

Judgment of the City of Man

Revelation 17



¹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, ² with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk.” ³ And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ 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 sexual immorality. ⁵ And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.” ⁶ 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. ⁷ But the angel said to me, “Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. ⁸ 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. ⁹ This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; ¹⁰ they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while. ¹¹ As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. ¹² 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. ¹³ These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ 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.” ¹⁵ And the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. ¹⁶ 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, ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ And the woman that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth.”



Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

**Let's do something
different—let's look
at the last v. first**



Revelation 17:18



- And the woman [the great prostitute] that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth.”

The Tale of Two Women and Two Cities

Chapters 14, 16, 17, 18

Chapters 19, 21, 22

Great Prostitute

Bride of Christ

Clothed purple and scarlet

Clothed fine linen, bright and pure

City of man

City of God

Babylon

New Jerusalem

Earth Dwellers

Elect of God

Sinful & Wicked

Holy & Righteous

Kings of the Earth

King of Kings, Lord of Lords

Destroyed from heaven

Coming down from heaven

Built by Man

Built by God

Revelation 17:1



- Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you **the judgment of the great prostitute** who is seated on many waters,

Recursive Parallelism

The Woman is the great city Babylon

Rev
14:8

Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is **Babylon the great, she** who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.”

Rev
16:19

The **great city** was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered **Babylon the great,**

Rev
17:18

And the **woman** that you saw is **the great city** that has dominion over the kings of the earth.”

Rev
18:10

They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, “Alas! Alas! **You great city, you mighty city, Babylon!** For in a single hour your judgment....

Revelation 17:2



- **with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk.”**

Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

**Sin is being described with
the most colorful and
apocalyptic language we
can imagine**



Revelation 17:3



- And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:4



- 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 sexual immorality.

The references to purple, scarlet, gold, jewels and pearls and a golden cup all show us that the city controls the economy and the accumulation of wealth is excessive and rapacious.

Rapacious is aggressively greedy or covetous.

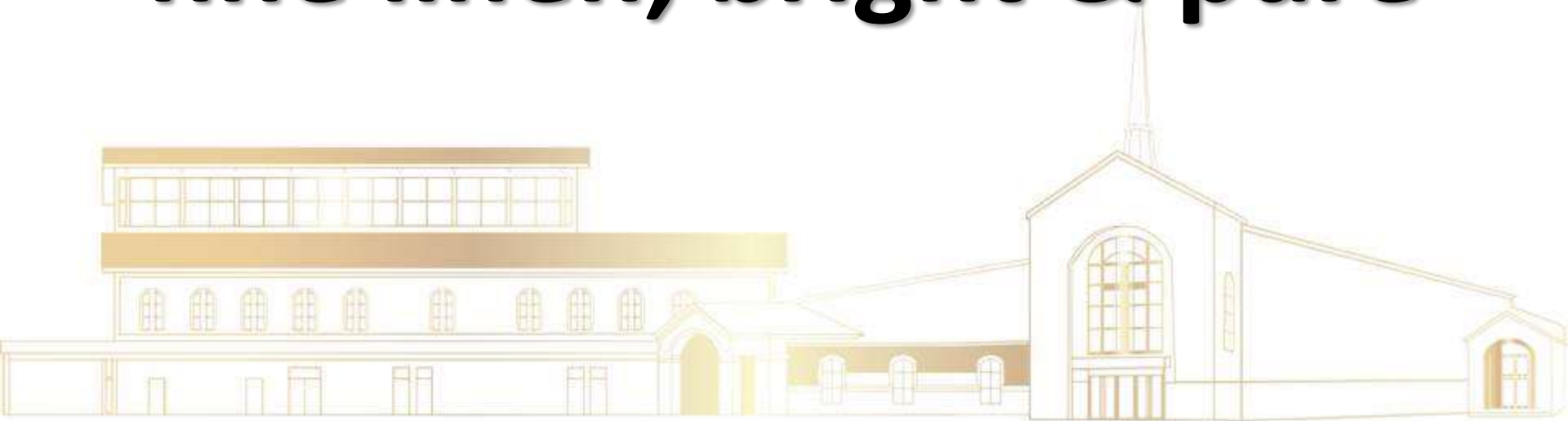




Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev 19

**the bride is clothed in
fine linen, bright & pure**





Revelation 17:4



- 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 sexual immorality.

The text continues to make specific reference to sexual immorality.

The woman is describe as a prostitute; she is whore.

Sexual immorality in this case is both spiritual and physical and probably inseparable.



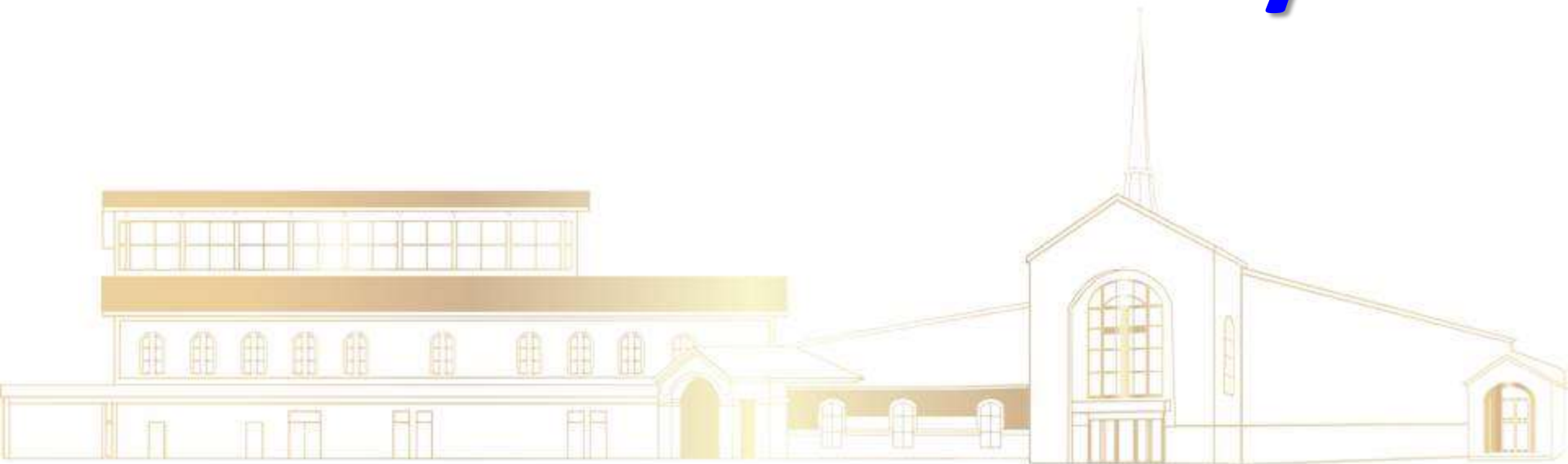
Revelation 17:5



- And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.”

Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Babylon Reminds Us of Man's First City



Genesis 11:9

- Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.



בָּבֶל

Transliteration

Babel

Pronunciation

bä·bel' (Key)

**Part of Speech**

proper locative noun

Root Word (Etymology)

From בָּלַל (H1101)

KJV Translation Count — Total: 262x

The KJV translates Strong's H894 in the following manner: [Babylon](#) (257x), [Babylonian](#) (with H1121) (3x), [Babel](#) (2x).



**As a city, Babylon symbolizes
humanity's ambition to
dethrone God and make the
earth its own.**

ESV Study Bible

Genesis 11:1–4



¹ Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ² And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³ And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.”



Revelation 17:5



- And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: “**Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.**”

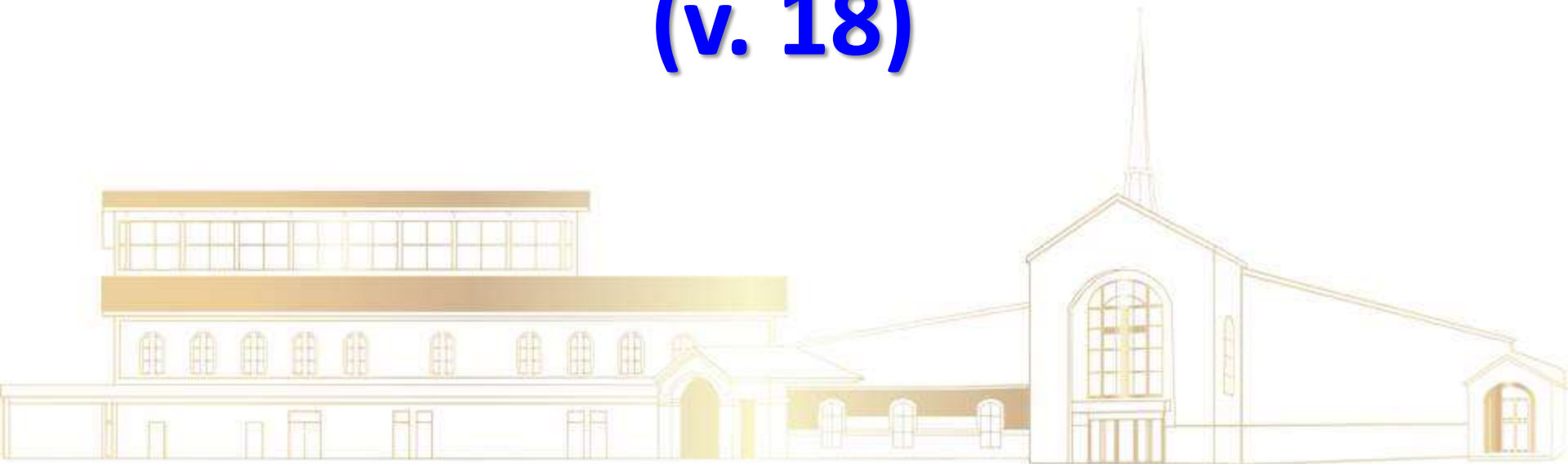
The city is described symbolically as a woman because:

- 1. She was not faithful to her husband God.**
- 2. She, the city, gives birth to the most humanistic, rebellious, and idolatrous ideas humanity can produce.**
- 3. Great cities are the place where kings rule from and commit great sin—idolatry and fornication beyond measure.**



Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

**Babylon is NOT one
particular city.
(v. 18)**



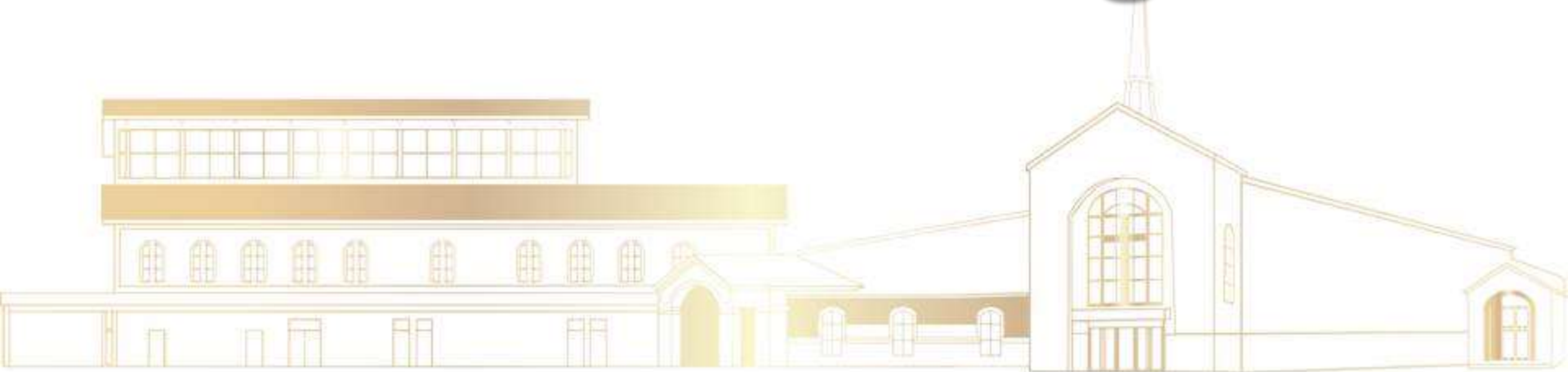
Revelation 17:18



- And the woman that you saw is **the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth.**

Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

**What city would that
be at the time of
John's writing?**



Revelation 17:6



- 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.

Look at the incredible imagery John is creating when we see the woman drunk.

But NOT drunk from wine—she is drunk from blood—the blood of the saints.

Rome is putting Christians to death at such a rate that she is drunk.



Revelation 17:6



- I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of **those who testified to Jesus.**

**Martyrs (in the ESV) is
translated ‘witness*’
in every other case in
the NT except this 1
verse.**



The woman, the city of man, cannot tolerate anyone devoted to Christ and thus she drinks their blood by taking the lives of those who belong to Jesus.

ESV Commentary



Revelation 17:6b



• I was greatly
astounded when I
saw her.

Seeing her drunk from the blood the
witnesses must have seriously scared
John.

Revelation 17:7



- But the angel said to me, “Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her.

Revelation 17:8



- The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction.

The beast may represent collective entities/regimes, which seem to come and go. They rise to power, and then are defeated and then something new rises to stand resurrected in the place of the new entity.

Or the beast in this case may be—the man of sin—the antichrist—who portrays a false death and fraudulent resurrection.

See Revelation 13:3 & 12



Rev 13:3, 12

- One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, **but its mortal wound was healed**, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.
- It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, **whose mortal wound was healed**.



Revelation 17:8b



- 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.

Once again there are only two groups of people Revelation:

1. Earth dwellers (dwell on the earth); they are the ones who take the mark of the beast and worship the image.

2. Those whose names are written in the book of life; they are the saints. They hold to the testimony of Jesus; they are called, chosen and faithful.



Revelation 17:9



- This calls for a mind with wisdom:
the seven heads are seven
mountains on which the woman is
seated;

If the 7 mountains on which the woman is seated are the 7 literal hills of Rome (as some suggest) then I don't understand the need to write: 'this calls for a mind with wisdom.'

I would suggest that 7 is the number of completion thus 7 mountains represents the full number of places of power from which earth dwellers rule the earth in rebellion to God's authority as the creator.



Babylon is a moniker.

At the time of writing it represented Rome.

Yet the use of the moniker allows Babylon to represent other cities.

Babylon “transcends Rome and represents all other cultures and cities of the world opposed to the things of God.” (Thomas Schreiner)



Revelation 17:10



- they are also seven kings,

Now we know this is all about symbolism because he tells us the 7 heads 'are also seven kings.'

Revelation 17:10



- they are also seven kings,
five of whom have fallen, one is,
the other has not yet come, and
when he does come he must
remain only a little while.

Since there have been 1000s and 1000s of kings ruling from the creation of the world.

It seems best here to understand the 7 kings as symbolic of all kings who rule under the Sovereign permission of God.

5 who have fallen and are no more represent the past.

And then 1—that is the one presently ruling.

And 1 more would be a future king whose empire and rule is brief.



Revelation 17:11



- As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction.

Revelation 17:12



- 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.

“One hour” alerts me to the figurative language being used here.

Ten kings is a representative number for all the kings of the earth who have been influenced by demonic spirits to wage war against Babylon.

This is God's doing in so much as they "receive authority [or power] as kings for one hour."

God is the one who determines how much power Satan, the beast, the false prophet, and the kings have and how long they will have it.

In this case, it is but a short time (one hour).



Revelation 17:13



- **These [the kings] are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast.**

The beast here appears to be the antichrist or man of sin.

Revelation 16:14

- For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty.



**Two weeks ago I showed
you a slide where I
thought the same battle
was referenced 4 times in
chapters 6, 16, 19, and 20.**

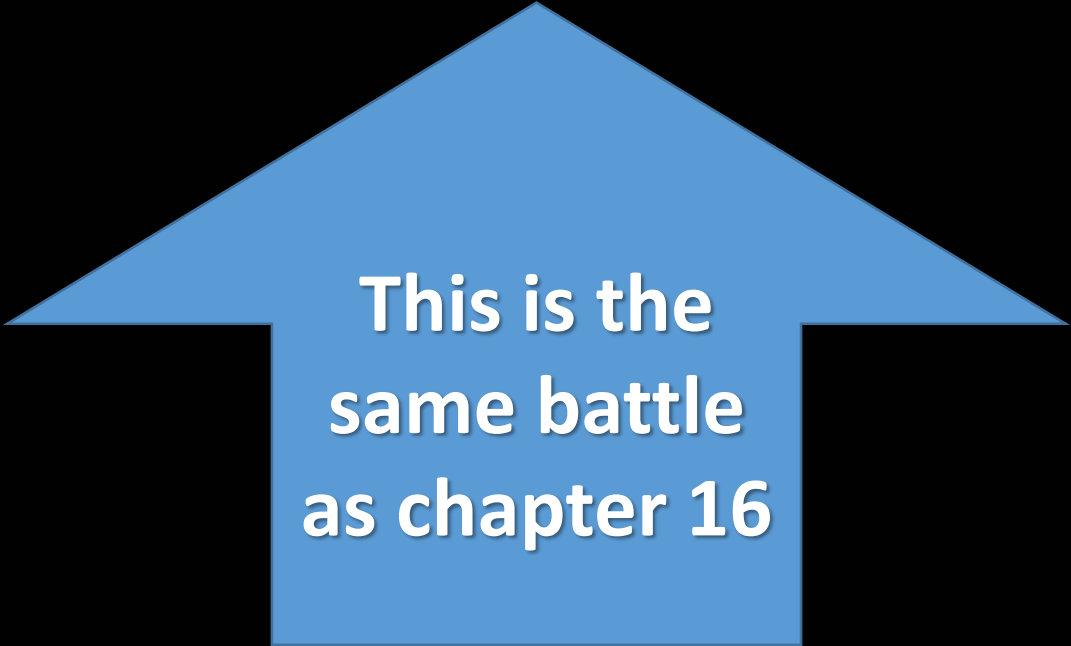


<p>6th Seal</p>	<p>Rev 6:16-17</p>	<p>calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”</p>
<p>6th Bowl</p>	<p>Rev 16:14</p>	<p>For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the <u>kings of the whole world</u>, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty.</p>
<p>Rider on White Horse</p>	<p>Rev 19:19</p>	<p>And I saw the beast and the <u>kings of the earth</u> with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army.</p>
<p>The Defeat of Satan</p>	<p>Rev 20:8</p>	<p>and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the <u>four corners of the earth</u>, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.</p>

Revelation 17:14



- **They will make war on the Lamb,**

A large blue arrow pointing upwards, with the text 'This is the same battle as chapter 16' centered inside it.

This is the
same battle
as chapter 16

6 th Seal	Rev 6:16-17	and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"
6 th Bowl	Rev 16:14	For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the <u>kings of the whole world</u> , to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty.
War on the Lamb	Rev 17:14	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."
Rider on White Horse	Rev 19:19	And I saw the beast and the <u>kings of the earth</u> with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army.
The Defeat of Satan	Rev 20:8	and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the <u>four corners of the earth</u> , Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle ; their number is like the sand of the sea.

Revelation 17:14



- 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.”

Recursive Parallelism

Rev
17:15

And the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, **where the prostitute is seated**, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.

Rev
19:2

for his judgments are true and just; for he has **judged the great prostitute** who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”

Recursive Parallelism

**Rev
17:14**

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.”**

**Rev
19:14**

And **the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, **were following him** on white horses.**

**Notice the particular reference to
“those with him”—that is the Lamb.**

They are:

- **Called (by God)**
- **Chosen [elect] (by God)**
- **Faithful (to God)**



Rev 17:14 is one of the more particular references to individual election in the Bible and yet we see even in this verse the tension.

God is the causal agent in the calling of the believer into a relationship with himself and God is the causal agent for the believer's election.

Yet those who are called and elect must be faithful. Faithful is a human responsibility and evidence of legitimacy.



2 Peter 1:10

- Therefore, brothers, **be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election,** for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.



Revelation 17:15



- And the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.

**Waters =
Multitudes, nations, and languages**

Revelation 17:16



- And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the prostitute [the city of man].
- They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire,

Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Notice v. 17

**This is the ultimate in
Sovereign Authority**



Revelation 17:17



- 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.

Let me show you the
KJV

Revelation 17:17



- For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

This text is very clear and quite specific.

God is the causal agent for kings of the earth uniting with the beast in opposition to the great prostitute.

And this is being done to fulfill the words of God.



