

Revelation
Ch 17 PT 3
FROM KAOS TO CONQUEST

How many people would have booked passage on the Titanic had they known the end result? ZERO

What's surprising is the number of people who stick with The Dragon, the Beast, and the Harlot of Babylon even after hearing about its ultimate demise from a very credible source – the Bible.

Some may doubt that, but no argument has debunked the credibility of the Bible. One reason is because the center of the Bible is Jesus Christ- his birth, life, death, and resurrection. People may doubt the truths of Christ, but they can't invalidate them, even though many have tried.

So, this book has been telling the world for 1000+ years that the agenda of the unholy trinity (Dragon, Beast 1 and Beast 2) is doomed, yet people still book passage on that ill-fated voyage.

12 The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. 13 These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast.

Victory for the Lamb

14 These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

15 And he *said to me, “The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. 17 For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled. 18 The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.”

Revelation is a book about unveiling things through a prophetic, apocalyptic, and pastoral letter to the seven churches and beyond.

It unveils the ultimate victory of Christ the Lamb, and it unveils the true nature of the clash of worldviews that has unfolded over human history, especially during this age between the resurrection of Christ and his second coming.

That clash has played itself out in the realms of religion, culture, politics, economics, academics, and moral values. At times it has been quite subtle, hidden or indirect. In our day, it is becoming increasingly evident as it centers around the core issues of life itself and the foundational and creational designs of marriage and family.

The very nature of our interconnected global society makes it easier for the Good News of Christ to spread, but it can also make it easier to spread the seductive wine of Babylon's immoralities and idolatries.

V. 13-14 Here in this passage we see that the last the opposition of the beast to the kingdom of God will be laid bare and the final conflict will ensue. Much of the opposition of Satan's kingdom to the kingdom of God in the course of history has been cleverly disguised, .but in the end it will be clear to all the nature of the battle to be waged and who belongs to which side.

As we've seen in Revelation, we are all bear the mark of the beast or the mark of God. There is NO NEUTRAL GROUND.

We, in our part of the world have been under the comfortable delusion that neutrality is possible and desirable in some ways. In ancient Rome, if Christians stayed in their lane and kept quiet, they might be left alone to some degree (see ch 2-3 letters to the churches). If they took a stand for the Lordship of Christ over Caesar, then they experienced the backlash and persecution.

In our world today, the issue of Lordship of Christ over Caesar isn't as clear as it was in the Days of Rome. We don't have the overt pressure to literally say, "Caesar is Lord" , but as the State intrudes on more and more areas, it will clash with clear biblical values. The neutral zone will shrink as the State itself, or those under its sway will seek to impose a godless agenda on the culture.

It seems likely that what we have described is what elsewhere is called the great tribulation, the terrible persecution that the Satanic kingdom will visit upon the saints of God at the end of history. But the beast will not succeed because he is *not* the Lord of Lords; Christ is. And Christ will then have made his appearance: that final appearance described in greater detail in chapter 19. The King of Kings will make short work of the beast and his kingdom.

"The War" is a bit anti-climactic because the real victory has already been won through the cross and resurrection.

The enemy may seem powerful. He may seem like he is winning, but he is defeated. Satan has been on a leash and now God yanks on the leash and brings him to heel. The unholy trinity hits the iceberg, and their Titanic goes under.

**Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and those with him are the called and chosen and faithful.
Ch 2-3 Those who overcome by standing firm will receive the crown of life (2:10) and will sit down with Christ on his throne (3:21)**

v. 15-16 the kingdom of Satan will turn in on itself

Even before the return of Christ in victory, the kingdom of the unholy trinity will begin to come apart because of internal struggles, animosities, jealousies, and mistrust. We overestimate the power and unity of evil.

EX: organized crime was only loosely organized; it was also very competitive and cut throat.

Sin always contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction.

There is no honor among thieves and followers of the Dragon.

Shared sin is not a good foundation for a relationship of trust

EX: DON'T share a "friendship" because of a mutual dislike for someone else. You both end up drinking the poison of bitterness.

Ex: people who cause dissension in a group – family, club, church, etc, rarely stay with any one group for long.

In ancient Rome, as in most dictatorships, internal threats abound.

When ungodly KAOS abounds, no one is safe. History is littered with rulers, kings, tyrants and tyrannical wannabes who have been killed by those inside their own inner circle.

This echoes the scene of Ezek 38:21 – "every man's sword will be against his brother."

The imagery of the woman who is desolate and naked is an eerie echo of Ezek 23 where Israel is described as one who has chased after other lovers. When God turns her over to those false lovers, she is left desolate and naked. Her sins and lewdness were exposed. This imagery was fulfilled when Babylon captured the remaining tribes of Judah and led them to exile.

The harlot of Babylon was once described as being robed in scarlet, purple, and many jewels. Now the desolation she brought to God's people is brought to her.

BEALE and Campbell note that

The Babylonian harlot is also modeled on Queen Jezebel, the evil wife of the evil King Ahab. She represents the spirit of idolatry, a spirit active in the churches, especially Thyatira (2:20-24). There are parallels between the OT Jezebel and the Harlot of Babylon, two of which are :
(1) 'her flesh being torn and eaten" 2 Kings 9:36 / Rev 17:16 and
(2) in each case their destruction was according to God's proclamation.

While there aren't many women named Jezebel today, her spirit still lives, as she did in Thyatira. There is actually a website called JEZEBEL*...which offers views and news on "Sex, Celebrity, Politics, With Teeth." ... Those are what we go to when people are big, and God is small in our hearts and minds. The name Jezebel says it all.

The warnings of Revelation 17 refer to unbelieving national Israel of the OT, to the pagan world systems, and to the apostate church which cooperates with it. - BEALE.

HOW DOES THIS SELF-DESTRUCTION HAPPEN?

v. 17-18 There is a Divine Purpose in the Self-Destruction of the Harlot of Babylon

To fulfill the word of God - Ezek 23 imagery is fulfilled.

Satan's kingdom is divided against himself so his kingdom cannot stand.
Every godless social or political movement contains the seeds of its own destruction.
EX: the French revolution is a prime example from world history.

The kings of the earth who were seduced by the woman turn on her. Their fixation turns to fury (Jeff Hamm).

An obsession turns to loathing.

EX: the kid who eats too much candy at Easter and gets sick.

This verse unveils a divine purpose in the self-destruction of evil. It also unveils a puzzling tension for us. How does God's sovereignty square with human responsibility.

Prov 21:1-2

1The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.

2Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts.

God directs the king's heart to accomplish God's own plans.

God used Assyria to discipline Israel and Babylon to discipline Judah. He used Cyrus of Persia to return His people back to the land of Israel.

Here is Rev 17, God gives it to the heart of the kings to join the beast in attacking the woman. They engage in the evil and are ultimately held accountable.

THAT'S NOT FAIR we may cry. Dr. Jeff Hamm...explains

Not at all. Verse 17, *for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast.*

In the Greek text, there is the repetition of the word *purpose*. *Literally, For God has put it in their hearts to carry out His purpose by being of one purpose...* (Rev 17:17). The word *purpose* is used twice. Once to refer to the purpose of God. Then again to refer to the *purpose* of the kings.

Verse 13, *They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast* (Rev 17:13 NIV). The kings of the earth unite for one *purpose*, to give their authority to the beast which they had purposed to do. Before God put this purpose in their hearts, they already had the purpose on their own.

God purposed to turn them over to what they had already purposed in their own hearts, so they got just what they wanted.

God did not create the evil purpose in their hearts, He simply purposed to turn them over to it. God uses their own evil to destroy evil.

Beale – God initiates the self-destruction of Satan as a part of the bowls of wrath.

Rom 1 When God turns us over to our own ways, the result is our own self-destruction.

The sovereignty of God may not satisfy us in explaining all issues that come to mind, but since it is seen all through scripture, we can stop kicking against it.

Some might object as in Romans 9... "Who can resist His will? Why does He find fault? How can we be held responsible if God is ultimately in charge?"

The apostle Paul understood and anticipated this objection in the argument he was laying out in Romans 8-9. He knows that a sovereign God, who does as He pleases, doesn't always land well with a human audience.

The ultimate answer is that which Paul gives in *Romans 9. 20 But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'" 21 Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?*

God is the potter; we are the clay. The Potter can do whatever He wants with His pottery. He doesn't need the clay's permission to form it into a common cup or a priceless vase. God possesses the right to do with us whatsoever He wills. He is sovereign and free.

Here's the First lesson of the Bible. There is a God, and you are not Him. He is Who He Is; He Does What He pleases; He is NOT accountable to us.

That really rubs us the wrong way, doesn't it? We're Americans. We believe in Liberty, choice, inclusion, teamwork, consensus, Democracy, etc.

While it may not be democratic, it is actually for our own good.

Left to our own devices, plans, and agendas we'd be right back in Gen 6...

5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

When we step into the role of God and we do it our way, the results are typically negative for humanity.

When it comes to providing a better path for human flourishing, my vote is for a sovereign God who is also gracious and compassionate.

We need a sovereign righteous God.

As hard as it may be for us to let God be God and trust in His ways, no one can accuse God of not being just and gracious.

How can anyone look at the person of Christ, his life, death, and resurrection, and say, "Why isn't God more gracious?"

What could be more gracious than giving your own Son for those who hate you?

God's character is above reproach.

No one gets injustice from the hand of God.

Some get mercy; some get justice; no one gets injustice from God.

It is ONLY God's sovereign rule that will ensure the defeat of Satan.

The irony of Babylon's fall magnifies the incomparable power and wisdom of God. The beast and its allies, raging in hostility toward the Lamb and his bride, will be the weapons that God uses to bring down the harlot, who was once the beast's royal partner. "For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled" (17:17).

If there is one thing in all the world that the rebels do not want to do, it is the purpose of God. But they are helpless to keep that sovereign purpose out of their hearts, to protect their minds from invasion by the Lord God Almighty. In doing what they want to do, hating the harlot and ripping her to pieces, they are doing precisely what God wants. And in gathering to wage their war against the Messiah, they are merely assembling for their own execution. Dennis Johnson p. 211

We need to hear it over and over. We are bombarded with an opposite message once we walk out these doors. This book is not a roadmap for the future, but a word of grace and strength for our hearts as we learn to trust in the character and heart of the sovereign God.

Satan serves the plan of God even when he doesn't want to.

"His rage we can endure for lo his doom is sure. One little word shall fell him."

This hope empowers us to endure to the end. The Lamb will overcome.

We are not on the losing team. God can and will use even our enemies for His plan for our good.

The ultimate evidence of this is the Cross of Christ.

This announcement of judgement in Revelation is a gracious call to trust Christ as Savior and to walk with Him as Lord, no matter what it costs.

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<https://jezebel.com/how-love-is-blinds-nancy-talks-about-abortion-should-be-1849710461>

<https://jezebel.com/abortion-american-history-1849079359>

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