10

REVELATION 17-19:10

JESUS IS BETTER THAN THIS WORLD

REVELATION REVELATION

17 THE WOMAN AND THE SCARLET BEAST

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me:
"Come, I will show you the judgment of the notorious prostitute who is seated on many waters.
2 The kings of the earth committed sexual immorality with her, and those who live on the earth
became drunk on the wine of her sexual immorality." 3 Then he carried me away in the Spirit
to a wilderness.

I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and
had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, adorned with
gold, jewels, and pearls. She had a golden cup in her hand filled with everything detestable
and with the impurities of her prostitution. 5 On her forehead was written a name, a mystery:
BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE DETESTABLE
THINGS OF THE EARTH. 6 Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the
saints and with the blood of the witnesses to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.

THE MEANING OF THE WOMAN AND OF THE BEAST

7 Then the angel said to me, "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the
woman and of the beast, with the seven heads and the ten horns, that carries her. 8 The beast
that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up from the abyss and go to destruction.
Those who live on the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the
foundation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast that was, and is not, and
is to come. 9 This calls for a mind that has wisdom: "The seven heads are seven mountains on
which the woman is seated. They are also seven kings: 10 Five have fallen, one is, the other
has not yet come, and when he comes, he must remain for only a little while. 11 The beast that
was and is not, is itself an eighth king, but it belongs to the seven and is going to destruction.
12 The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will
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. 14 These will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb
will conquer them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. Those with him are called,
chosen, and faithful."

15 He also said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute was seated, are peoples,
multitudes, nations, and languages. 16 The ten horns you saw, and the beast, will hate the
prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, devour her flesh, and burn her up with fire.
17 For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his plan by having one purpose and to give
their kingdom to the beast until the words of God are fulfilled. 18 And the woman you saw is
the great city that has royal power over the kings of the earth."

18 THE FALL OF BABYLON THE GREAT

After this I saw another angel with great authority coming down from heaven, and the
earth was illuminated by his splendor. 2 He called out in a mighty voice:

It has fallen,
Babylon the Great has fallen!
She has become a home for demons,
a haunt for every unclean spirit,
a haunt for every unclean bird,
and a haunt for every unclean and despicable beast.
3 For all the nations have drunk
the wine of her sexual immorality,
which brings wrath.
The kings of the earth
have committed sexual immorality with her,
and the merchants of the earth
have grown wealthy from her sensuality and excess.
4 Then I heard another voice from heaven:
Come out of her, my people,
so that you will not share in her sins
or receive any of her plagues.
5 For her sins are piled up to heaven,
and God has remembered her crimes.
6 Pay her back the way she also paid,
and double it according to her works.
In the cup in which she mixed,
mix a double portion for her.
7 As much as she glorified herself and indulged her sensual and excessive ways,
give her that much torment and grief.
For she says in her heart,
"I sit as a queen;
I am not a widow,
and I will never see grief."
8 For this reason her plagues will come in just one day—
death and grief and famine.
She will be burned up with fire,
because the Lord God who judges her is mighty.

THE WORLD MOURNS BABYLON'S FALL

9 The kings of the earth who have committed sexual immorality and shared her sensual and
excessive ways will weep and mourn over her when they see the smoke from her burning.
10 They will stand far off in fear of her torment, saying,

Woe, woe, the great city,
Babylon, the mighty city!
For in a single hour
your judgment has come.

11 The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their
cargo any longer— 12 cargo of gold, silver, jewels, and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk, and scarlet;
all kinds of fragrant wood products; objects of ivory; objects of expensive wood, brass, iron,
and marble; 13 cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, and frankincense; wine, olive oil, fine flour,
and grain; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and slaves—human lives.

14 The fruit you craved has left you.
All your splendid and glamorous things are gone;
they will never find them again.

15 The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand far off in fear of her
torment, weeping and mourning, 16 saying,

Woe, woe, the great city,
dressed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet,
adorned with gold, jewels, and pearls;
17 for in a single hour
such fabulous wealth was destroyed!

And every shipmaster, seafarer, the sailors, and all who do business by sea, stood far off 18 as
they watched the smoke from her burning and kept crying out, "Who was like the great city?"
19 They threw dust on their heads and kept crying out, weeping, and mourning,

Woe, woe, the great city,
where all those who have ships on the sea
became rich from her wealth;
for in a single hour she was destroyed.
20 Rejoice over her, heaven,
and you saints, apostles, and prophets,
because God has pronounced on her the judgment she passed on you!

THE FINALITY OF BABYLON'S FALL

21 Then a mighty angel picked up a stone like a large millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,

In this way, Babylon the great city
will be thrown down violently
and never be found again.
22 The sound of harpists, musicians,
flutists, and trumpeters
will never be heard in you again;
no craftsman of any trade
will ever be found in you again;
the sound of a mill
will never be heard in you again;
23 the light of a lamp
will never shine in you again;
and the voice of a groom and bride
will never be heard in you again.
All this will happen
because your merchants
were the nobility of the earth,
because all the nations were deceived
by your sorcery.
24 In her was found the blood of prophets and saints,
and of all those slaughtered on the earth.

19

CELEBRATION IN HEAVEN

After this I heard something like the loud voice of a vast multitude in heaven, saying,
Hallelujah!
Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God,
2 because his judgments are true and righteous,
because he has judged the notorious prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality;
and he has avenged the blood of his servants
that was on her hands.
3 A second time they said,

Hallelujah!
Her smoke ascends forever and ever!

4 Then the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who
is seated on the throne, saying,
Amen! Hallelujah!
5 A voice came from the throne, saying,
Praise our God,
all his servants, and the ones who fear him,
both small and great!
6 Then I heard something like the voice of a vast multitude, like the sound of cascading waters,
and like the rumbling of loud thunder, saying,
Hallelujah, because our Lord God, the Almighty,
reigns!
7 Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory,
because the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has prepared herself.
8 She was given fine linen to wear, bright and pure.
For the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints.
9 Then he said to me, "Write: Blessed are those invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb!"
He also said to me, "These words of God are true." 10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him, but
he said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers and sisters who
hold firmly to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, because the testimony of Jesus is the spirit
of prophecy."

Message Notes

WEEK TEN

...Come out of her, my people,
so that you will not share in her sins
or receive any of her plagues.
(Revelation 18:4)

Come out from among her, my people!
Save your lives, each of you,
from the LORD's burning anger.
(Jeremiah 51:45)

"Two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self."
— (Augustine)

• Allegiance of Babylon vs. allegiance of the Bride

...I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names... On her forehead was written a name, a mystery: BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE DETESTABLE THINGS OF THE EARTH. (Revelation 17:3, 5)

Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has prepared herself. She was given fine linen to wear, bright and pure... (Revelation 19:7-8)

• Affections of Babylon vs. affections of the Bride

As much as she glorified herself and indulged her sensual and excessive ways, give her that much torment and grief. For she says in her heart, "I sit as a queen; I am not a widow, and I will never see grief." (Revelation 18:7)

...Hallelujah, because our Lord God, the Almighty, reigns! Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory... (Revelation 19:6-7)

• Actions of Babylon vs. actions of the Bride

Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses to Jesus...For all the nations have drunk the wine of her sexual immorality, which brings wrath. The kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown wealthy from her sensuality and excess.
(Revelation 17:6; 18:3)

...For the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints. (Revelation 19:8)

BABYLON: PLACE AND PATTERN	
The Place	
Babel	People unite to make a name for themselves rather than honor God's name (Genesis 11).
Babylon	The great destroyer of Jerusalem, whom God pronounces judgment over and whose doom John echoes in Revelation 18 (Jeremiah 50–51).
Rome compared to Babylon	The early Christians, including the apostle Peter, already saw Rome as their Babylon (1 Peter 5:13).
The Pattern (Revelation 17-18)	
Immoral and impure (17:2, 4)	Babylon corrupts those around her. The kings don't just trade with her; they become like her.
Tempting (17:4)	The cup Babylon offers looks magnificent: wealth, power, belonging. Babylon's danger is not that she is obviously evil but that she is genuinely attractive.
Hostile to God and His people (17:6)	Babylon will accommodate almost anything except the claim that Jesus is Lord.
Self-glorifying (18:7)	Babylon refuses to answer to anyone other than herself.
Temporary (18:2)	She has fallen, and she will fall again. Once and for all.

Life Group Discussion Guide

WEEK TEN

RHYTHM REMINDER

Repentance

LEAN IN

Can you think of a kingdom, business, or powerful institution from history that seemed unstoppable at its peak but eventually fell? What comes to mind, and what do you think brought it down? _____

_____

LOOK DOWN

Read Revelation 19:1-10 (pg. 133). In verses 1-5, Heaven responds to God's judgment of Babylon with a thunderous "Hallelujah!" What does that response tell us about how Heaven views God's justice? _____

_____

_____

LOOK OUT

The heavens rejoice at God's justice. Yet many people today see God's judgment as something to be embarrassed about or explained away. Why do you think the idea of God's judgment makes so many people uncomfortable? _____

_____

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LOOK IN

The Bride in Revelation 19:8 is given a gift of grace, not something she earned. How does it change the way you approach Jesus, knowing that your standing before Him is something He has provided rather than something you have achieved? _____

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NOTES