

Final Destruction of False Religion

Revelation 17:1-18

I. Introduction:

A. Another parenthetical

1. Chapter 17 is another parenthetical, a pause in the chronology of the events of the tribulation for the purpose of filling in prophetic detail. Both 17 & 18 are parenthetical.
2. Chapter 17: describes the religious component of antichrist's kingdom.
3. Antichrist will use religion, a false religion, to unify the hearts & minds of a lost world
4. God will destroy that false religious system referred to in chapter 17 as a harlot.
5. Chapter 18: describes the material economic power of antichrist's kingdom.
6. He will be the most powerful leader the world has ever seen controlling much of the world's wealth. God will destroy this part of antichrist's kingdom as well.

B. False Religion

1. False religion had its beginning within 2 generations after the flood. (**Genesis 11:1-9**)
2. Noah's great-grandson, Nimrod, in a rebellion against God, led a host of people east & they settled in the land of Shinar where they built the first city of Babylon.
3. He led the people to build a great tower that reached up to heaven.
4. On top of the tower a priest could read the stars & purportedly forecast the future.
5. The tower of babel that Nimrod built was in direct defiance of the living God.
6. Up to this point in human history, everyone spoke the same language.
7. Scattered: God confused the language of man & scattered the people so they could not complete the tower. They took their rebellious hearts with them & began false religions.

II. Apex of False Religion (Revelation 17:1-2)

A. Final form of false religion

- *One of the 7 angels who had one of the 7 bowl judgments has this conversation with John*
 1. – Judgment of the great harlot
 - a. The final form of world false religion is likened to a harlot, a descriptive term.
 - b. A harlot is an appropriate analogy because much like a harlot, false religion is:
 - outwardly attractive,
 - promises excitement, joy, fulfillment, and happiness,
 - appeals to the appetite of the flesh,
 - utterly corrupts body, soul, and spirit, and
 - ultimately leads to ruin, destruction, and death.
 2. – Sits on many waters
 - a. The impact of this false religion is expressed in this statement.
 - b. The interpretation is given to us in verse 15. (**Revelation 17:15**)
 - c. Antichrist will use the power of religion to help unite the world under his authority.
 - d. The kings, rulers and leaders of the earth, will be intoxicated with this false religion.

III. **Description of this harlot (Revelation 17:3-6)**

A. **Harlot riding the beast**

1. The beast with the seven heads and ten horns is the antichrist. See **Revelation 13:1**.
2. The picture is that the false religion is empowered by antichrist.
3. It will be successful in the tribulation period until antichrist is done using it.
4. At the midpoint of the tribulation, the antichrist will reject & destroy the false religion & claim all worship for himself. He'll claim to be god & no one will be able to worship anyone except him on the pain of death.

B. **Harlot identified**

1. The outward dress of a harlot is usually designed to draw attention, attract customers.
2. She is adorned with purple & scarlet, demonstrating money and worldly pleasures.
3. She is adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls.
4. In her hand is an intoxicating drink to dull the inhibitions and sooth the conscience.
5. False Religion Today: Most false religions are designed to be attractive to the masses.

C. **Drunk with the blood of the saints**

1. To be drunk with blood is a phrase describes a murderous thirst or lust for violence.
2. This false religion will be antichrist instrument to kill those professing faith in Jesus.

IV. **Explanation of the vision (Revelation 17:7-13)**

A. **Mystery revealed**

1. – The beast (v 8)

- a. Beast is demon possessed antichrist whose power ascended out the bottomless pit.
- b. His great intellect, military genius, & leadership will be satanically influenced.
- c. “**He was, is not, and will ascend**” speaks to his apparent death and the false miracle of a resurrection. (**Revelation 13:3**) The greatest deception of all the tribulation.

2. – Seven mountains and seven kings

- a. The same interpretation from **Revelation 13:1** applies here.
- b. Antichrist's kingdom is the last of a long line of world empires.
- c. Seven world empires were before his: Egypt, Assyria, Babylonians, Medo-Persians, Greeks, & the Romans. Antichrist's kingdom is an amalgamation of the previous six.
- d. His is the 7th. He'll also be the 8th because of his apparent resurrection deception.

3. – The ten horns

- a. 10 horns are 10 world leaders who'll throw in their lot with antichrist for a season.
- b. They will voluntarily become a part of his world empire.

V. **Destruction of the Harlot (Revelation 17:14-18)**

A. **These will make war with the Lamb.**

1. These 10 kings, under the leadership of antichrist, will make war against Jesus and His remnant. This will happen at the battle of Armageddon.
2. Jesus will overcome antichrist & his followers casting them into eternal lake of fire.

B. **Harlot destroyed**

1. Before the end of the tribulation, God will move antichrist & the kings that follow him, to destroy the harlot. They will turn on this worldwide false religion.
2. Antichrist will declare himself to be deity & demand the world worship him alone.
3. That is the point where antichrist will break his covenant with Israel.
4. The tribulation's false religious system will be destroyed by the antichrist.