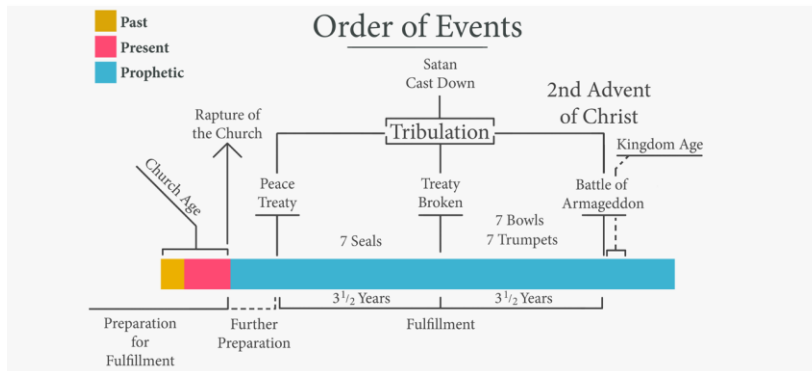


Revelation 17:8-18:3 – Seventh Bowl And Judgment On The Enemy



Rev. 17:8-10: *“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 the earth whose names...”*

- In vs. 8 we read about the beast. This is either an individual or representative of the coming future empire ruled by the antichrist.
- In Rev. 13:3 we read about a “wound” that the beast recovered from but that was touted as some miracle. Rev. 13:3 is clear that the beast did not die. If an individual, then when he arises from this wound, he is empowered by the enemy, more so than before.
- If we believe Rev. 13:8 speaks to a political system, and a future “Roman empire” will arise, this also fits with this verse. Notice in the end they will be destroyed.
- Some see Rev. 13:8 as the death and rebirth of a political system led by a powerful person, the antichrist. This individual may lose power at some point, be brought back to power and people will be in awe of that.
- Note those who are in awe of the beast are the unsaved world.
- The two possibilities of the beast, and Bible students are divided on this, is that here in Revelation 17 it is either an individual or a political system, or both.
- Rev. 17:10 some see as a reference back to Dan. 2:37-45, Dan. 7:7. Others see these seven kings as representing seven great world empires (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome during John’s time and the future empire) and that of the antichrist. The emphasis is on kingdoms, political systems.
- Some see these five kings as five prominent Roman rulers who have died.

Rev. 17:11-14,17: *“As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings...”*

- Regarding vs. 11, some see the seventh beast as the revived Roman Empire and the eighth beast is the antichrist, the final world ruler until Christ returns.
- The antichrist rises to power even after his “demise” (Rev. 13), to lead a world system that is a final empire.

- In vs. 12, we meet ten rulers who in the future will rule with the antichrist. Who are these ten kings? Are they rulers over nations? Are they representative of the “revived” Roman Empire? Is it the European Union or a power that rises out of Europe?
- Some see them as rulers in the Middle East who support the antichrist.
- There is the thought that the antichrist will divide his empire into ten districts.
- Note in vs. 13 that these ten kings will give their consent to the antichrist to increase his power and authority over the world as he becomes a dictator.
- In vs. 14 these nations will go to war against the Lord, and they will be soundly defeated. This most likely refers to the Battle of Armageddon. The real intent is to try to destroy the Lord, but these nations utterly fail in that. Jesus is Lord of lords and King of kings.
- In vs. 17 we see that it is God’s plan for the ten nations to give the power they have to the antichrist, consolidating his power as he rules as a dictator.

Rev. 18:1-3: *“After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority and the earth was made bright with his glory. And he called out with a...”*

** Revelation 18 leads into a discussion regarding Babylon. Are there one or two Babylon’s? Is there a literal city that will be rebuilt, or is the word used as symbolic for the future empire of the antichrist? In Revelation 17:16,18 says that Babylon is destroyed or devoured by the ten-nation conglomerate.

- Since the false prophet and the false religious system is destroyed, this Babylon connected to her is either a city or the word represents the religious system as such. It may refer to the city from which the religious world system operates.
- It may be that we see the religious aspect of Babylon in Rev. 17 and the political and economic aspect of Babylon in Rev. 18.
- Rev. 17 and 18 are difficult chapters with many interpretations. What does jump out is that God hates Babylon.
- As we have mentioned, there are two views regarding Babylon. One is that it will be rebuilt, whether on the exact same location or not we do not know. Second, there is prophecy that seems to indicate that it will never be rebuilt (Isa. 13:19-22). Could Babylon be a city in existence today that will be the capital of the future world ruler? Thus, Babylon would refer to a city and a system.
- Those who believe it will be rebuilt or I would say could be a current city note the following. Mark Hitchcock notes:
 - A) It is literal Babylon in modern day Iraq.
 - B) It will be rebuilt in the end times.
 - C) Babylon is man’s city (Rev. 17-18), Jerusalem is God’s city (Rev. 21-22).
 - D) It will be one of the headquarters of the antichrist.
 - E) It will reign over the kings of the earth.
 - F) Evil will return to Babylon, and God will destroy it.
 - G) It is a city and a system.

- In Rev. 18:1 an angel comes from heaven, bright with glory. In vs. 2 he proclaims the fall of Babylon.
- It was the center of economy and religion (vs. 3) and is brought to an end.
- The religious system is destroyed in Rev. 17, and here in Rev. 18 the political and economic system is judged and dealt with.
- There is still a religious system but now it is connected to the antichrist and his claim to be God, ruler, world dictator. But the religious system of Rev. 13 has been destroyed in Rev. 17.
- Regarding vs. 2, the religious system that is left, and throughout the tribulation period, is detestable to God. The evil influence of those leading this religion at various times during the tribulation is seen in vs. 2. No belief in God, horrible theology, promotion of a false Messiah, etc.
- We see today in our world false religions on the rise.

Practical Application:

- God's plans will happen. As we see the future of the world, it reminds us of the need to live the Christian life and share Jesus with others.
- We already see things being laid out for the future world ruler and even today false religions are growing. We must be discerning, even within the Christian church, because many are teaching questionable doctrines.