**Title: The Babylonian Mother, The Monster, and The Massacre**

**Scripture Text: Revelation 17:1-18** **Date: March 26, 2023**

# SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

In the first act of the final judgement, the Apostle John describes the fate of the one called the 'great harlot'. Chapter 16 ended with the seventh bowl being emptied. Revelation 16:19 describes Babylon, the great city, being split into three pieces, meaning it was completely broken up. As we transition to chapter 17, John gives us more detail on the destruction of the great city Babylon, which is depicted as the great harlot. She represents all that is evil in the world.

## I. The Babylonian Mother (Rev. 17:1-6)

In this passage, the great harlot is introduced. She represents a godless society who actively rejects God and His commands. The characteristics of such a society include (1) Popularity – vs. 1, (2) Persuasion – vs. 2, (3) Position – vs. 3, (4) Prosperity – vs. 4, and (5) Persecution – vs. 6.

- Review these verses and explain how John describes each of these 5 characteristics of a godless society.
- List an example of how each of these characteristics are played out today in our culture.
- How are these characteristics a temptation, even for Christians?
- How can you be better equipped to see these characteristics for what they are and not succumb to the temptation to join in?

## II. The Monster (Rev. 17:7-14)

Attention now shifts to the beast (monster). The beast is described as having seven heads and ten horns. These heads and horns can be difficult to interpret. One interpretation is that the seven heads represent seven earthly kingdoms: Egypt, Assyrian, Babylonian (old), Medo-Persian, and Greece are the five that have fallen, Rome is the kingdom that is (when John wrote Revelation, Rome was the world power, and many influential kingdoms that follow are based on or influenced by Roman culture). The seventh is the kingdom of the antichrist, and the one yet to come is the antichrist again after the fatal wound he received and overcame in Rev. 13:3.

- Based on the interpretation above, what is the next kingdom to rise to world dominance?
- This is another indicator that the rapture could happen at any moment. How ready are you for the rapture to occur?

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- What about your family and friends?
- What do you need to do to be ready for the rapture?
- What can you do to help others be ready?
- How does the answer to these questions help us maintain an eternal perspective (1 Tim. 4:7-8)?

**III. The Massacre (Rev. 17:15-18)**

Revelation 17:14 describes how the beast and the harlot wage war on the Lamb (Jesus Christ). Yet the Lamb will overcome them. We also see the beast along with the ten kings eventually turn against the harlot. The actions are divinely influenced and orchestrated, and results in her ultimate destruction (as we'll see next in Revelation 18).

- What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the Lord of lords and King of kings (vs. 14)?
- Describe characteristics of a Christian whose life reflects that Jesus is Lord of lords and King of kings?
- Those kings who received brief authority from the beast turned on the harlot. As is reflected in this passage, pride, greed, and selfishness lead to destruction.
    - What are ways we see pride, greed and selfishness demonstrated in our society today?
    - How can these attitudes creep into the church?
    - How can we guard ourselves from adopting these attitudes?
    - How important is humility in the Christian life (Mic. 6:8)?
    - What are examples of Jesus' humility?
    - What are practical ways you can practice humility?

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