

Revealing the Mystery

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Preacher: Bill Story

[0 : 00] Do you believe that? One day, one day, in his house, in his courts.

Where does that come from? So I looked it up. Psalm 84. Psalm 84 starts with, How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts.

My soul longs. Yes, faints for the courts of the Lord. Is your soul faint for his court?

A day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield. The Lord bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.

[1 : 05] O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you. That's where that comes from. I've sung that a hundred times. I think I've looked it up before.

It struck me this time. Thank you. It's good to be in the Lord's house. This is one of his houses. It's good to have some folks back.

Great to see the Rathburn clan playing with us. I want to embarrass you. Praise the Lord.

Great to see the Romers, Ramers, what are they? Rhymers. You know, what did you call them, James? The Rhymer young ones?

Young Rhymers. Young Rhymers. That sounds like a music group that's on tour. Yeah, they're on tour. They went through St. Louis. Now they've come to the Springs. They're up here in Palmer Lake.

[2 : 03] So we'll hear them share in song later today, right? Thank you. All right, Jared. Thank you, Jared. Did we get the bell rung today?

Good. My neighbor will be happy. I have a German neighbor. She says, I missed the bell on Sunday morning. Reminds me of my childhood in Germany. I'm like, oh, Jared?

Jared was our ringer. We haven't had a replacement, so. Your job before leaving today, make sure we have a replacement. All right. Take your Bibles out with me and turn to the book of Revelation, chapter 17.

Only a few more chapters left. I estimate that, Lord willing, we'll be finishing up in March. We're looking for something new to do.

So we pray for that. I don't know where we're going yet after Revelation. Because I thought it would just take longer. Well, we could drag it out, probably. I'm just anxious to get to chapter 21, aren't you?

[3 : 11] That's what Dylan and I say every week. He's like, I can't wait for chapter 21. I can't wait for chapter 21. But it's important to hear this other part.

Really important. Today we're called to have wisdom. The information that we're given today in chapter 17 of Revelation is very, very important.

It gives us, it calls us to discernment. Now, why does it call us to discernment if it's just talking about the judgment of those who reject God?

Why do we have to have wisdom in all this? Well, that's why we need to pay attention to this. This applies to us. This makes a difference. Okay, so let's zero in.

I want to read the text and then we'll pray and then we'll dig in. So if you're able, please stand as I read from Revelation chapter 17. Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bulls came and said to me, Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers of the earth have become drunk.

[4 : 37] And he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns.

The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her immorality.

And on her forehead was written a name of mystery, Babylon the Great, mother of prostitutes and earth's abominations.

And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

When I saw her, I marveled greatly. But the angel said to me, why do you marvel?

[5 : 53] I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. The beast that you saw was and is not and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction.

And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast because it was and is not and is to come.

This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated. They are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen.

One is, the other has not yet come and when it does come it must remain only a little while. As for the beast that was and is not, it is also an eighth.

But it belongs to the seven and it goes to destruction. And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour together with the beast.

[7 : 24] These are of one mind and they hand over their power and authority to the beast. they will make war on the lamb and the lamb will conquer them for he is lord of lords and king of kings and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.

And the angel said to me, the waters that you saw where the prostitute is seated are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. And the ten horns that you saw they and the beast will hate the prostitute.

They will make her desolate and naked and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire 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 until the words of God are fulfilled. And the woman that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth.

So reads the word. Let us pray. Father, grant us your eyes to see. Grant us soft hearts to receive.

Give us a soul, O Father, that longs and faints for you, is hungry for you.

[9 : 10] Grant us to see, Lord, with discerning eyes today who or what is this woman and who or what is this beast with whom we need to deal.

This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. So the times, they are a-changing.

Who is that? Dylan that sang that song? I don't know. Before my time, I don't know. On January 24th of this year, Johanna Podjula, I have no idea if I'm pronouncing his name right, he is a pastor in Finland.

He will go on trial for expressing a Christian view on marriage. For preaching a Christian message, he is being condemned for hate speech.

This is happening. Now, Finland claims to protect freedom of speech. Yet, the officers who arrested Johanna say that his Christian beliefs are thought crimes.

[10 : 49] So to call sin a sin may and has become illegal. The times, they are a-changing.

It's happening this month in Finland. Now, who could be behind all of this? according to the book of Revelation, it is a dragon who is identified as the ancient serpent, the devil, Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, the dragon who works through the beast, who is described here in this very chapter as world rulers.

believers. And they work with false religion, which is described today as this woman who intoxicates and seduces.

And ultimately, this is a war, a worldly war against people of Christian faith. they war against the lamb, they war against the saints.

So today, we come to Revelation chapter 17. And here, it's a special chapter because here we're given an explanation of how to interpret the mysteries in Revelation.

[12 : 23] We're given a clue, we're given a code, we're given a direction of how to understand the mystery. he's going to explain the mystery.

Jesus told stories, remember what he called them? Parables. He called parables what? Mysteries of the kingdom.

Remember when Jesus told these parables? They're of course understandable on one level, but then what did he mean by that? And so the disciples remember after he told the parable would come to him in private and say, explain the parable to us.

What is this whole gardening thing going on? What is the seed and what are these different areas that the seeds are falling on? What does that mean? And Jesus would interpret, explain the mystery of the kingdom by the parables.

So that's what the angel's doing here for us. He's going to explain, I will tell you the mystery of two things, the mystery of the woman and the mystery of the beast.

[13 : 35] That has the seven heads and ten horns as grotesque beast. Obviously, it's symbolic. Standing for some.

So I'm going to explain that to you. So we get that here. So the purpose of this chapter is twofold. One, he's breaking the code here. He says in verse one, he's going to show, come I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, who is seated on this beast. He's going to show the judgment. It's a verdict. He's going to show the guilt of this prostitute. She will also be called Babylon the great in verse five and she will also be called the great city. So it's a picture of a woman, of a city, of a place. it's a code word. It's a picture, right, of something that is going on in our own society, in our world, that seduces and intoxicates people and is extremely dangerous.

The very same thing Jesus warned us against. So here in chapter 17, he's going to identify her, right, he's going to show who she is and how she relates to the beast.

[14 : 55] in chapter 18, we will see then the announcement, she has fallen, we will see the various aspects of society from the kings to the nations, to the merchants, right, and the ship builders, in other words, all of society is affected by this fall of this woman, this city, this Babylon, this reality in our own culture that is given these pictures, okay.

And then in chapter 19, so it kind of goes backwards as we're, in Revelation in chapter 12, he reveals the dragon, chapter 13, he reveals the beast, then later now he's revealing this woman. So the judgment of each of those are going to go backwards, so the judgment of the woman comes first, chapter 19 will be the judgment of the beast, and then in chapter 20 will be the judgment of the dragon.

Okay, so it keeps going, this dragon, this, you know, he reveals them, and then in reverse order he judges them, okay. So that's kind of where Revelation is going. Then we get to 21, okay, we'll be done with judgment.

New heaven and new earth, good stuff, but we need to hear this stuff. So, and then in verse 7, there's the other purpose of this chapter, he says I'm going to reveal this, I'm going to show you, I'm going to tell you the mystery, okay, so the meaning of the woman and the meaning of the beast.

[16 : 29] So, we'll call this, just for fun, we'll call it Beauty and the Beast. Beauty and the Beast, yeah, it's an old story. Heaven reveals the meaning of these two mysterious symbols, the mystery of the woman and the mystery of the beast.

Interesting, he describes the woman first in verses 1, along with the beast, he describes the woman mainly in the first six verses.

Verse 7 says I'm going to reveal, tell you who the woman and the beast are, and then he starts with the beast. So he talks about the woman and then first interprets the beast, and then at the end, verse 18, he says, oh, the woman, oh, the woman, the woman, yeah, yeah, she's the great city. Okay, so it's interesting, he starts and ends with the woman, but in the middle is the beast that we're dealing with. All right, so we'll look at these two things. First of all, who's the woman?

Who's the woman? What I think the woman is, is not a person, but an ideal. It's the economic, religious system in this world.

[17 : 42] It's worldliness. Worldliness that works through economics. In other words, selling, buying, selling, trading, getting prosperous, gaining luxury, gaining riches, gaining security, gaining things we look for.

I mean, money is a big deal in our culture, and it always has been. So it's economic, and it's also religious, not in the sense of people go to false churches, in the sense that they worship false gods. They wouldn't call it religion. People don't say, I'm, people, most people probably today would say, I'm not religious at all. And yet they are. They're worshiping something. They're trusting in something.

They're going after something. They're finding their security in something. Their identity and their meaning. Right? That's their God.

That's what God says. Anything that replaces me is your idol, is your religion. So, so the woman is really just representative.

[18:52] Since she's also a place called Babylon, she's called the mother of prostitutes. Since she's also called the great city, and cities, by the way, is where that stuff happens.

Cities. What's a city? Cities where you have banks. Cities where you buy and sell and trade. City is where you do your religion. Whatever that is.

Okay? So, the woman is the economic religious system used by world rulers to deceive the world. So, no, she's riding on the beast.

So, she is connected to this beast who are world rulers. So, first of all, she's pictured as a prostitute. What's that picture for? I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute.

Later, she's called verse 3 a woman, and then, of course, in verse 5, she's called mother of prostitutes. Verse 18, she's called the great city. So, why prostitute?

[19:51] Well, prostitute means that she's seductive. She's alluring. And it talks about here that verse 2, the kings commit immorality with her, and the wine, the wine of her immorality, the dwellers of the earth have become drunk.

So, she's intoxicating. She's seductive and intoxicating, and intoxication leads us, have you ever been intoxicated in anybody here? Good, that's alright.

It happens. we lose discernment. We lose, huh?

Here, hold my beer. Here, hold my beer. No, give it back to me. Beer. Sorry. It blinds us, it numbs us.

So, that's why this image is shown. Whatever she is, she seduces and lures us and intoxicates us, we become drunk.

[21:00] And we kind of, we lose perspective, we lose wisdom. Right? It's okay. Go along with it. It says, the kings are united with her in this immorality and in this drinking, and the dwellers of the earth are involved with this.

They're drunk with wine. What does that mean? So, we go to the next chapter, chapter 18. Just look at verse 3 in the next chapter, because it's still going to describe this Babylon and how she has fallen and who she is.

So, look at verse 3 in 18. For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality. The kings of the earth have committed immorality with her. The merchants of the earth have, what?

Grown rich from the power of her luxurious living. Who is she? She's prosperity. She's riches. She's the riches of the world. She's that ideal. Now, I may not want to be rich, but I want to be safe. I want to be secure. Hmm?

[22:07] That's who she is. She influences us that way, whether it's through immorality or intoxication.

Verse 4, look at how she's adorned. So we see the woman, but how is she dressed? She's the beauty. Look what she wears. The woman is arrayed in what?

Purple and scarlet, which in the first century, only kings and rich people could get this dye. It's an extremely expensive process to get purple and scarlet.

white. That's why kings wear that. She wears this. And then she's got jewelry with gold and jewels and pearls.

Pearls! Now, we can buy pearls today, but in the first century, right? Jesus says the pearl of great price, right? Someone will sell everything they have to buy that one pearl.

[23:16] That's how extremely rare and valuable it is. We're talking about gems and riches and luxury and costly things.

But she's also holding in her hand, here's the flip side, she's holding in her hand a cup. Now, it looks just like a cup, but then what's inside this cup is what he's telling us.

What's inside this cup is full of abominations and impurities. See, she looks good. You can't judge a book by its cover, they say, right?

On the outside, looks good. That's real promising, real pretty, real, oh, she's a beauty. Yeah, you want to drink her wine? You want to know what she's really about?

Right? She's about abomination and immorality. idolatry. She's about the treasures of the world.

[24 : 14] Remember, Jesus warned us, do not lay up treasures upon earth where they rest and are stolen or fade away. Lay up treasures in heaven where they're eternal.

And he says, why? Why don't do that? Why don't lay up treasures on earth? Right? Because they fade and yeah, yeah, yeah, there's that.

But he goes to a deeper reason. For where your treasure is, that's where your heart is. What you really treasure, that's your God.

What you really value, that's your idol. And you cannot have two masters, either God or money. Can I have a book? That's why this is relevant. The woman is alive and prosperous today. We're seduced by her.

[25 : 20] This isn't something that Christians are just, oh, yeah, the woman goes, we're seduced by this too. We, like everybody else in the world, want to be safe.

We want to have enough, right? We're seduced by that. We're intoxicated by that. Why else would Jesus warn us?

That's why this angel is saying, you need to be wise about this. You need to be discerning about this woman and this beast. They're not fairy tales. They're not something long far in the future. They are right here today. The dragon is at work today. Okay. So then she's also a persecutor, we see in verse three through six.

In verse three, he says that she sits on the beast. She's working with the beast, the world rulers. World rulers are using prosperity, economic, religion, to deceive the world.

[26 : 27] She is identified in verse five. She has this mysterious name which tells us there's a hidden meaning behind her name. It's not a real name, it's a symbol name, it's a code word for what she stands for.

She is Babylon the great. Babylon was the ultimate captive, captor of Israel. right?

Holds them. Then she's also the mother of prostitutes and of earth's abomination. So to be the mother of prostitutes and the mother of abomination means she's the source.

She's the beginning and she continues. She births other prostitutes and other abominations. So in other words, all prostitution and all abomination of that ilk come from this woman.

Okay? In other words, she started way back in the garden. Who started her idea? The serpent in the garden.

[27 : 30] As God really said. God's hiding something from you. Don't you want to be, don't you want to have it all? He birthed it right in the garden, in paradise.

And Adam led him, let the serpent in, didn't he? Let the serpent talk. Adam was the guardian of the garden and he let the serpent talk.

So, she's identified as this seducer, right? This one who's from the beginning. Her mission, verse 6, I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs.

See what's behind all of what she does? She's got the cup of abomination and immorality and all that, but she herself, what she pursues, what intoxicates her, what floats her boat, is the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Christ.

she hunts down believers because she serves the dragon who seeks to devour every saint.

[28 : 48] He will do it through deception, he will do it through putting you in prison. Here we have a pastor going possibly to prison for preaching the gospel, for preaching truth that has now been twisted to a crime.

And so we see early in Revelation the believers in the seven churches, some are going to prison, some are being killed because they stand for truth.

The day is coming for us. It's not far away, it's very conceivable, is it not? Mark may have to fill in for me a lot more.

Not just Mark. James, Ron, David, Dan, saying, for saying things that we have taken for granted, that we have the freedom to say, that goes away.

Used to be freedom in Rome too. Used to be peace in Rome. Rome was the model.

[30 : 13] And they slowly started to crumble, slowly started to fall apart, slowly started to corrode from within. By the time Attila the Hun comes, it's no match.

So, think back to the first century. Who is this beast? The beast is Rome in first century.

Who is the woman? It's the whole economic, religious system of Rome. Buying, selling, trading, the getting ahead, going across seas, the whole thing. The marketplace, the agora of the first century was huge.

the ports to Corinth and Ephesus and other places were huge for making money and prospering. That's why chapter 18 is going to talk about the merchants. It's going to talk about the shipmasters. They lose everything when she goes down.

[31 : 18] And how she goes down is quite interesting.

Because she's taken out by her own people. Government turns on them. Interesting. So, in the first century, who killed Jesus?

Huh? Yeah, they're responsible, but who was, who, who, they were the most responsible because they asked for that, but they didn't have the power to put them to death.

Who put them to death? Pilate. Remember, Jesus said to Pilate, yeah, you're going to bear responsibility here, but they're going to bear a higher responsibility.

But don't, don't think you can wash your hands here, pal. Who killed Peter and Paul? Nero.

[32 : 22] Who exiled John, who wrote this book to the island of Patmos to get him out of the way? Rome. Who, uh, who's putting this pastor in Finland on trial?

a government who has been twisted and changed by changing ideals within its culture, redefining identity, changes what crimes are because it now becomes a higher thing to protect my identity, however I want to define that and suddenly what we thought was true all along, we've got to change that because now we've got new identities.

I'm not a sinner, I'm this. I like to rob things. That's just who I am.

I like to commit adultery, so that's not a sin, that's just who I am, I was born that way. Right?

Ridiculous, isn't it? Absolutely ridiculous. You know, I just covet everything, but it's okay, I was born that way.

[34 : 00] Well, I was. I coveted things from the age of one. If my sister had it, I needed it.

But I'm born that way, so it's okay, right? Is any of my sin okay simply because I'm born with it and it's natural desire? Why not?

That's what we're doing. is it not? Nobody can tell me what's right and wrong. And therefore, when that becomes the absolute, it's fair game.

And who's left in society holding the bag for trying to tell what's true? Those people who still hold to the holy triune God.

That's it. because every other religion can kind of slide. I don't know about every, but Muslims have some trouble, but they got their own protection.

[35 : 12] They're not really under the gun. They're being protected as well. Because, you know, it's cultural. okay, sorry.

Back to the text. So, now verse 18, who is she? So, she's portrayed as a woman. The woman is the great city.

So, she's a prostitute. She's Babylon. She's the great city. The great city, obviously, is symbolic.

Woman, picture of a woman is obviously symbolic.

Remember back in chapter 11, verse 8, we were talking about the two witnesses and how they are invincible. Remember, these two witnesses are invincible. Nobody can stop them.

They preach for Christ for, what is it, 42 months? 1260 days? I forget which it is. It doesn't matter.

You know, they got a period of time. While they're on mission, they're invincible.

[36 : 12] Until God says, okay, that's enough. Now, dragon, you can kill them. And they'll lay there for three days and then they resurrect. So, not much of a victory for the dragon.

But it was said that their bodies lied in this great city. Chapter 11, verse 8. Lied in the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom, Egypt.

and by the way, the place where the Lord was crucified, what place was that? Jerusalem. So, the great city is any city that has opposed God and become an anti-God place.

Jerusalem became that very thing. We reject God's son. We are now the great city. No longer the holy city. We're now the great city, like Sodom was, like Egypt was.

Well, was Egypt? No. How many gods can you take? Egypt had a God for everything. Greeks have a God for everything. Romans have a God for everything.

[37 : 26] Americans have a God for everything. We call them superheroes. Which is all those gods are. They're superheroes. They're not immortal. They have an old, you know, they have kryptonite or something that can put them on, you know.

They're just superhuman. Those are those kind of gods. They're not real gods. Okay. So she is this great city and she has dominion over all the kings of the earth.

Literally, she has a kingdom over the earthly kingdoms. She's the one who has the world kingdom manifested through all the earthly kingdoms.

So she's not a you can't find her in one place. She's everywhere. She's influencing. She's the economic, religious system of the world. That leads us to idolatry to seek security in anything but God.

So think about our own government. Okay, careful here, right? Hmm. What drives government? [38 : 37] government? Now they, now we have an experiment going on here in America that's, you know, we elect our leaders, right?

We don't have kings over us. We elect them. Used to. We get to, what? Used to. Okay. Right? I don't know. So what drives them?

So they make promises. We elect them. They don't keep their promises. But we reelect them because they promise again and then they don't keep their promises. And we reelect them again because they promised. And they cried and they feel our pain.

And I don't care what party you're talking about. Who trusts them. But what drives them really? Have we discerned that?

What drives them? Power. Getting reelected, right? So, power, money. Let's make America great again.

[39 : 42] Which means what? Prosperity. I'm not aiming at one person here. There are many that talk about that.

Either party, you can say it's, well, there's other parties now too. Big parties are keeping down. Because it's about control and it's about how do we control the people.

We control the people either through giving them their ability to make their own prosperity or we become the ones who take care of everybody. Trust us and we'll take care of you.

Give us your money, we'll take care of you. I don't know who that party is, but either one, I don't care.

I don't care. I don't trust either of them because they're all liars. They're in it for themselves. That doesn't mean there can't be some good people in there.

[40 : 45] I'm not saying that. There are some good people in there. I don't know why they would ever want to do that. But I think there are some good people in there. But when you look at the government as a whole, what are they driven by?

They're driven by money. They're driven by people to be dependent upon them. They're driven by control and influence. They're driven by lobbyists. So what is at issue here?

This woman, why is it important to understand this economic religious system of the world? Why is she called a harlot? Well, back in Hosea, remember the prophet Hosea ever read Hosea?

You read him lately? This poor guy, I would never want to be a prophet in the Old Testament. You got to do stuff that's not fun. Poor Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea was told to go find a prostitute and make her your wife.

Thank you very much. because she's simply going to be a living parable and illustration to the rest of Israel of what I think of them. Alright, so Hosea says this, God spoke to Israel in the same way that Revelation 17 is speaking of this woman.

[42 : 13] Okay, when the Lord first spoke through Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea, go take a wife, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom.

Why? For the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the Lord. I want to show Israel my chosen people, I want to show them who they become.

So you get to be exhibit A, Hosea, bless your heart. So he went and took Gomer, the daughter of somebody, and she conceived and bore him a son, and the Lord said to him, call his name Jezreel, which means sowing of seed, for in just a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end, watch this, wait a minute, wait a minute, I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.

I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. This is the end of Israel. Now remember at this point the kingdom was divided, there is a northern kingdom called kingdom of Israel, who does not have a king on their throne from the line of David, they have their own kings, and they have their own temple, and they go down quickly because they're into false worship.

And there's a southern kingdom called the kingdom of Judah, who still has, the line of David. When the northern kings, the ten tribes of the north go out, they're gone, they never come back.

[43 : 57] They never come back. They're gone. Gone, gone, gone. Right? And on that day, he says, I put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel, and on that day I will break the bow of Israel in the land of Jezreel.

So she conceived again and bore a daughter, and the Lord said to him, call her name, no mercy. That's a good name, isn't it? No mercy, for I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, to forgive them at all.

It's over. But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and I will save them by the Lord their God. I will not have mercy, I will not save them by bow, or sword, or war, or horses, or horsemen, but by me.

Spiritual salvation, real salvation. And the Lord said, call women, and she conceived again, and she bore a son, and the Lord said, okay, call his name, not my people.

So here's good old Hosea, faithful to the Lord, preaching for the Lord. Go get Gomer, yeah, she's a harlot, and make her your wife, and then have children. I'm going to call your children, spreads a lot of seed, no mercy, and not my people.

[45 : 21] It's like, it's kind of negative, isn't it, Lord? I got a message for my people, and you're going to be the illustrated sermon. My people are harlots, and they have spread their seed everywhere, and I will no longer have mercy on them, and they are no longer my people.

They are no longer my people. They've divorced me, I divorced them. And God hates divorce, right?

So call his name not my people, for you are not my people, and I am not your God. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered, and in the place where it was said to them, you are not my people, in the future it will be said to them, children of the living God.

So out of all those rejected people of Israel, the Samaritans and such, they all move back into places like Galilee, Galilee of the Gentiles, Samaria, and what happens to those people?

They find Jesus, and they become his people. In fact, 1 Peter 2, 10 quotes this very verse, not my people, now my people.

[46 : 55] God doesn't have a long memory on some of this stuff. So, Israel was judged for idolatry, and so in other words, in the Old Testament idolatry is often called whoredom.

You go after another God. God is your God, God is your husband to Israel. Israel is God's bride. Does that sound familiar in the New Testament?

The church is who? The bride of Jesus. So, in the Old Testament, God had made Israel his bride. And she gone off to other lovers.

She had left him and deserted him. That's the picture. Have we done that? God had given her everything.

He gave her a promise. He gave her land. He gave her mercy and he gave her kindness. How have you responded to the Lord? Right?

[47 : 57] I mean, I appreciate it, brother. Ron saying, you know, I needed to hear that message last week. I forget. I'm amen and I'm with you.

Forget. Forget what the real gift is. Take it for granted. My goodness, people would have killed, well, killed. They would have given anything to have something like this in their own possession.

They had to go down to the synagogue to pull out the scroll and they couldn't go anywhere. They just had whatever local scroll was there. What if it was Leviticus?

Right? It seems like Jesus grew up in the synagogue that pretty much had Deuteronomy because when he faced the devil, he just quoted from Deuteronomy, Deuteronomy, Deuteronomy.

Could I do that? Probably not. Give me Gospel of John or something. We have a tremendous gift here. Are we using it?

[48 : 59] How are we treating God? This isn't about guilt. This is just saying, how are we doing? How are you doing? Because I need to hear it too. So there's a second mystery we see revealed and that's the beast.

And we've already kind of been talking about this. We've referred to this before so it's not a surprise if you've been following along. The beast is, are the world rulers? And here in this text, it's the world rulers and their allies, these ten horns, these ten other kings, who are judged by the lamb as a sham.

They are exposed as a sham. They are a false messiah. Remember, the beast had a false prophet who looked like, remember, it looked like what?

A lamb. It had horns like a lamb. But what gave it away was how it spoke. It spoke as a dragon. It's a liar.

Book in the cover, right? So, in fact, everything about the dragon, he's got a false trinity, right? The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, right?

[50 : 15] The fake trinity. He's even described as was and is and is to come. It's the same way God is described. The Lord God, the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.

And then later in Revelation, he was, he is, and now he's reigning, chapter 11. He was and he is, and now he's judging. In other words, he's not is to come, he's come.

Revelation is showing when he comes, boom. We're still kind of living in the is to come. But this beast is described the same way.

Was, is, is to come. But I want you to notice something. Look at verse 8. First he explains the heads of this beast. The beast that you saw was and is not, and is it, wait a minute, what did that say?

It's supposed to say is. The beast that you saw was and is not and is about to arise from the abyss and go to destruction. Wait a minute. Go down to the end of verse 8.

[51 : 26] They will marvel to see the beast because it was and is not and is to come. Wait a minute, what? Verse 11, as for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth.

What? The beast was, is about to come, but right now is not. He's going to describe the seven heads differently, right?

Five were, one is, one will come. So he's somehow distinguishing the beast from the heads of the beast.

The beast is the overall picture, has the seven heads. The beast is the servant of the dragon who also has, by the way, seven heads. ten horns.

The beast is the earthly manifestation of the dragon. Worldly, earthly governments are the earthly manifestation of Satan.

[52 : 31] Not our government. I don't know. What do you think of our government? Well, it depends on who's, yeah, I know.

I was reading the book here. So, in other words, was, is not.

In other words, this, this beast is false. In some sense, it's not real. In some sense, it's not all present.

It's not all there. It's a shadow. because the beast is the earthly manifestation of the dragon. What happened to the dragon?

Chapter 12, the dragon stood before the woman about to give birth, the birth to the child who's going to rule everything, right? And he stands before to devour the child. He uses Herod, he uses different people.

[53 : 37] Finally, he gets Pilate to put him to death, death, but that didn't last. right, so Genesis 3, what the curse on the serpent is, your offspring will bruise the heel of the child of Eve.

You know, you trip him up, but he, the child of Eve, the ultimate child of Eve, will crush the head of the serpent. So when Jesus died and rose again, the devil tripped him, but Jesus crushed him.

And we remember chapter 12 tells us that next after he ascended, that's when the devil gets thrown down. He's out of heaven. He has no more place there. He is out because he has no way to accuse those brethren anymore because Christ has defeated him and disarmed him.

Hasn't demolished him, he's still around. Now he's on earth in this manifestation of world government. Not just one.

So in other words, the beast was, and then in the first century, he's not. He's done. He's around.

[55 : 04] around, you know, he's around, but he has no real power over believers. He's been disarmed. He cannot touch them.

He can deceive them. He can get them into prison. He can even bring about their death, yes, but he cannot demonize them.

He get them. Why? Because you are sealed. You have the Holy Spirit within and greater than he is within. He ain't coming in here with the Holy Spirit.

Now he can say stuff and I can go, okay, can't hear you. What? I like what he's saying. I can get deceived and I do. I fall for it more than I want to admit.

So, so, where am I? Oh, he's the sham. He's defeated. Yeah. So, then we're told in verse 9, this is call for wisdom.

[56 : 16] How am I doing anyway? I got a feeling I thought this was going to be really short. Every time I think that, the Lord says, yeah, right.

I prayed for the Lord to restrain unnecessary, so I hope the Lord will. Verse 9, this calls for a mind with wisdom. This makes a difference who this beast and this woman are.

It calls for discernment. We need to discern the falseness. We're told then in verse 9 that the heads are seven mountains. Well, that makes it, you know, in the first century, the seven mountains, well, not mountains, but hills, were the seven hills of Rome.

Rome sat on, or eventually grew from those seven communities that became now the great city. So, you could interpret that if seven is literal, if seven in Revelation is literal, then seven mountains are seven specific mountains.

It makes it Rome. Well, if you're going to make seven literal, you're going to have trouble with other things like Jesus having seven eyes, and there only being seven churches, only seven, and they're all gone now.

[57 : 41] But remember seven, we found seven, seven churches were representative, they weren't all the churches at that time, they were simply representative of all churches, not only of that time, but all time.

We found ourselves relating to every one of those churches in some way. Seven days of a week.

Why didn't God make eight days a week? God made seven days a week.

Why not five? Why not a longer weekend? God says six days and one day rest. So he says seven days. Why? Because that's a full week. that's representative of the whole time that you live your life. Seven. So seven is representative. So Jesus has seven horns. The lamb has seven horns. Not just two horns, the lamb has seven horns. What's that? Does he really have seven horns?

No, seven is the full complete perfection of power. So seven is representative of all.

[58 : 44] It represents the full realm of government. It spans the ages. So the seven heads are not just, see if we make these seven sequential from the time of, well, when do you go?

So remember, so what do you have here? Verse 10. So it's not only seven mountains. And if it means, if it's symbolic of seven mountains, it just means, you know, all the mountains.

Remember at the very end, the mountains go away? Governments go away? Everything goes away? So verse 10. So they're not only seven mountains, they're also seven kings.

So here we go. So five of whom have fallen, one is, and the other is not yet to come. So that means, so in John's time, five have already come. Five kings have already come and gone.

Is he talking about the kings just of Rome? So where do we start counting? Because there's a lot more than seven kings of Rome. Right? So where do you start?

[59 : 46] Do you start with Caligula? Do you start with, you know, who do you start with? Do you start with Caesar? Who do you start with? Because they've got a ton of them. And a bunch of them were real short termish, so that one doesn't count.

So where do you start? Or is he talking about world kingdoms? So is he going back like in Daniel?

Remember Daniel talks about, Daniel 7 talks about four different beasts, remember?

And we rely a lot on Daniel because Daniel is picked up on a lot of phrases. So in Daniel you've got the first beast, right? Who we're told is Babylon and another beast, which I think, the first one I think was lion, right?

Second one was bear, then the leopard, right? So you had Babylon, you had Medo-Persia, and you had Greece. Remember Alexander the Great knew he was talked about in the Bible.

Did you know that? He knew that. He's described as that third beast, the leopard, in Daniel. And then talks about the fourth kingdom.

[60 : 51] The fourth kingdom doesn't even get an animal-like description. The fourth one in Daniel is just called a beast. Is this the beast? It's not even lion, bear, leopard.

It's just a beast. And that's when everything changes in Daniel 7, because then comes this one like a son of man who receives a kingdom and sets up his own kingdom, and everything's different from that.

So if we say, so in Daniel, right, it was sequential. Four different kingdoms, you've got Babylon. So is that what it means here in Revelation 17? These seven, are they seven earthly kingdoms?

Do we have to go back to Egypt, and then Assyria, and then Babylon, and then Persia, then Greece, then Rome? Because if we do that, we start with Egypt.

I don't even know if that's the right one to start with. But then the sixth one is the one that is here, right? Five have fallen. Egypt, Assyria, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, no.

[62 : 04] Sorry, Miss Persia. So by six, anyway, by six you get to Rome. So that's the one that is. You've got to start there. That's Rome. After Rome, there's only one more, and it only comes for a brief time.

Rome spanned five centuries. Okay? Rome, give or take, you know, when did it actually start? When did it actually fall?

But there were Caesars four, five centuries. So after Rome comes who? So if you take seven as sequential, if you take seven as literal, so seven literal kings, right?

And then number six is Rome. Number seven comes, which is the next one after Rome. Who is that? Because it's been a 2,000 year gap.

Well, okay, not Rome ended about 400s-ish. So 1,600 year gap. So I don't think it means that.

[63 : 23] I think seven means full representative of all the time. Daniel's showing similarities.

There's four different beasts. In Revelation, we only have one beast with seven different heads.

Has qualities like that, but the beast in Revelation is more of a composite of all of them. Okay? I think. So what about the horns? We're told in verse 12, the 12 horns represent kings as well.

But these kings, notice here, the ten horns that you saw are ten kings. Who have what? Have not yet received royal power. So they're future. In fact, they're going to be the very end time kings.

How do I know that? Well, keep reading. Who have not yet received their royal power. But they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, which compared to 42 months and, you know, 1260 days, not very long, right?

One hour, together with the beast. So very brief. These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast, so they're all in with the big world rulers.

[64 : 30] Verse 14. What do they do? What is it that these ten kings do? They will make war on the lamb, and it ain't going to last long. They will make war on the lamb, which is what, remember, bowl six and seven referred to, the clearing of the Euphrates, right?

The gathering, right? To the mountain, and then trying to, the last battle. Last battle is described in chapter 16, 17, 19, and 20 from different perspectives.

It's not a long battle. Why? Verse 14. They will come and make war on the lamb, and the lamb will conquer them.

Why? Because of who he is. He's lord of lords. He's not just a lord. He's lord of lords, and he's the king. Of kings.

They're no match. They're no match. It's... They're just no match. Finally, there's a twist here in verse 15.

[65 : 39] Well, verse 15, he tells us who the waters are. The waters are... It's just a picture of the people. Right? She's sitting on waters, which means she has influence over peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and languages.

Well, how many people is that? That's pretty much everyone. She has universal influence over all people of the world.

Not just one nation. Nations. Not just one language. Languages. Not just one people. Peoples.

Okay? Got it? She has universal influence.

She seduces and fools them and deceives them by desires for an idol that gives me money and security. A government I can trust.

That I can depend on. Wouldn't it be nice to have a government we could trust and depend on?

Give us what we really want. Well, that's the promises that the politicians make, isn't it?

[66 : 41] And then no keep, right? I don't know. Maybe I'm... Maybe I'm a half full cup of a guy. I don't know. We still hope for a good one, right?

Maybe Johnny will run. No? You've given up by now? Maybe Ronnie will come back. Oh. What if Ronnie came back?

I'm betraying myself. Never mind. Never mind. Sorry. She'll ask who's Ronnie. Ronnie Reagan?

Yeah. Yeah, his name spells out 6662, so...

Not really, but yeah. Yeah, but remember, they come back. The wound is healed. I just thought I'd throw that in. I know, I know.

I'm just... He wasn't perfect. I know that. I actually liked his vice president a lot more than I liked him, but never mind.

[67 : 50] See, they're actors. But look at Israel. Getting onto this whole ruler king, you know. Who's the best king of Israel? Who's the best king the world has ever seen?

David. Okay, yeah. Trump card. Okay. Sorry for saying Trump. David. Not head and shoulders physically, but head and shoulders king-wise, hands down.

When he was king, everything went well. Tell one day. So even our best, he's a man after God's own heart.

God picked him because he was a man. He's an impressive dude. The men have been reading about him. We're just like, man, this dude's extraordinary. He goofs up a lot, but end of the day, he is an extraordinary man.

Would we elect David to be king over us? Well, over other choices? Yeah. You know.

[69 : 13] And yet he's a failure. Yet he's a failure. He's the best we have to offer. I love the guy.

He's kind of like a Peter though, right? I mean, you love him and you go, Peter, why'd you say that? Knucklehead.

All right. So then verse 16, the end time. Here's the twist. Verse 16, the ten horns that you saw on the beast will hate the prostitute.

Now, wait a minute. They've been working with the prostitute. Now, all of a sudden, they're going to hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire. So the world governments are going to suddenly turn on the economic religious system. Why in the world would the government turn on wealth? War? War? Something's going to happen.

[70 : 17] That's been their ally. Economic religion, false religion, idolatry, system, world's system, working, working, working.

All of a sudden, the government's going to turn on it? At the end, at the very end, because it's these ten kings, this is at the very end. They're going to turn on her. They're going to devour her and they're going to expose her and burn her up with fire.

Why? Verse 17, the only reason they're going to do it is because it wouldn't make any sense. The only reason they're going to do it is because God put it into their hearts. Because they wouldn't do it.

This is not logical. Although governments can be quite irrational. 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 until the words of God are fulfilled.

So when God says it's time out, time's up, He's going to, okay, now, you're all going to go nuts. And you're going to dump the very thing that's made you successful.

[71 : 25] You're going to turn on your very own huge influence or you're just going to dump it. And you're set up for me. Okay, so, all right, what's the point of all this?

Here's the picture. The world is judged for forsaking God as a husband. That's what this is really about. The woman represents the very things we go after, the ideals we long for, the very things the dragon from the very beginning appealed to us about.

We want more. I want something besides God I can count on. I don't want to just take God's word for it. I want to make something happen. And so I make my own God.

I create my own security. Whether I do that through an idea, through business, through a career, through a family, through ministry.

Pastors do this. I'm going to create something and that's what I will trust. Because I can't control God.

[72 : 35] God wants me to trust Him and He won't tell me everything. He says it's all going to be okay but there's a lot of days it's not okay.

Right? I mean, being a Christian nowadays, it takes faith, doesn't it? It takes a lot of faith.

because He says He's always present but He doesn't always feel present, does He? He says everything will work out for good but in the process it doesn't feel very good.

So I get antsy and impatient and I want to make it work and feel better now because I'm weary and I'm worn out and I'm discouraged and my soul that's where it hits, isn't it?

The soul wants what it wants right now. That's why I can't listen to it. That's why like David I got to talk to it and say stop, stop, stop, stop.

[73 : 54] So here's the point. Ezekiel 16, it almost sounds just like Revelation 17.

Interesting how these future things are echoed from the Old Testament. God's not saying something new, He's already said it to Israel.

How He's going to treat the world is how He's already treated Israel. Israel forsook God as her husband. Ezekiel 16 describes how God came to Israel.

He found her like a woman. He found her, He chose her, He cleansed her. He found her naked and He clothed her. He had compassion on her, He gave her life. She had nothing, He gave her life. He clothed her and made her beautiful. Yet, after all that He had done for her, she went after another husband.

[74 : 56] Another God. So here's what Ezekiel 16 says. He says, How sick is your heart, declares the Lord God, because you did all these things, the deeds of a brazen prostitute, building your vaulted chamber at the head of every street, making your lofty place in every square.

Yet, you were not like a prostitute because you scorned payment. you did it for free. Adulterous wives, see, here's the real point.

Adulterous wife, Israel, who received strangers instead of her husband. Men give gifts to all prostitutes, but you, you gave your gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from every side with your whorings.

So, you were different from other women in your whorings. No one solicited you to play the whore, and you gave payment. Well, no payment was given to you.

Therefore, you were different. Therefore, oh, prostitute, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God, because your lust was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your whorings with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, see, it's connected to idolatry, and because of the blood of your children that you gave to them, oh, my gosh, therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved, and all those you hated, I will gather them against you from every side, and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness.

[76 : 38] I will judge you as women who commit adultery, and shed blood are judged, and I will bring you the blood of wrath and jealousy, and I will give you into their hands, and they shall throw you down, throw down your vaulted chamber, and break down your lofty places, they shall strip you of your clothes, and take your beautiful jewels, and leave you naked and bare.

The same description that is given to Babylon, the woman, in Revelation 17, suddenly, all her lovers, the government, will turn on her, and devour her, and strip her, expose her.

Who is she? She's all of us who lay up treasure on earth. Remember what Jesus said?

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth. Where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Why? For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body, so if the eye is healthy, if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

[78 : 10] But if your eye is bad, if your eye is evil, if your eye is covetousness, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness?

Bottom line, no one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and money. You can't. You can't have them both. So what does that mean? Does that mean all money is evil? No, love of money is evil. The control of money, the covetousness of money is evil.

I can't tell you for you, you must go to Jesus and he'll tell you. He'll let you know. So what is your master?

[79 : 13] Where is your treasure? What is your eye focused on? Let's pray. Our Father, we pray that you would create in us a clean heart.

Renew in us a right spirit and sustain us with a willing spirit. make us, cause us to walk in the path of your commandments for we delight in the path.

Incline our hearts to your testimonies and not to selfish gain. Turn away our eyes from looking at vanity, vain, empty things and revive us in your ways.

Establish thy word to thy servant as that which produces true fear of you. We long, O Father, from our souls, we long for your precepts.

Revive us through your righteousness. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.