. Rev. 17:2; Jer. 51:7

Apparently God holds Babylon responsible for introducing immoral abominations into God's world and God's people.

When God made man and woman, He made them to enjoy physical things together. As husband and wife they could be intoxicated with each other's love and it honored the Lord.

But then there was the tower of Babel, in which men were going to build a tower to heaven. So God confused their language and the people spread out to various places. That happened in Genesis 11. Those people who spread out from Babel did not worship God. By the time we get to Genesis 18 things are so immoral that you could not find ten moral people in Sodom and the city was dominated by homosexuality (Gen. 19). By the time Moses writes the law, there are a series of sexual perversions that are abominations to God (Lev. 18).

Moses has to warn God's own people to not get involved in homosexuality, bestiality and sacrificing babies to false deities. Where did this all begin? Babylon.

(Evil #3) - She is responsible for doing evil against Israel.

God makes it very clear that He has kept the record of all of the evil things Babylon did to national Israel (Jer. 50:17-20, 29; 51:24, 49). God has kept the records of everything and Babylon will be judged for what she did to Israel.

Now God intends to literally make Babylon a "horror" statement of a demonstration of His wrath and indignation (Jer. 50:23)

As we mentioned, Babylon refers to several things:

- 1) A specific land and geographical location sometimes called Babylon and also Chaldea
It is a vast land that is comprised of many cities. Jer. 50:1, 10, 32; 51:2; 51:43
- 2) It refers to a specific city with literal streets and literal walls. Jer. 50:30; Jer. 51:12, 31, 44
- 3) It refers to an apostate religion that is completely idolatrous. Jer. 50:36, 38; Jer. 51:52
- 4) It refers to a political power and political leader. Jer. 50:18, 35; Jer. 51:
- 5) It refers to the source of depraved godlessness. Rev. 17:5

Babylon is the mother who gave birth to all of the idolatry and immorality that pulled Israel away from God.

What God predicts He will do to this place is totally and completely annihilate, eliminate, obliterate, eradicate and exterminate Babylon. He will wipe her off the face of the earth.

As we said, four chapters in the Bible are specifically devoted to this theme. What we see here in Revelation are the logistics of how that will actually happen.

JOHN IS PERMITTED TO SEE THE GRAPHIC DETAILS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON JUST BEFORE JESUS CHRIST RETURNS TO DESTROY ALL ENEMIES AND TAKE OVER THE WORLD.

What we have seen to this point is that there is a close connection in the Great Tribulation between Babylon and the Antichrist and all of the world powers and political powers who are supporting the Antichrist.

She is in cahoots with them and is riding along supported by them. But that is all about to change.

As we come to this text we learn four very important prophetic facts:

PROPHETIC FACT #1 – The Antichrist and the ten kings who support him will wage war against the Lamb. **17:14a**

At this point in the Great Tribulation, the Antichrist controls the world and he has specifically entered into some key relationship with ten major kings. He will have political allies who quite frankly are out of their minds.

These ten kings rule simultaneously and they specifically rule in their hatred of the Lamb. Keep in mind that ever since the Tribulation began these leaders know this is the “wrath of the Lamb” (Rev. 6:15-17).

By this point in the Great Tribulation, geographical places have been destroyed by the wrath of God all over the world. So I am not sure just exactly where the dimensions are concerning the kingdoms of these ten kings. But they are identified as “kings,” not presidents or prime ministers, so we may assume, politically speaking, this is not a democracy.

At this point in the Great Tribulation, these ten specific kings are completely on board with a hatred of Jesus Christ. These ten kings completely support the agenda of the Antichrist, which is stated to be to “wage war against the Lamb.”

The verb “wage war” (polemeu) is one that means to fight and go to battle in war against the Lamb (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 379). The future tense of the verb is important. At this point Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb, is not back on earth. So the Antichrist and these political leaders are actually aware of the fact that He is coming back and they are planning a future fight and war against Him.

Now you would naturally think that these political leaders would think, perhaps we better not try to go to war against the Lamb who has been destroying the world. But the Antichrist who has been raised from the dead will convince them otherwise.

Political leaders who are not after the Truth of God think in ways and do things that are against reason.

PROPHETIC FACT #2 – The Lamb will overcome them. **17:14b**

The bottom line of this is the Lamb wins and they all lose.

The future tense verb “overcome” (nikaw) is one that means when this fight and war occurs, the one who will be the conquering victor and the one who will have total victory will be the Lamb.

The Lamb will defeat the Antichrist and all of his forces for three stated reasons:

Reason #1 - The Lamb is the Lord of lords.

Jesus Christ is the Lord and master and ruler over all. He is the Lord of lords. The Antichrist and his followers are not the Lord, Jesus Christ is the Lord.

This specific title “Lord of lords” is used in reference to God (Deut. 10:17; Dan. 2:37, 47).

Reason #2 - The Lamb is the King of kings.

Jesus Christ is the God King over all the kings who have ever reigned. The Antichrist has ten kings, but he is up against the King of all kings.

Reason #3 - The Lamb has a victorious army with Him.

When Jesus Christ returns, He is not coming alone. He will have His army with Him. Really, He doesn't need them to win this thing, but He has decided to share this moment with His family. He promised the Church that they would participate in coming back to reign with Him (Rev. 2:26-27). It is at this point in the Tribulation, when this moment is about to take place.

There are three qualities that he brings out about His team traveling with Him:

(Quality #1) - They are called.

This refers to the fact that God called them and saved them.

(Quality #2) - They are chosen.

This refers to the fact that God elected them.

(Quality #3) - They are faithful.

This refers to the fact that they were believers who had faith in Him and they were trustworthy and reliable family members.

So Satan and His Antichrist and all of his evil forces are about to wage war with the Lamb of God, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords and they will lose.

PROPHETIC FACT #3 – The waters upon which the Babylonian harlot sits are the nations of the world. **17:15**

All of a sudden the emphasis shifts to the woman. All of the idolatrous religion and all of the evil immorality that has influenced the entire world has stemmed from this Babylonian influence.

The different nations of the world and the different languages of the world have all been seduced by this harlot. God is about to turn the Satanic world to destroy one of its own.

PROPHETIC FACT #4 – The Antichrist and the kings who support him will turn against the harlot. **17:16-18**

Before these forces go to fight against the Lamb, they are going to turn against one of their own.

In one of the most amazing displays one will ever see of the sovereignty of God, this is incredible. All of these people are in cahoots against the Lamb. They are out to go to war against the Lamb. That is their intent. But notice what happens:

Observation #1 - The kings and beast will hate the harlot. **Rev. 17:16a**

Observation #2 - The kings and beast will destroy the harlot. **Rev. 17:16b**

Observation #3 - The kings and beast will strip the harlot. **Rev. 17:16c**

This theme of being without clothing shows up often in Revelation. The description of what life will be like in the Tribulation is stated in Revelation 9:21. It will be filled with murder, sorcery, immorality and thefts. Furthermore, nudity will become so prevalent that someone is praised who keeps his clothes on (Rev. 16:15). I have no doubt that this refers to the fact that the people who are being attacked will literally be without clothes.

Observation #4 - The kings and beast will eat the harlot. **Rev.17:16d**

What this means is that people will be eaten perhaps in cannibalism or in the carrion birds who will be called to a feast (Rev. 19:17-18).

Observation #5 - The kings and beast burn the harlot. **17:16e**

This is a surreal turn of events and **verse 17** gives us the reason for the turn of events:

(Reason #1) - God has put all of this into the minds and hearts to execute His purpose. **17:17a**

Every bit of this is under the sovereign control of God. God sovereignly controls all things, including what He permits evil people to do.

Evil forces can only accomplish what God wants them to accomplish. Look at this. God can actually program a person's heart and mind and put into it exactly what He wants.

(Reason #2) - God has put this uniting with the beast to fulfill His word. **17:17b**

Do not ever underestimate the power that God has when it comes to taking out your enemies. He can turn minds any way He wants so that they will actually turn against each other.

God actually intervenes in the Satanic world and turns the minds of everyone in that world to carry out His sovereign plan and will.

In **verse 18**, we learn that the woman is "the great city" that reigns over the kings of the earth.

Now the city is Babylon. This Babylon will be a dominant city when the Antichrist is ruling the world.