

THE BOOK OF REVELATION: VERSE BY VERSE

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WEEK FIFTEEN

I. THE TALE OF TWO CITIES – PART ONE (Rev 17:1 - 20:15)

A. The Woman On The Beast (17:1-18)

1. The beast appears to be the same as depicted in Revelation 13:1...
 - a. This is representing Satanically inspired and manipulated political power...
 - i. *"...once was, now is not, and yet will come..."*: likely a word play on the legend of Nero's death and eventual return, along with John's familiar description of God. (See Revelation 1:4, 8; 11:17)
2. The woman – certainly to John's first century readers – would represent the city of Rome. However, it could represent every Satanically-inspired political entity throughout history.
 - a. *"...drunk with the blood of God's holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus."*: John is focusing upon the anti-Christ nature of this entity.

What Is The Meaning of "Babylon?"

"Babylon" is biblical code for humanity that seeks to build a world without God. (Genesis 11:4)

- b. *"Seven heads"*:
 - i. *"...are the seven hills on which the woman sits..."*: is clearly an allusion to the city of Rome.
 - ii. *"They are also seven kings..."*: 7 is a number of completeness, therefore possibly representing the entire political history of Rome (past, present and future), with the 8th referring to the Satanic source behind all of the rulers.
- c. *"The ten horns you saw are ten kings"*: ten is a number communicating fullness, possibly representing the totality of all political rulers on the earth. Such is the nature of evil: for after initially rallying together against the Lamb, they eventually turn on Babylon and she implodes.

B. A Funeral Song For Babylon (18:1 - 19:10)

1. In this section, John dials down the apocalyptic volume and dials up the prophetic volume. Pronouncing prophetic declarations against Babylon...
 - a. Those who gained from doing commerce with her mourn her loss... (18:1-3, 9-19)
 - b. God's people are warned against getting too close to her, lest they be caught up in her judgment... (18:4-8)
 - c. Babylon's final judgment and destruction is celebrated... (18:20-19:5)
 - d. The Bride is contrasted with the Prostitute... (19:6-10)

C. The Winding Down Of Evil (19:11 - 20:15)

1. Christ, pictured as a heavenly warrior, defeats the unholy trinity of Satan, the beast, and the false prophet... (19:11 - 20:3, 7-10)
2. The rebellious dead (who, up until this point, have been in hell/hades, awaiting their final judgment) are finally called before the White Throne (signalling purity) of God and judged... (20:11-15)

To What Does The "1000 Years" Refer?

Opinions vary as to what 20:4-6 is referring. This "**1,000 years**" is often referred to as "the millennium" (from the Latin root for "1000 years"). Generally speaking, there are three interpretations from which one can choose:

1. **Pre-millennialism:** this is the view that this is a literal period of 1,000 years. This view is called "pre-millennial" because it teaches that Christ returns to earth at the close of the Great Tribulation (*before* the millennium) to set up a unique kingdom on the earth where He, along with His saints, rule over the earth for 1,000 years.
2. **A-millennialism:** this is the view that sees the 1,000 years as a purely symbolic reference to an undesignated time on earth during which Christ rules through His church. The Greek letter *alpha* (the "A" in A-millennialism) negates the word to which it is attached. It is called "A-millennialism" because, according to this view, there *isn't* a literal 1,000 year period sometime in the future. According to this view, we are in the millennium right now. Christ is ruling right now. This view teaches that Christ returns at the end of this present period (known as "the Church age"), after a brief time of Satanically-inspired chaos.
3. **Post-millennialism:** this is the view that Christ returns *after* a literal (or, according to some post-millennialists, *not* literal) 1,000 year period of unique Christ-empowered rule on the earth. This view holds that there is an extended period of time on earth when God's Kingdom reigns. At the end of this period, Satan unleashes a brief moment of chaos during which Christ returns.