

Revelation
Ch 17:1-7

For years there have been conspiracy theories swirling around in our culture
Some of the modern era ones would be...

Who Shot JFK?

Who shot RFK?

Who shot MLK?

Area 51

UFO's

Who killed Jimmy Hoffa?

Did Epstein really kill himself?

Voting in Chicago in the 1960 election

Hanging Chads in 2000

What's up with the Illuminati, CFR, Trilateral commission, WHO, WEF, CDC, and the Great Reset,

Was Paul McCartney really dead and did Beatle songs give the clues?

Was Nero, the anti-Christ, Joseph Stalin, Reagan or Prince Charles...

And Who shot JR, etc

Sometimes the theories are local, sometimes national, sometimes global. They may or may not get a lot of attention.

After reading Revelation, I'm convinced that Our conspiracy theories are TOO SMALL.

It's not about the X's and O's or Neros and Joes

Revelation reveals the real cosmic conspiracy that has been going on for thousands of years. We are seeing the players unveiled even as the victorious Lamb is unveiled as the ultimate conqueror.

Because of this, John wants his audience and us to have HOPE for the future and for the present.

The Doom of Babylon Rev 17

1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality."

3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, 5 and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly. 7 And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

As a preview of what's to come in ch 17-22 we're going to watch a picture show.

BIBLE PROJECT video on Revelation pt 2

Although it is a bit long, this is helpful as we move toward the final chapters of this complicated book.

Since Revelation is a “picture book” full of symbols, I found this helpful in terms of putting some of the pieces together.

Caveat about a couple of issues, but overall, it is very helpful. They are not drawing a hardline position but try to acknowledge some historically held divergent views.

(6:13 mark to cover ch 17-22)

Now that we’ve seen the preview, today we’ll dive into ch 17 by focusing on two areas: The Harlot and Babylon.

A PERSPECTIVE ON HARLOTRY ISSUES

** Some of the terminology of this passage is not the most comfortable for discussion in such an age diverse crowd, so I may refer to other texts rather than reading the passage. It is a sign of spiritual health that we are uncomfortable with the imagery used.

There is a theme that stands out in the passage, and it does so by repetition of content. That is the reference to the Harlot and her immorality (Porneia)

Some have asked, “Why is sexual sin such a big deal in the Bible?” We’ve already seen numerous references to this issue in Revelation, and they are also scattered throughout the OT AND NT.

I think there are several layers to this issue.

The foundational layer is this: **Human sexuality is such a Valuable part of God’s plan that it deserves to be safeguarded. Male-female intimacy and oneness in marriage reflects the very intimacy of God with man. (Dr. Peter Jones, The God of Sex).** We safeguard what we find valuable.

There is something deeply embedded in our souls that is violated by sexual sin in a way that doesn’t happen with other sins. If we were merely soulless physical beings, this would not be the case. The animal world does not contemplate the issues of immorality.

The Creation narrative of Genesis shows us the first marital union as God brings Eve to Adam. It rocked his world in a GOOD way. It set the pattern of oneness of the marital union.

Dr. Jones...Marriage is a form of prophecy in that it expresses the ultimate and final meaning of existence- the marriage supper of the Lamb and His bride – Rev 19. Earthly marriage points to something eternal.

The happy ending of Revelation shows the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. This motif of God as husband to His people shows the sanctity of the marital relationship.

An exclusive male-female marital relationship is the positive sexual imagery the Bible uses to describe God’s relationship with His people.

The marital math of scripture is $1+1=1$ the TWO BECOME ONE FLESH.

In the biblical understanding of relationships, physical intimacy finds its God ordained expression only in marriage. There is NO other relationship that can biblically take the place of a married spouse.

Marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church, i.e. His Bride. It is an exclusive relationship by design.

Just as the relationship of Christ and the church is exclusive, so too the husband -wife relationship is exclusive. Babylon has always seeks to break the bonds of husband and wife and Christ and the church. **In the Dragon's great war against Christ and His people, the sanctity of marriage has been a constant target because it is a picture of Christ and His Church. Sexual immorality is the starting point for dismantling the beauty of God's design for marital intimacy.**

Marriage is Gospel Re-enactment, so it is no wonder that Babylon and the Harlot want to destroy marriage – they hate anything that reflects Christ.

Finally, more often than not, someone's greatest regrets AND hurts come in the area of sexual immorality. In the economy of Satan, sexual sin, distortion, and confusion has the greatest return on investment for harm. It doesn't take much to do a great deal of damage. The book of Proverbs gives many wise warnings about the snares and dangers of immorality.

A PERSPECTIVE ON BABYLON

Those who are friendly with the world of Babylon are said to be adulterers.

James 4 – friendship with the world i.e. Babylon

4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

One takeaway from Revelation is that Babylon is a heart issue, NOT JUST A governmental or cultural issue.

The main Babylon we need to be aware of and the only one that we can do anything about is in our own hearts.

The Beast represents the anti-God structure and institutions of this world, but the warning is not just against the organized external forces. The warning should cause us to consider the “Babylon” of our own hearts.. Babylon represents a spirit of the world that is typified by immorality, pleasure, SELF, and corruption. We get the Babylon type leaders because we are a Babylonian type people

Babylon or Rome found her support by those who willingly embrace her practices of worldly pleasure, prosperity and power. Verse 8 explains that Babylon is embraced by those whose names have NOT BEEN written in the book of life. Just as the spirit of anti-Christ is seen in the array of God opposing institutions and influencers, so too the Prostitute is seen in the unbelieving world. In v. 6 we see that the Prostitute is Babylon the Great. The Beasts of Babylon seek to promote ideas and events that undermine biblical truth, such things as the Pagan Pride Fest Oct 29th.

EX: Truth is stranger than fiction – Satanic Temple “Unbaptism certificate” at an event 10/29/22

__name__ has been unbaptized the day, Oct 29th, 2022 at the Pagan Pride Fest in Tyler, TX...
”All bonds of servitude have been broken. Power and Agency have been restored. Thyself is Thy Master, Hail Satan”

Babylon is a template for the pride and arrogance of the human heart and the world's system. This lure to be our own master, to be like God, is as old as the Fall in Genesis 3

Genesis 3:5-7

[5] For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

[6] So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

The lie of sin is that it will satisfy, but the next verse of Gen 3 shows the reality...

[7] Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (ESV)

The result was a natural shame for violating their relationship with God.

As we saw in Genesis 3:7, sin brings a sense of shame, or it does until our conscience is seared and we don't give it a second thought. In the OT the house of Israel is described in this way in Jeremiah

Jer 3:3, 6:15; 8:12

3:3 Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no spring rain.
Yet you had a harlot's forehead; You refused to be ashamed.

6:15 Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done?

They were not even ashamed at all; They did not even know how to blush.

The people had become so bold in their sin and tolerance of evil that they had forgotten how to blush. They had become devoid of all shame in regard to sin. No reasoning or warning could move them.

That is a picture of Babylon that is supported by a culture with no ability to blush because sin had become so engrained in their lives.

I dare say that we see a similar thing when immorality becomes a source of celebration and Pride.

We are all selectively Babylonian to some degree.

The Babylonian heart is one that is seeking value, worth, meaning, or identity in something other than God. It is the idolatrous heart. It may take the form of straight up sensual pleasure or money or power. It can be clearly secular without reference to God, or it can take on a shade or veneer of religion.

EX: Phil 3 where Paul gives his religious resume, i.e. a "righteousness of my own", not through Christ.

Because of spiritual negligence, even as believers, we want to find our sense of worth and value in US – in what we do, what we have, what we achieve. Our search for meaning often takes us on a wild goose chase as we forget God to gain the applause and praise of others.

- We forsake God the fountain of living water to dig for ourselves broken cisterns (Jer 2)
- We are easily tempted to give our hearts to the fleeting pleasures of the world – 1 John 2

The entire picture of the woman is one of corruption and immorality joined with luxury, splendor, and sensual pleasure. She is a counterfeit kingdom offering a sort of salvation and utopia. We've already seen this description of the world under Satanic control in this book. But it is revisited and given focus as the time of judgment on Babylon arrives.

How do we stand firm against the forces of the Babylon and the Beasts of Revelation?

How do we break the power of sin and shame?

By finding refuge in Jesus.

Perhaps by praying along these lines...

Valley of Vision - Vocation

"Let no strong affection wantonly dally with the world.

May I live high above a love of things temporal,

Sanctified, cleansed, unblemished, hallowed by grace,

Thy love my fullness,

Thy glory my joy,

Thy precepts my pathway,

Thy cross my resting place."

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