

## Behold | Sermons through the Revelation

Sermon #33 | Revelation 16:17-17:2 | The End of Judgment

### Revelation 16:17-21 | The Seventh Vial

- Verse 17 declares from heaven that **it is done**. That is, God's wrath has been poured out in full, His judgment is complete, and He is now ready to begin the promised Kingdom and the restoration of all things.
- In a very real sense, verse 17 is *the last thing* done, and the completion of all things related to wrath.
- This being the case, verses 18-21, as well as chapters 17-18 which follow, are all events which take place so simultaneously and so quickly that it would be difficult to separate them into separate events.
- A summary of the cataclysmic events (not including the destruction of Babylon, which will be given in the following chapters) includes:
  - The collapse of the natural world order – v. 18.
  - Babylon is split into three parts and is remembered by God for her sin – v. 19.
    - While most assume Jerusalem is "the great city," the rule of "Scripture interprets Scripture" doesn't allow this. The exact Greek term "η πολις η μεγαλη" [literally, "the city the great"] is used six times in the book of Revelation, and in the other five is exclusively a reference to Babylon.
    - Furthermore, the exact term is used only once in the Septuagint, in Genesis 10:12 of Resen, also a city built by Nimrod.
    - Presumably, therefore, the "great city" is Babylon, and it will be divided in three parts by the earthquake of v. 18.
  - The reconstruction of the earth – v. 20.
  - A plague of hail – v. 21.

### Revelation 17:1-2 | The Judgment of Babylon: Part 1 - Introduction

- The angel is going to show John **the judgment of Babylon**.
  - This is given without regard to timing. Presumably this takes place in the last days of the tribulation, but not necessarily within the seventh vial or after the seventh vial.
  - Since the seventh vial is the completion, it would not make sense that the judgment on Babylon is "what is done after **it is done**" (Rev. 16:17).
- The **judgment of the whore** is the focus of the vision of chapters 17-18. Verses 1-2 give an introduction to what will be seen, the actual scene begins in v. 3.

- Note that the angel is going to show a singular **judgment**, which is problematic to those who interpret Revelation 17 and 18 to be two judgments, one of the apostate church and another of the city.
- The Bible gives a clear description of the Babylon in chapters 17-18:
  - The **great whore** is the **woman** on the **scarlet colored beast** of v. 3, who is defined as **Babylon the Great** in v. 5 and **the great city** in v. 18.
  - To conclude the woman is anything other than the city of Babylon is difficult at best, and almost certainly unmerited. Why do we need to reinterpret that which the Bible has interpreted?
- She is described as one who **sittith on the waters**.
  - The waters are defined in verse 15 as the peoples and nations of the world.
  - **Sitting upon** is indicative of the support that Babylon has and needs from the nations. The **whore** is "riding the wave" of popular support.
  - Note that Jeremiah 51:13 mentions "many waters" as well, in the context of Babylon. The Jeremiah connection gives further indication that we are talking about literal Babylon.
- The coming abuse of government – v. 2
  - The **kings of the earth have committed fornication** (v. 2) with **the many waters** of verse 1. That is, the governments (kings) have used the peoples of the earth for their own pleasures.
  - The **inhabitants of the earth** became **drunk with the wine of her fornication** (v. 2). That is, the people enjoyed being used by their governments.
  - A day is coming in which government will use, for its own pleasure, its citizens. And its citizens will cry out to be used by their governments.
  - This coming day will be a time in which the world will be totally controlled by government and will plead with government to control them more totally.

### A Warning for Today

- We are quickly creating a "longing for Babylon" in our world today.
- Babylon has always been a city birthed by government that provides the people their protections in exchange for their freedoms.
- How to avoid a Babylonian dependency:
  - Don't give the government authority. Keep it in the hands of the people.
  - Don't live as if government is the Almighty protector or provider or permission grantor.
- A helpful hint: If a society turns off the media, it thinks on its own!