

'Our Common Enemy'

Revelation 17:1-18

Introduction - The Third Vision, Revelation 17:1-19:10 (Revelation 1:10; 4:2; 21:10)

First, the evil union (17:1-6) – Unrestricted worldwide influence (17:2; 18:3, 9) an empowered agent of Satan, under his complete and perverse control is "Babylon the great".

Summary: First, all real battle is at a spiritual level between God's servant & Satan's recruits. Second, that battle is embedded in social interactions and leadership directions; every human interaction is laced with good and evil; sometimes in the same person.

Second, the beast (17:7-14) – There is a relationship between the "Babylon of the ages" and Satan; between the "beast of another world" and Lucifer.

Precept: The beast/antichrist is an egomaniac who desires to be worshipped as God. (Matthew 4:8-10) He is morally incapable of being God, therefore, he must disguise himself.

Summary: As independent as I may think of myself, we all follow someone—choose carefully.

Third, the prostitute (17:15-18) – What we read and learn in verse 16 is not what we would expect; they self-destruct by civil war, they fight amongst themselves.

Concept: Human government has been an experiment in degrees of failure; and everyone of them teeters on the character and restraint of those who lead.

Summary: The prostitute is the personification of Satan's ultimate control; a spiritual deceiver and a master manipulator who is supernaturally empowered to carry out Satan's wishes.

Conclusion: Chapters 17-18 describe the judgment that God has in store for the prostitute, but being submerged in this cesspool of evil should not distract God's people from their primary task—take the good news to the lost world.

The primary image is prostitution, selling something in a tempting, seductive way. As Christians we are called to resist these corrupt social mores, this pagan line of thinking and walk in the works and ways of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Both the beast and the prostitute that rides it are covered in the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. For all of their evil, their greatest personal evil is killing God's people, and they relish it. (Matthew 10:28)

Such passages as Isaiah 1:21 tell me that this prostitution will not only be in society and culture, but it will seep into groups of the people of God. The people of God are also guilty of spiritual prostitution (Jeremiah 13:27; Ezekiel 16:15ff; Hosea 2:5; 1 Peter 4:17).