Revelation Chapter 17

Babylon the Great is Judged

1. **Vision of the great prostitute: verses 1-6**
   1. Prostitute on the beast with seven heads and ten horns.
      1. In Rev. 13:1 we are told of the beast coming out of the sea that has seven heads and ten horns.
         1. This beast represents society, government, economies, etc. that the dragon uses in warfare against the church.
         2. The other beast from Rev. 13 is the beast of the earth that changes appearances to a beast that looks like a lamb but speaks like a dragon (13:11).
            1. This beast takes the form of a false prophet (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10) and then also a prostitute (Rev. 17:1,5, 15,16; 19:2)

The beast of the earth comes to represent the false church.

True Church (spotless bride of Christ) verses the False Church (the prostitute).

* + 1. In the Old Testament God charges his people of playing the prostitute when it came to their idolatry and false worship.
       1. Hosea 4:10-15; Psalm 106:36-40; Ezekiel 6:9; Judges 2:17; 8:27.
  1. The beast in the wilderness: verse 3
     1. In Rev. 12:6,14 the woman after the birth of the child fled into the wilderness. The dragon pursued her.
        1. The wilderness it symbolizes the experience of the church (woman) on this earth.
           1. For the Christian, life in this world is like a journey through a desert in which only God can care for and sustain.

Jeremiah 31:1-6 is an excellent picture of this care.

* + 1. “full of blasphemous names”
       1. The beast seeks to be worshiped.
  1. The prostitute: verse 4
     1. Dress
        1. Purple and scarlet denote luxury and splendor.
     2. Cup of abominations
        1. This symbolizes all the immoral, evil, and corruptive practices and influences the prostitute offers to the people and the rulers.
  2. The mystery of the prostitute’s name
     1. Mystery can mean a secret, secrete rite or teaching. It can also refer to something that is only known by a special revelation.
     2. The name Babylon on the forehead:
        1. She is the enemy of God’s people just as Babylon in the Old Testament was the enemy of Israel.
        2. Babylon the Great is the system of godlessness which leads people away from worshiping God to their own destruction.
        3. There was a custom in John’s day of putting the name of a prostitute on their forehead/headband.
  3. The prostitute in a drunken stupor: verse 6
     1. She is drunk with the blood of the saints.
        1. Her goal is to persecute the true church.
           1. In Isaiah 49:26 it is God who makes the oppressors of His people drunk on their own blood.

Next week we will look at the prostitutes demise!