

## Revelation 17 Part 1

Hi, this is Richard Oliver, and we are looking at Revelation chapter seventeen, this is number thirty-four in our study on the book of Revelation.

Verse one of chapter seventeen, *'And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:'*

Now, of course, a whore is a prostitute, someone who will allow others to plant seed in her, generally for money.

Verse two, *'With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.'*

What on earth does all this mean? Well, of course, the first thing to remember is the book of Revelation is a book of symbols. Everything here represents something. A woman, of course, represents a church. A prostitute woman allows men to plant seed in her and she generally does this for money, sometimes it's for power and influence. So this has to be a church that is using its power and influence for money, for gain, for control and influence. Fornication is, of course, having sex without there being any binding agreement, no marriage or anything of that sort. In a genuine marriage situation a husband wants to plant his seed in his wife to create new children, to create life. God too has seed, but His seed is His Word. Right at the beginning of Genesis chapter one God said 'Let there be light, let there be life, let there be animals,' and so on. His Word brought light and life. His Word is the original seed. And what God wants, of course, is to plant His Word in His church. And here is the world churches taking a man's view, taking the political view, making money out of it, to gain power and influence. So what these two verses are talking about is the world churches making all sorts of deals and arrangements and agreements between themselves, the kings of the earth, for their own financial gain, their own power, and, of course, for the politicians for control and for getting the things that they want. And generally speaking the world, at least the western world, has really prospered through these meetings.

Onto verse three.

*'So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.'*

So this is a picture of the world church.

Verse four, *'And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:'*

Another picture of the church.

Verse five, *'And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.'*

Now, Babylon in the Old Testament was the beginning of man's control over the world. It was from Babylon that Nimrod went out and started to conquer the world. It was Nebuchadnezzar that conquered Israel and so on. It's always been Babylon. Babylon itself, or the power of Babylon, we now know from earlier in the book of Revelation, moved from that area to Pergamos. And this is

where church and state came together. This is where the power of the beast, the Roman organisation, the Roman Empire, accepted Christianity, or its version of Christianity, as the state religion. The two, state and church, joined together. And that always creates a monster.

We also understand that the leaders, the priests, from Babylon moved to Pergamos and then, in turn, they moved to Rome. And, of course, this was over centuries, this wasn't an immediate thing, but bit-by-bit as Rome got control she took the Babylonian system. Can this be? It says that this Mystery Babylon the Great was the mother of harlots. Now, of course, a harlot is just the same thing as a prostitute. Did the Roman Catholic church have daughters that were acting in exactly the same way? Well, regrettably yes they did. Initially the Lutheran church was pure, it was straightforward, but these soon came back to the same organisation, same man-ruled or man-controlled system that Rome used. So did the Church of England. So did the Methodist church and so on and so forth. Always it comes back to man ruling the churches. And so the daughters of the church, the people that came out of Rome, the churches that came out of Rome, became the daughters, there again the churches, they're females, they're women.

Verse six, *'And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.'*

Now, she was good to look at. It looked like a really, really good thing, this Roman system. But she has killed the martyrs, killed saints, killed people. Why? For the name of Jesus. Why? She had replaced the name of Jesus with Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Once again, that is the key sticking point.

Verse seven, *'And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.'*

*'The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.'*

What on earth is this? The beast – the beast is a power. It is always the power. And it is represented as various animals in the book of Revelation as we know, each beast, each country, each civilization is represented as a beast. But here, this beast was, is not and yet is. Well, when we go back to Daniel there are only four systems of the world. Four civilizations that the bible acknowledges: Babylon, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. That's all there is. So this fourth beast has to be Roman. And the Roman Empire was, it doesn't exist now, and yet it does. But as a religious church.

What the bible is saying here, of course, is that most people will not even recognise this. They will scoff at the idea. They won't even believe it. But that's what it's saying.

Verse nine, *'And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.'*

Now we know that Rome sits on seven hills. But surely there are other cities that sit on seven hills. Yes, there are. Just a few for argument's sake is Kampala in Uganda, Seattle in the USA, Amman in Jordan, Mecca even, Athens, and Edenborough. There's over a hundred cities that are built on seven hills.

But the key thing here is what of these, of all those cities sitting on seven hills, also is a church and also was a world power? Well, there is only one. That has to be Rome.

*Verse ten, 'And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.'*

Now, I'm sorry, I don't understand that verse at all. Obviously it means specific persons or specific leaders, but I haven't a clue what the seven kings are, what they mean and what one of them was at that time, and what was to come. Sorry, I can't help you on that one.

We'll finish there, because we're going to pick up at verse eleven on the second part of this study. May God bless you.