

## Judgment of the Great Harlot (Part 1 of Message # 39)

Revelation 17: 1-6

In [Chp.16](#) we saw the final judgments of God poured out in seven vial or bowl judgments. In the last of the seven vials, God struck the very heart of man's depravity. He brought a great earthquake that destroyed all that man prized and worshipped above Him, their power, pleasures, and profits.

Also in that last vial God judged Babylon, the system of corruption that represents all that man has achieved and trusted in apart from the Lord. [Chps.17 & 18](#) deal with the judgment and destruction of Babylon in detail. Babylon is more than a city; it is a religious system, as well as a political and economic system. Here in [Chp.17](#) we find the destruction of the world's false religious system.

For centuries man has denied God and served idols, but He will judge their false religion at the end of the Tribulation. Once again as we look into the future, I want to preach on: [Judgment of the Great Harlot](#). We will begin with part one, [Vv.1-6](#), and continue next week with part two. There is too much to cover in one night in these verses.

**I. The Manifestation of the Harlot (1-6)** – One of the seven angels has called upon John to witness the judgment of the [great whore](#). The Lord chose a vivid description as He inspired John to pen these words, revealing one who sells herself for profit and the pleasure of others. In [Vv.1-6](#) we will see a detailed description of the false religion, or the great whore of this world.

**A. The Advancement of Her System (1)** – [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:](#) She is seen sitting upon [many waters](#). Verse 15 defines the waters as [people, multitudes, nations, and tongues](#), literally the whole world. The influence of the great harlot will consume all of mankind.

- We live in a day of varied religions with vastly different views. There is a move in our day to unite all of religion under a common banner. During the Tribulation the modern ecumenical movement will come full circle.
- Allow me to remind you that religion is manmade. Salvation is of the Lord. I pray that you have more than a mere religious experience. I am not religious; I am redeemed. I'm not counting on religious rituals; I have put my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! At this point in time, with the church raptured, removing all Spirit filled believers, the religions of the world will unite under the banner of a one world religion. They will worship Antichrist and his world system.

**B. The Attraction of Her System (2) – 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.**

- The leaders of this world will be seduced by the lure of the harlot. They have made their bed with the great harlot. She will be praised and promoted by the kings of the earth.
- This may seem hard to imagine but we are already seeing governments use religion to their advantage. Consider the lunatics like the president of Iran. He is using radical Islamic religion to promote his evil ambitions.
- People are going to worship something. Many choose to worship themselves and their pleasures, but all men worship something. Many are deceived by a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. They have been sold a bill of goods that God is a merciful, loving God and He would not condemn them. They attend a service sometime during the week, leave feeling good about themselves, and live the rest of the week as they please.
- There will be great appeal for the people of this world in this universal religion. All will be accepted, regardless of what they believe or practice. God has called us to be a separate people, coming apart from the world. In these days, all of humanity will abandon the true and living God to commit fornication with the harlot.

**C. The Alliance of Her System (3) – 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.** In the wilderness John discovered the harlot sitting upon a **scarlet colored beast**. Clearly this speaks of the Anti-christ. He will be the catalyst that brings about this one world religion. He will be the backbone of this idolatrous system.

- The beast is described as being **full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns**. The phrase names of blasphemy refer to Antichrist's desire to be God. During the first half of the Tribulation he will make a deal with Israel, bringing peace, but in the latter stages he will desecrate the Jewish Temple and set himself up as the one men are to worship. **II Thes.2:3-4 – Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.**
- The seven heads are seven mountains, **V.9 – And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth**. Many believe this to be the rebirth of the Roman Empire, since Rome is built upon seven hills. Those who hold this view link Roman Catholicism to the one world religion. This may be the case, but it is also possible that the seven mountains could refer to a mountain upon each continent, revealing a worldwide following.

- Whatever the case, this religious system will enjoy a time of prominence and promotion by the world. We see this proven by the **ten horns** which are **ten kings**, **V.12**. The harlot will have the support of the beast and all who follow him, basically the entire world.

**D. The Affluence of Her System** (4) – **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:** John describes the appearance of the harlot, revealing her provocative nature. She is **arrayed in purple and scarlet**, the colors of royalty and power. She is dressed in fine apparel and **decked with gold and precious stones and pearls**. The harlot will acquire great wealth and prosperity. The one world system of religion will be wealthy beyond measure.

- I have always been leery of the flashy, flamboyant preachers. We have witnessed the rise of many in our day. Religion is big money in a lot of so called “ministries.” Many of us remember the extravagance of PTL and those who were taken advantage of. Sadly this continues today. Many TV evangelist use the name of Jesus and religion to mass great empires of wealth, through a health and wealth doctrine. This is exactly what the harlot will do—seduce others for her own gain.
- Also we see that she holds a **golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication**. While she flashes the wealth of her prosperity before others, hidden within the facade is great wickedness. To the world it appears that all is well; they have finally found a form of religion that all can agree on and find acceptance in, but God sees through the outward shell to the heart of the matter.
- There is a great lesson for us here as well. We must guard against the lure of our day to become appealing to the world. It is a tragedy for those who are desirable on the outside and destitute on the inside. We need the approval of God rather than the acceptance of the world. We may never achieve the numbers to be considered successful by the world, but I want to give folks what they need instead of what they want. There is enough worldliness in our everyday lives without filling the church with it!

**E. The Abomination of Her System** (5) – **And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.** She has been marked with a name, similar to the harlots of old that would mark themselves to reveal their desire to those who sought their services.

- She is the **mother of harlots and abominations of the earth**. The Babylonian system of religion is almost as old as time. In past studies we were reminded that it began with Nimrod and the tower of Babel. She gave birth to all the false religions of this world, those who rely upon rituals, or look to other sources of power instead of the eternal God of heaven. She stands for all that godless religion promotes.

- Religion without the Lord Jesus Christ is a waste of time. Hell will be filled with those who were devoutly religious but never came to a saving knowledge in Christ our Lord.

**F. The Atrocity of Her System** (6) – [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.](#) John sees the harlot drunk with the blood of the saints. She has filled herself with the innocent blood of the redeemed. This depraved system of religion has brought about the deaths of millions of Christians.

- From the jealousy of Cain toward Abel, to the hatred of Jezebel for the prophets, to Herod and Pilate, and those who executed the apostles; from the countless early Christians who perished under the tyranny of Rome, to those who died in the persecutions of the dark ages, to those who are murdered today at the hands of extremist, and to all those who will be martyred in the Tribulation; all of this death and suffering will be laid to her account. God will judge the harlot for the death she has caused and the pleasure it has brought her.

As I studied this passage I was reminded of the deception of many. There are a lot of folks who have been deceived by mere religion. They are trusting in a system of religion rather than a redeeming Savior.

God despises a form of religion that denies His power and sacrifice. Millions will one day find that religion wasn't all that is needed in eternity. Where do you stand tonight? Are you religious, or are you saved and secure in Jesus? There is a difference and it has eternal consequences!