Session 11 The Fall of Babylon (Rev. 17-18)

1. John’s prophecy about the fall of Babylon (Rev. 17-18)

*This is session eleven covering Revelation 17-18, the fall of Babylon. We are only going to look at the introduction to this and not all the details of it, simply because of time. In the days to come, we will go a lot deeper on this very, very relevant subject with many, many points that we are not covering today. I want to give you some takeaway points for today. There are some practical takeaways for right now, for this hour of history. Let’s get a little overview of what is going on here.*

* + 1. Revelation 17-18 is an angelic explanation (parenthetical section) that follows after the crisis described in the seven bowl judgments in Revelation 16.

*Revelation 17-18 is an angelic explanation that follows the crisis described in the seven bowls of chapter 16. I am trying to use an easy term when I say “angelic explanation.” Chapter 17-18 is like a parenthetical section. This is where the angel puts the storyline on hold—puts it on pause—and tells John the behind-the-scene information as to why what is happening in the storyline is so intense and so severe.*

* + 1. The five chronological sections in the book of Revelation tell us the main storyline of God’s judgment events against harlot Babylon and Antichrist’s empire. After each of the chronological sections, an angel explained to John why these judgment events are absolutely necessary. These explanations function as a parenthesis that puts the storyline on “pause” as they answer questions as to *“why is God’s wrath so severe?”* and *“what will happen to the saints during the judgments?”*

*There are five chronological sections in the book of Revelation. They tell us the main storyline of God’s judgment events against Babylon and the Antichrist Empire. There are five parts of the book of Revelation where the storyline unfolds one event after the other. After a little bit of the storyline, the angel puts it on pause, and it is like he tells John, “Sit down, and I am going to tell you the behind the scenes information as to why what happened has to happen.”*

*Why? Because undoubtedly John is a little blown away by the events as they are unfolding one after the other. They are so intense. They are so severe. His natural question would be, “Why so severe?” The other question is, “What about the saints? What about us?” The angelic explanation is the parenthesis. They give that information. Right here in Revelation 17-18 is another parenthesis. The angel is explaining to John the “behind the scenes” as to what is happening.*

* + 1. The seventh bowl will involve the most severe earthquake in history, followed by 100-pound hailstones that will destroy many cites of the earth (Rev. 16:17-21). The Antichrist’s worshipers will not repent, but will stubbornly blaspheme God (Rev. 16:9, 11, 21).

18...there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth…19And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath…21And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent [100 pounds]. Men blasphemed God… (Rev. 16:18-21)

*The last event was revealed in Revelation 16. It was the seventh bowl. The most severe earthquake in history followed by 100-pound hailstones destroying the cities of the earth. I can just imagine it. I am picturing John thinking, “What?”*

*The angel says, “John, I am losing you. I can tell. Let’s pause this thing for a minute. Let me explain why this has to happen.”*

*Look at that in Revelation 16. There is an earthquake—this is the seventh bowl—a mighty great earthquake, such as men have never seen on the earth. The greatest earthquake in human history. Babylon is being destroyed.*

*The chapters we are on tonight tell us the reason why Babylon is being destroyed. It is because Babylon filled the earth with sorcery and immorality, had economic control of the nations, and was persecuting and murdering the saints. That is why Babylon has to be completely destroyed, because her infrastructure was touching all throughout the nations of the earth. These hailstones and earthquake are a demolition time where all the infrastructure of the Babylon system is being annihilated, destroyed, and removed.*

* + 1. In this angelic explanation, an angel showed John why it was necessary to destroy many cities of the earth and why Jesus will dash to pieces the societal infrastructure of the nations. It is because the seduction of Babylon’s religion of evil will permeate so many of these structures of society. The seventh trumpet will focus on replacing evil leaders, and the seventh bowl will focus on replacing the social infrastructures (social, financial, and legal institutions that empowered evil activities).

8I will give You [Jesus] the nations for Your inheritance…9You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel. (Ps. 2:8-9)

*The angel was showing John why it was necessary to destroy the cities of the earth this way and why Jesus will dash to pieces the societal infrastructure of the nations. We all love Psalm 2. That is a famous psalm about the Messiah. David wrote Psalm 2.*

*We all love verse 8, “I will give You the nations as Your inheritance.” This is the Father is speaking to the Son. We all love Psalm 2:8, and we pray it, “Father, give Jesus the nations.”*

*No one ever quotes verse 9. It is not funny, but no one quotes verse 9. We say, “Give us the nations.” We do it in context to the mission movement, and we should, but when Jesus fully receives the nations in that hour, according to verse 9, He will break them, and He will dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel. It is like they are a clay vessel, and He will dash the nations to pieces. That is the seven bowls in Revelation 16. It is Jesus dashing the nations to pieces because the nations are permeated with sorcery, immorality, perversion, economic manipulation, and the control of the Babylonian system. That is why the nations must be dashed.*

*They are all going to be completely rebuilt, except for the parts where righteousness was already established. I believe there is continuity in this age with the age to come. That is another point for another time. So if there is a city that overturns abortion, then that is a city where Jesus does not have to overturn that law when He returns. When there is righteousness anywhere in the earth—and there will be righteousness. There will be great advancements in righteousness—there will be continuity between the righteousness that happens in this age and what happens in the age to come, but I am getting way off the subject here.*

*I lost some of you when I said “dash” the nations. You thought, “Oh, my goodness!” That is what Psalm 2 says, and that is what the seven bowls of wrath accomplish.*

* + 1. Revelation 17-18 is one of the most significant end-time prophecies because it gives us insight into Satan’s strategy to deceive the nations while causing many Christians to fall away from the faith. This prophecy deserves careful study and dialogue because those who are deceived by the harlot will end up in the lake of fire and many of the saints who resist the harlot will be killed (Rev. 17:6).

*Revelation 17 is one of the most significant end-time prophecies. It gives insight into Satan’s strategy to deceive the nations. Satan wants to deceive the nations and put his systems in place. One of the reasons this is so significant for us to understand is that it will cause many Christians to fall away from their faith. I do not believe most will, but I believe many will. I believe it will be millions and millions. They will denounce Christ under the pressures of the oppression and under this seduction and temptation of the harlot system. They will not denounce Christ just because of pressure. They will denounce Christ because of the seductions of what the harlot Babylon system is offering the nations. It will appear very, very good on the front-end. While I believe there will be millions falling away, I believe there will be hundreds of millions coming to the Lord in the great harvest. I believe at the same time of the falling away will be the ingathering of souls in the great harvest. Two things are happening at the same time frame.*

* + 1. The main message of Revelation 17 is easy to understand. The main themes are the seductive power and cruel persecution, along with the inevitable destruction of the harlot systems. Revelation 17 is the most symbolic passage in the book of Revelation with many intricate details making it the most difficult chapter in Revelation to understand. Since the angel gave John the meaning of the symbols, we have a solid foundation for understanding this passage.

*The main message of chapter 17 is all we are going to look at in the first part of chapter 17. It sets the stage to understand the rest of it. The first six verses are all we are looking at. It sets the stage and tells the main point spiritually where the seduction is going to be in the earth and how intense the seduction and the persecution will be. That is why we are just looking at the first six verses.*

*The main themes of chapter 17 are the seductive power and the cruel persecution, along with the inevitable destruction of the harlot systems. The main message of Revelation 17 is that the harlot system has seductive power. The nations will love it. They will rejoice in it, “This is amazing.” There will be economic prosperity; there will be total rampant immorality. No moral absolutes at all, and it will all be under the banner of “God is pleased” and “Isn’t this wonderful?” There will be a temporary world peace at the same time. Many people will say, “Maybe this is the thing we have been praying for.” It is not. It is the counterfeit that will emerge first.*

*The counterfeit global prosperity, unity of the nations, world peace, and the counterfeit global justice movement will be led by the harlot Babylon system. Many believers, not most, but many millions will say, “This is what we have prayed for.” If they have even a foundational understanding in the Scripture, they will know this is the counterfeit, the deception. It will be very, very seductive in its power.*

*Revelation 17 tells us more. It will include cruel persecution. Though this religious system will be filled with humanitarian works and having gold and prosperity, they will be drunk with the blood of the saints. They will see the saints as the archenemy of global unity and prosperity. They will say, “That one group is saying this is of the devil. Though we have never had world unity at this level, we have never had world prosperity at this level, and we have never had more goodness happen, they keep saying it is of the devil. They are criminals of the state; they are enemies of society.” That is what the saints will look like to them.*

*The message is not just that the saints will experience cruel persecution and the nations will be seduced powerfully. There is also the inevitable destruction of these systems. Meaning, the saints need to be steady because it is only a* ***temporary*** *exaltation of the harlot. This system will go down and forever be wiped off the face of the earth. It is only a temporary counterfeit. It is a real but counterfeit justice movement.*

* + 1. In my opinion, the literal city of Babylon in Iraq (50 miles south of Baghdad) will be restored and used as one of the headquarters for the Antichrist and as a center of demonic religious and economic networks. As Jerusalem suddenly came out of the ashes and was rebuilt, I believe so also the city of Babylon in Iraq will suddenly be rebuilt. The judgments prophesied in Jeremiah 50-51 about the city of Babylon being suddenly and forever destroyed have not yet been fulfilled.

1. The end-time falling away from the faith
   * 1. The two signs that Paul gave to indicate the time of Jesus’ coming are a falling away from the faith combined with the revealing of the Antichrist on the world stage (2 Thes. 2:3). Love of the truth is more than an intellectual adherence to truth; it takes a firm stand for truth regardless of the cost.

3Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day [Jesus’ second coming] will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin [Antichrist] is revealed…9The coming of the lawless one [Antichrist] is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (2 Thes. 2:3, 9-10)

*Paul gave two signs that he highlighted above all the others, which indicate Jesus’ Second Coming. These two are really negative. Paul highlighted a falling away from the faith. There will be a falling away from the faith that is so visible. It will not be a steady, kind of a subtle falling away through history like some theologians say, “Well, this is a gradual falling away that is not really noticed.” No, this is so pronounced that it will be a sign of the times.*

*The second sign is the revealing of the Antichrist on the world stage. The falling away and the revealing of the Antichrist are proportionate signs. Meaning, the falling away will be so pronounced that it will be of the same level as the Antichrist appearing on the world stage. That is a pretty big sign, the Antichrist on the world stage. The falling away will be that pronounced of a sign as well to be one of just two signs Paul gave.*

*In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul said, “Let no one deceive you by any means, for the day of the Lord will not come, that day will not come, until the falling away comes first, until the man of sin, the Antichrist is revealed.” He is saying, in effect, “Do not be deceived. The Lord is not returning for His people until the falling away comes first and the Antichrist is on the world stage.” Until those two things happen, the Lord is not returning.*

*Some people say He is coming any minute. I say no. I can see the early stirrings of the falling away in this whole religion of tolerance that is finding its way in the church in a very, very rapid pace and the cultural wars that are escalating right now globally. Globally, the cultural wars are where absolutes are being cast aside, and the authority of the Scripture is being cast aside, even in the midst of many people who profess faith in Christ. Absolutes and the authority of the Word are being cast aside. I think it will be far more intense before the Lord returns. Some people say that the Lord is coming any minute. Well, until the falling away comes and until the Antichrist is on the world stage, Paul says, “Do not be deceived by anyone. It is not coming until those two things happen.”*

*He goes on to talk more about the Antichrist. He says in verse 9, “The coming of the lawless one”—that is the Antichrist again. That is another title for him—“is according to the working of Satan with all power.” He will have tremendous demonic display of power. It will be lying signs and wonders. Meaning, the signs and wonders will be real, but they will give a lying message. It will not be sleight of hands or a magician’s trick. They will be true signs. They will be lying wonders because they will not have the truth; the message associated with it will be a lie. They will come with unrighteous deception among all who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth.*

*The love of the truth is more than intellectual adherence to the truth. A lot of people will say, “I believe Jesus is God and that He died for me.” That is not the same thing as love of the truth. Love of the truth is more than intellectual agreement with the truth. It is to take a firm stand for the truth regardless what it costs us. That is love of the truth. Those who love the truth will grasp the truth. None of us has it completely clear yet. Nobody does. The whole storyline of the end times and everything will become more and more clear. The Lord will have His people, a billion of them around the world, prepared and ready before the Lord returns as the great harvest brings in so many as well.*

* + 1. There will be an end-time falling away (Mt. 24:9-13; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3). A doctrine of demons is a teaching inspired by demons that if believed and acted on will hinder someone from receiving salvation or will cause someone to fall away from salvation.

1Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3forbidding to marry… (1 Tim. 4:1-3)

*There will be an end-time falling away. “The Spirit expressly says,”—the Holy Spirit expressly says—“in the last days some will depart from the faith.” Not the majority, but the number will be big enough to be a sign of the times according to Paul. They will give heed to deceiving spirits. They will give heed to doctrines of demons. The people that speak these doctrines will speak lies. They will have hypocrisy in their heart. They will claim to love truth, but they love their own selfish gain. There is the hypocrisy. They know they do not love the truth, but they present themselves as loving the truth.*

*Their conscience will be seared with an iron, even forbidding to marry. The reason I threw that in there, though that is kind of like a random point, is that some people interpret this forbidding to marry in a way that I do not agree with them. The traditional view of this “forbidding to marry” is that some different denominations have seen the Catholic Church as the harlot Babylon, Rome is the city, and the celibacy of the Catholic priesthood is the forbidding to marry. I do not believe this is what that is about. I believe the “forbidding to marry” is where the gay agenda is going in the nation and in many places in the earth. It will actually be illegal to marry. That is a prophecy from Paul. I believe this is about the gay agenda escalating beyond where it is at right now, so that marriage itself in parts of the world will be outlawed and forbidden. That is how perverse the nations will be, that even the institution of marriage will be outlawed in various parts of the world. Not everywhere.*

*I believe a doctrine of demons is a lie that actually brings someone’s salvation into jeopardy. Meaning, for example, someone believes a lie like Jesus is not the only way of salivation. That is a lie. If someone believes that lie, acts on it, and believes in other sources for salvation, then that person will not be saved. That is a doctrine of demons in my opinion. It is a doctrine of demon that actually hinders somebody from salvation or causes somebody to deny the faith.*

*The people who speak doctrines of demons are not all demonized people. Some people mix that up. They think, “A doctrine of demon is only spoke by a demonized, crazed man.”*

*Well, Peter told Jesus, “Do not go to the cross.”*

*Jesus said, “Get thee behind Me, Satan.” He was not saying, “You are demonized, Peter.” He was saying, “That is a doctrine of demons, Peter, that you are telling Me. You are a good man, but you are telling Me not to go to the cross. Your whole salvation, the whole salvation order, would never be established if I listened to you, Peter. That is Satan talking to you.”*

*I think some of the men who teach doctrines of demons are demonized. I think doctrines of demons are not just some insidious, evil doctrines that men with horns, who are frenzied and crazy, talk about. I believe it is the confusion of the key doctrines and the key points of salvation. I think this is involved in that. It is not about worshiping demons. It is far more subtle than just worshipping a demon. It is a doctrine of demons. They obscure the key doctrines of the faith. If embraced, they hinder people from receiving salvation or cause them to fall away. That is my opinion.*

1. two stages in Satan’s End-Time plan
   * 1. There are two stages in Satan’s end-time plan to be worshipped by all nations. Satan knows that it is a step too large for a compromising Christian, Muslim, Hindu, etc. suddenly to become a devoted Satan worshipper. Thus he will first call all to join a one-world religion of tolerance that will declare that all paths lead to God and salvation. As multitudes from various religious backgrounds are seduced into joining the harlot Babylon religion, it will weaken and defile their conscience concerning their religious heritage. Then Satan will demand that they worship him.

4They worshiped the Dragon [Satan]…8All who dwell on the earth will worship him [Antichrist], whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8)

*There are two stages in Satan’s end time plan. Two stages. Satan wants to be worshiped by all the nations. He has two stages to being worshiped by the nations. It says clearly in the book of Revelation, chapter 13, that this is what he is after. Satan knows it is too big of a first step for compromising Christians or compromising Muslims or Hindus or all the religions of the world to worship him immediately. I am just saying those religions because they are the big ones. You could add any religion you want there. He knows it is too big of a step to get a compromising Christian or Hindu or Muslim to deny their religious heritage and worship demons. That is way too big of a step. Like, “Deny your faith, and worship Satan.”*

*They would say, “No, no. We are not going to do that.” It is too big. What he is going to do, in my opinion, is first raise up a worldwide religion that the Bible refers to as the harlot. It will be a religion of tolerance that has no absolutes. It will declare that all paths lead to God and salvation, that everything is equal. Then compromising Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and all the other world religions will adopt that religion of tolerance with no absolutes. Their conscience will get weakened and defiled in that context.*

*Then he will bring to them the demon worship, the Satan worship concept. I do not think they will go from compromising straight to demon worship. They will go from compromising to embracing a religion of tolerance. We are seeing the very early stages of it all over the world. This new tolerance in the cultural wars, and many believers are embracing it. A lot of other believers are suspiciously silent. That is, they are not embracing it, but they are not taking a stand in any way whatsoever. They are just silent. That does not mean they will embrace it, but not taking a stand on some of the important subjects and keeping everything positive is a way to condition the people to begin to embrace that religion of tolerance with no absolutes, where every path is right.*

* + 1. People will break away from their religious heritage by renouncing their former beliefs. Once they leave their religious ideals, whether Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, or Buddhism, there will be no absolutes to keep them from worshipping Satan who appears as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).
    2. The *voluntary* harlot Babylon religion will be replaced by a *mandatory* Antichrist religion.

First, people voluntarily join the harlot Babylon one-world religion of tolerance (Rev. 17).

Second, they will be forced to be Satan worshippers in the Antichrist religion (Rev. 13:4, 15).

*What I believe will happen first is the voluntary harlot religion—that religion of tolerance—will be more formalized. Right now it is quite informal. I am assuming it will be formalized. It will be a real religious system across the world where everybody will be urged to participate. Then it will be replaced by a mandatory Antichrist system.*

*The voluntary harlot system, “Come, if you will. See the prosperity. Involve yourself in the great justice movement. See world unity, world peace. Do not worry about Jesus. Jesus, Buddha, Mohammad are all the same. Confucius. They are all the same. Come as you will and enjoy the world celebration.” That is voluntary. People get to choose to do that or not. That will go for a while. Then that system will be discarded. It will be discarded. It will be thrown away.*

*Then there will only be one system. It will not be voluntary. It will be mandatory. It will be a forced system. Anyone who resists it will resist it at the threat of physical death. There will be legislations in the nations to kill anybody who resists the Antichrist worship system. I am convinced the church will be here in that hour. The church will be the faithful witness of Jesus, and it will be the greatest revival of any time ever in history going on at that time with signs and wonders and power. There will be tremendous bloodshed and tremendous conflict going on as well.*

* + 1. I agree with a popular view that sees Revelation 17-18 describing the fall of Babylon in two stages.

Thefirst phase of the fall of Babylon (Rev. 17) relates to worldwide religious system of toleration and syncretism. The fall occurs at the beginning of the Great Tribulation at the hands of the ten kings (Rev. 17:16) who will burn it and replace it with Antichrist worship.

The second phase of her fall will be at the end of the Great Tribulation. It will focus on the collapse of the Antichrist’s global economic system at God’s hands (Rev. 18:8).

1. The Great Harlot: her seductions and persecutions (Rev. 17:1-6)
   * 1. Before the angel showed John the wealth and counterfeit beauty of the harlot religion, he showed him her inevitable judgment and sure defeat (Rev. 17:1). It will fail and be totally destroyed.

1Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication…3I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet Beast [Antichrist]…4The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold…having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. 5On her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, the mother of Harlots and of the abominations of the earth. 6I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints…15He said, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.” (Rev. 17:1-6, 15)

*Before the angel shows John the wealth, the glory, and the counterfeit beauty of the harlot religion that we are going to see, before that was unveiled, first he wanted to show John its inevitable and sure defeat. He is going to paint this glorious picture in the flesh of the carnal eye of this world movement. He starts off in verse 1, “Before I tell you how glorious it will look, I will show you the judgment of the harlot who sits on many waters. Let me tell you, this harlot, though she will emerge on a global scene with a certain grandeur and a certain splendor according to the flesh, she will inevitably be judged.” It’s like the angel said, “John, tell the saints—write it down—not to waiver in that moment because this system that will be so seductive will not survive. It will be destroyed in a short amount of time.”*

*Verse 1, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.” You might wonder what are the waters. We find in verse 15, the angel said, in essence, “Just so you know, the waters mean the nations of the earth.” The angel interprets the symbolism to us, so there is no guessing what it means that she sits on many waters. “This system, let me tell you about it. The kings of the earth will commit fornication with this system, the harlot. It is not just the political leaders of the earth committing fornication. The inhabitants of the earth will be happy participants. They will be drunk. They will be intoxicated with all of her perversions.” The kings commit fornication with this system, but the inhabitants of the earth will be happy participants, being intoxicated, made drunk, with all the perversions and all of the dark things that go along with this system.*

*Then he goes on, “Let me tell you about this harlot.” In verse 3, “I saw it. It is like a woman.” This is a symbol. “This harlot is sitting on a scarlet beast,” which is clearly the Antichrist. The harlot is riding on the Antichrist. The Antichrist will carry her along for a while. They will be in partnership on the front end.*

*In verse 4, we see her glory, her apparent beauty. It is a counterfeit beauty. Verse 4, “The woman will be arrayed in purple.” That is, she will have a royal status around the earth. She will be adorned with gold. That is, it will be the wealthiest religion in history, adorned with gold in every way. In her hand is a golden cup. With that cup she will appear to be a service to the nations. She will be involved in humanitarian aid. She will be serving the nations of the earth, but the angel said, “Do not be deceived by that golden cup”—that justice movement that is using money for the good of mankind—“it is full of abominations, and it is filled with filth.” Completely filthy. It is not true. It is not what it appears on the front end. Verse 4 tells us the grandeur of this false system, its apparent grandeur.*

*Then the angel tells John in verse 5, “Notice her name is on her forehead,” because her name will describe her nature, how she functions, her origin, what she is like. That is what the name means. It is a mysterious name. It is a name that nobody could have put together by reading the Bible before it was revealed. Before the angel revealed it in the will of God, no apostle or prophet could have figured this thing out. That is why it is called mysterious. It is a mystery name. Meaning it is one that could not be figured out without divine revelation that is right here in verse 5. John was the first to see it, that this religion actually is Babylon. He says, “Its origin is the tower of Babel, the first organized religion in the earth. Go back to Babel, and you will understand this religion.”*

*I can imagine John saying, “Really? Who would have thought it traces back to there?” We study the tower of Babel and what happened in Genesis 11 in order to gain insight into the nature, function, and spirit in which this global religion will operate.*

*He says, “But I warn you, this mysterious religion is more than a religion. She is cruel.” Verse 6, “The woman was drunk with the blood of the saints.” Because the saints will be present on the earth when she is there, when this religion is there. The saints will be exposing her as false and demonic. She will be using her gold, her royal status as arrayed in purple, with the kings of the earth backing her up like David said in Psalm 2. All the kings of the earth will be in unity against the Lord and His Christ. All the kings of the earth will be in unity supporting and committing fornication with this system.*

* + 1. ***Sits on many waters***:The harlot will sit on many nations (17:1, 15) or will have authority over the nations by seducing and controlling the world’s most powerful leaders—the kings and merchants.

*She sits on many waters. That is, she will have authority over the nations. This religion will sit on many waters. That means it will have authority over nations. That is what it means to “sit on the waters.” In verse 15, the waters clearly talk about the nations of the earth.*

*She will have authority over the nations by seducing the world’s most powerful leaders–the kings and the merchants. That is what chapter 18 makes clear. It is the kings and merchants, who are the wealthiest men and women, the ones with the most money and the ones with the most political authority. The money and the political systems will back her up. Again, that is what David said in Psalm 2. All the kings of the earth will gather together, and they will plot in order to war against the Lord and His Christ.*

* + 1. ***The kings***: The primary political leaders in the earth will understand some of the lies that empower the harlot system. However, they will support her agenda to gain her wealth, knowingly prostituting themselves or committing fornication with her in supporting her lies for money.

2…with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication… (Rev. 17:2)

*The kings of the earth will commit fornication. In what sense will the kings commit fornication, since it is a system? Here is how I understand it. They will understand the lies behind what she is presenting. The top leaders of the earth, the kings of the earth, will understand most of it is a façade and a lie. For example, I think of the Hitler regime to which I compared the Antichrist regime in part. The Antichrist will be far more powerful than Hitler. In the Hitler regime, the public presentation was so different from what they were doing in private. They were slaughtering the Jews in private and presenting themselves as a peace-loving nation. That is what they were trying to do at various times. Those kinds of opposites were going on. They were aggressors and taking over nations and plotting to take over Poland and France and Russia. On the front end they were presenting themselves as peace loving and full of goodwill. The top leaders knew it was a lie.*

*What John is saying here is that the kings know it is a lie. The people do not. They are legitimately deceived. They think it is amazing. They do not know it is a lie. The kings are in this for favor, for economic favor— billions of dollars undoubtedly, or whatever, I do not know the amount—for incredible economic wealth. They will sell their country out in order to get the wealth, the power, and the prestige, knowing it is a lie. In that sense they are prostituting themselves and selling out their people for their own gain for it. David picks up on that in Psalm 2.*

*The peoples are legitimately deceived. They think it is true. They will be drunk. The harlot systems will cause the nations to be drunk or intoxicated with her promises. The nations will be intoxicated, just like Nazi Germany was intoxicated with the prosperity of Adolf Hitler in the early days of his reign. Do you know that Time Magazine—I believe it was Time Magazine. Maybe it was one of the other ones. I think it was Time Magazine—in 1935 they named Hitler the man of the year because he had such a dynamic economic recovery in Germany. He was the man of the year. One of the most evil men who ever lived on the earth was called the man of the year. The nations were thinking he was amazing, most of them except for Churchill. Churchill never believed it.*

* + 1. ***Made drunk***: The harlot’s system will cause the nations to be drunk or intoxicated with her seductions that promise great benefits including humanitarian aid and a prosperous world economy. The nations will be overjoyed with her promises of prosperity and theology of tolerance. She will be a religion of affirmation and toleration without absolutes, with a counterfeit justice movement.
    2. ***Sitting on the Beast***: The harlot will *sit on* or depend on the Antichrist who will *carry* her or will provide significant resource, validation, and protection for her.

3I saw a woman sitting on a Beast [Antichrist] which was full of names of blasphemy…7I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the Beast that carries her… (Rev. 17:3, 7)

*This harlot will be sitting on the beast. It says in verse 3, “I saw the woman sitting on a beast.” To sit on the beast means that she will be dependent on the Antichrist for a season. There will be this relationship—I do not know exactly what it will look like—but there will be this sense of dependency. She will need the Antichrist and the Antichrist will need her.*

*After a season the Antichrist will discard her and burn her. The harlot Babylon has two destructions. The one who destroys her first is actually the Antichrist and his ten kings, which is so surprising. She sits on the beast, the Antichrist, but the Antichrist is also described as carrying her or providing significant resources for her. She is dependent on the Antichrist. She is sitting on him; The Antichrist is carrying her. He is providing for her as well. There is going to be an observable relationship between this religion and this man. My understanding is it is before the Antichrist is seen in fullness on a world stage as being the Antichrist. It is the step before he is fully unveiled and it becomes clear.*

* + 1. ***Arrayed in purple***: To be arrayed in purple speaks of her royal status or prominence. The harlot religion will have great prominence and will be embraced by the elite financial leaders of the earth.

4The woman was arrayed in purple [royalty] and scarlet, and adorned with gold…having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. (Rev. 17:4)

* + 1. ***Adorned with gold***: it will be the wealthiest religious network in all of history.
    2. ***A golden cup***: The harlot will have a golden cup from which she “serves” the nations. She will provide unprecedented humanitarian service, and her service will appear golden—valuable and good. It will facilitate unity in many nations. War will disappear for first time in modern history, resulting in a temporary world peace. Paul prophesied that just before sudden destruction (Great Tribulation) comes, “they” or the nations shall proclaim peace and safety. (1 Thes. 5:3).

3…when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them… (1 Thes. 5:3)

*She will have a golden cup from which she serves the nations. Unprecedented humanitarian works. Her service will appear golden, glorious, amazing, one of the deceptive fruits of all that will be happening. There will be many involved in this in a way that I cannot figure out the details of it. I do not understand all the details.*

*Paul talked about it in 1 Thessalonians 5. He prophesied that there will be a temporary world peace, “They will say, ‘Peace and safety,’” and then suddenly the Great Tribulation comes. Before the great destruction happens, the nations related to the harlot Babylon will be proclaiming her peace and safety. They will be saying, “There is political peace—no more war—and safety.” The terrorism thing and the global economic collapse are over. There is safety, and there is peace without war, but it will be a very short-lived, temporary peace. It will seduce the nations to believe this system is working. Paul says, “Do not buy it when you see it.” The economic recovery, terrorism is stopped, peace treaties, everybody is happy, world peace, prosperity.*

*Then believers— faithful witnesses—are saying, “It is of the devil. It is of the devil.”*

*The world is saying, “What do you Christians want? You pray for unity for years, you finally get it, and you call it the devil.” This is really going to be politically incorrect. It will lead to the purification of the church and the greatest revival in history. It is planned. The Lord is allowing it to unfold this way.*

* + 1. ***Full of abomination and filth***: She will offer a cup, or service, that is full of abomination and filth. Abomination refers to being associated with demonic activity since abominations in the Old Testament often referred to idolatrous or demonic activity. Filthiness points to its moral perversions.

*He says, “This cup will be full of abomination and filth.” This cup of service, the humanitarian service–with this cup she is serving the nations, and the abominations refer to it being associated with demonic activity. The concept of abomination connects with the demonic activity.*

*But it will be more than demonic. It will be filthy. Filthiness points to moral perversion. There will be moral perversion and demonic activity at a level that I do not think that we can grasp or we can predict.*

* + 1. The harlot will deceive the nations by sorcery, which is a combination of drugs and demonic power (witchcraft). Her dark, supernatural power will fascinate people, while appearing to be good. In my opinion, her worship music will be powerful, having a supernatural, demonic element to it.

23For by your [Babylon’s] sorcery all the nations were deceived. (Rev. 18:23)

* + 1. The harlot Babylon system is the context in which the nations will reach fullness in sin (Dan. 8:23). Then a king—the Antichrist—will appear on the world stage.

23In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king [Antichrist] shall arise…who understands sinister schemes. (Dan. 8:23)

*Daniel talked about the time of the harlot Babylon system. Daniel 8:23, “In the latter time of their kingdom when sin or transgression reaches fullness”—there is a time in history where sin will reach its fullness. Sin globally will reach its fullness—“at that time the Antichrist will arise.” It is not like the Antichrist ushers it in himself. He arises in the environment of where sin has reached its fullness. I believe the context is the harlot Babylon that comes before the Antichrist is identified as a primary leader on the global stage.*

* + 1. The church across all the nations will expose the harlot for who she is. Then they will be hated by all nations for this. They will declare the seductive nature of her perversion and her judgment.

9They will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. 10Then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.   
11Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. (Mt. 24:9-11)

*I believe this is the time frame—this is not all of the time frame, but this is part of the time frame—that Jesus was referring to in Matthew 24. He said, “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation. They will kill you. You will be hated, etc.” The church is going to expose the harlot for who she is.*

*Someone says, “I will do it [stand for the truth at that time].” Well, do not wait until the harlot is exposed. Stand for truth now. If you stand for truth—the sanctity of life, the sanctity of marriage, the sanctity of sex, the one way of salvation, the truth of the gospel of grace that leads to radical obedience—you will already be shouted down by many. Not most, but many in the church will call you false and in error, etc. Stand now. Do not say, “I would stand if it was that time.” Stand now.*

*You get in a conversation. The subject of the judgments of God, the subject of hell, the subject of gay rights and all the moral perversion that is exploding in the nations, and Christians are becoming incredibly silent in the marketplace with their friends.*

*“Well, the Lord knows.”*

*“What do you mean, the Lord knows? You know what the Word says.”*

*“Well, I am waiting for an opportunity.”*

*“That is an opportunity.”*

*“Well, I just did not feel the witness of the Spirit.” Maybe that is really true. That really can be true, but I am saying, for decades we can talk ourselves out of standing for truth, imagining that if these things ever happened in our day, we would stand. Well, stand now then!*

*“Then they will be hated by all the nations,” Jesus said, when the church declares the seductive nature and the perversion. More than the perversion of this system of toleration, it is when the church declares her ultimate, sure judgment. You can call her perverse, and the world will say, “Well you are just all mixed up and you are intolerant.” You say, “She is going to come under the judgment of God,” then you are cruel. It is what the Scripture says. We need to say it in tenderness, and we need to say it with tears in our eyes, but this is where it is going. This is part of the storyline, where the Lord is going to equip His church to stand in that day.*

* + 1. Surprisingly, the harlot religion will be hated and destroyed by the jealousy of the ten kings who serve closest to the Antichrist (Dan. 7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 17:16). They will burn the harlot at beginning of Great Tribulation. Satan’s kingdom is filled with hatred, not unity. Even when the harlot is at the height of her prominence, the Church will prophesy that she will be burned by Antichrist’s ten kings.

12The ten horns which you saw are ten kings…16The ten horns…on the Beast [Antichrist] will hate the harlot, make her desolate…and burn her with fire. (Rev. 17:12, 16)

*Surprisingly the harlot religion will be hated and destroyed by the jealousy of the ten kings closest to the Antichrist. When I first read this some time ago, years ago, where it says in verse 16 that the ten horns, the ten kings, are the ones that burn the harlot, I thought, “Wait a second! Why would the Antichrist burn the harlot? I thought he liked the harlot?” You see, he is going to get rid of her religion of toleration and replace it with a religion of no toleration, Antichrist worship. Where you will be killed if you do not do it his way. Her way is only a temporary scene, a forerunner. It is Satan’s forerunner to the Antichrist system.*

* + 1. In the middle of the final seven years of this age, I believe that the harlot religion of tolerance will be replaced with Antichrist worship. The Antichrist religion will be strict and without toleration.   
       All who refuse to worship the Antichrist will be killed (Rev. 13:4-18). Satan’s purpose for the harlot religion is to be the “forerunner” to prepare the nations for Antichrist worship.

It is my opinion that this will happen in the middle of the seven final years. The harlot Babylon religion of tolerance will be replaced by the Antichrist worship, which will be very strict religion.

1. The Harlot’s origin: the tower of Babel
   * 1. The harlot’s name was a mystery to John. An angel gave him new information that had not yet been clearly revealed in Scripture—namely that the harlot is named Babylon the Great.

5And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH 6I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. (Rev. 17:5-6)

*In verse 5, we get to this idea that on her forehead is her name. Her name gives the insight as to her nature, her origin, and the spirit in which she operates. The angel says, “John”—I am just making up this conversation, of course—“John, this is going to surprise you. This end-time harlot religion actually has its roots in the tower of Babel.” That is what he is saying in essence. I am just imagining John thinking, “Really?” as the angel continues, “As a matter of fact, that harlot has been functioning throughout history, but not on the prominent, global level at the measure it is going to in the generation the Lord returns.”*

* + 1. ***The mother***: The harlot will be the mother of harlots or the source of false religion through history as well as the mother or source of abominations in the end times. Her offspring of false religion through history will crescendo and set the stage for the Antichrist in the end times.

*Babylon the Great is the mother of all the other false religions. She is the mother of all the other false doctrines, all the world religions. The mother will be the harlot or the source. She is the source of false religions over the last approximately 6000 years since the tower of Babel. Approximately 6000 years, something like that. Some say it is a little short of that.*

* + 1. ***Drunk with blood***: The harlot will have a murderous heart despite her humanitarian appearance. The influence of the harlot will cause multitudes to be drunk or intoxicated with the blood of the saints who expose her. The more she kills, the bolder she will become in killing the saints.

*Verse 6 says that the harlot, the woman, will be drunk with the blood of the saints. She will have a murderous heart, despite her humanitarian appearances. The more she kills, the bolder she will become in killing. She will be drunk. She will be intoxicated. In my opinion intoxicated in this context means that the more she murders, the bolder she will get and the more blood lust she will have.*

* + 1. ***Babylon the Great***: The angel revealed the harlot’s name as Babylon. In other words, her origin was in Babylon—at the tower of Babel. By understanding what happened at the tower of Babel we gain insight into how she will operate. Babel was the first city to organize a rebellion against God.

*Babylon the Great is her name. In other words, her origin was in Babylon, and the origin of Babylon is the tower of Babel. That is where Babylon started. In the city of Babel was the first organized world religion. The first organized rebellion against God was there.*

1. The tower of Babel
   * 1. The residents of Babel sought to build a tower whose “top is in the heavens.” This refers to reaching into the spirit realm. It is not a reference to the height of a building that was made of mud bricks. The Lord had told the people to multiply and *fill the earth* (Gen. 1:28). The people of Babel wanted to *stay in* Babel to accomplish more together instead of going forth to fill the earth (Gen. 11:4).

4They said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.” (Gen. 11:4)

*The residents of the tower of Babel sought to build a tower. Here is the key part to understanding the tower of Babel. It is this phrase, that they wanted to build “a tower whose top was in the heavens.” That is the key phrase. I think that is often misunderstood. The top was in the heavens. I believe what that means is they wanted to build a tower that would reach into the spirit realm.*

*I do not believe at all the story is talking about mud bricks that were assembled, used, and the building got so high, like ten stories, that God said, “Oh no, mud bricks! This is threatening to Me. I am going to judge them. They are up to ten stories. They could get to twenty stories in the next thousand years.”*

*God was not talking about the architectural structure when it said the top of the heavens. I believe it is talking about the realm of the spirit, that they had an organized evil, that they would have a synergism in evil. If they stayed together, they would advance in evil in the realm of the demonic faster that God wanted them to, because God had an end-time plan and a plan for history. He only wanted it to come to fullness in the generation His Son would return. He stopped them and scattered them. I believe what He was doing was hindering their synergism and progression in evil, not their architectural pursuits.*

* + 1. Nothing they set their heart to do together would be withheld from them in terms of reaching their full potential in sin. The NAS/NIV translates this as nothing that they plan to do *“will be impossible for them.”* This refers to their *unity in sin* to reach into the demonic realm (top in the heavens). The Lord was not referring to their architectural abilities having no limit, but to their progression in evil.

6The Lord said, “Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.” (Gen. 11:6)

*In verse 6 we read, “Nothing will be impossible for them.” What I believe that means is “nothing” in terms of their unity in sin, perversion, and accessing the realm of the demonic. That is what I believe. I do not believe He is talking about the space race or architectural pursuits. That is not what He is talking about. He says, “If they enter into this realm of the spirit, there is nothing they will not do in perversion.” That will be the harlot Babylon. They will go to the fullness. Transgression will reach its fullness.*

* + 1. The Lord scattered their language to slow down their escalation of sin until the end times.

9Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth. (Gen. 11:9)

* + 1. In Jacob’s dream he saw a ladder that gave him access to the heavenly realm in the will of God. Jesus referred to this reality as an “open heaven” where angels interact much with the earthly realm.

12He [Jacob] dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. (Gen. 28:12)

51And He [Jesus] said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” (Jn. 1:51)

*Jacob had a dream, and in the dream he saw a ladder. You can read it in Genesis 12:28. The ladder reached its top in the heavens. That is the same phrase. It is not talking about a ladder going ten stories or maybe twenty stories. We are not talking about the length of a natural ladder. We are talking about it reaching into the heavenly realm. The top of the heavens means the heavenly realm.*

* + 1. The harlot will have a “ladder of access” to the demonic realm enabling them to go to new heights of sin being assisted by demons. Those in Babel were seeking to reach a “demonic open heaven.” In the Babylonian language, Babel means the *“gate of heaven,”* yet in Hebrew it means *“confusion.”*
    2. Billions of demons will be dislodged from their place in the heavens and cast to earth. I believe that in the end times there will be an unprecedented interaction between the demonic and human realm.

7And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon…8but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9So the great dragon [Satan] was cast out…he was cast to the earth, and his angels [demons] were cast out with him. (Rev 12:7-9)

* + 1. The time before Jesus’ second coming is compared to the days of Noah in Genesis 6.

37But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Mt. 24:37)

*Before Jesus returns, the “Genesis 11 tower of Babel” days of Noah are going to happen. The whole thing that was happening in Noah’s day is back in Genesis 6 where wickedness reached its highest level. I believe the harlot Babylon will reach the same levels and go beyond the Genesis 11 level. The violence and perversion of Genesis 6 and the dynamics of Genesis 11 brought together in the harlot Babylon. That is just a point of clarification.*

* + 1. The people in Genesis 6 seemed to have walked in a sort of “counterfeit” open heaven as demons interacted with humans in an intense way (Gen. 6:4; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). There seems to have been a deep connection between the natural and demonic realm, resulting in violence (Gen. 6:7; 7:1-24).

5The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually… 11The earth was filled with violence. 12So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. 13God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” (Gen. 6:5-13)

1. the End-Time conflict over the truth of who Jesus is
   * 1. In the end time there will be a battle for the truth about Jesus. Some believers will give heed to doctrines that lie about Jesus. The conflict will center on defining who Jesus is and how we love Him. We must love God on His terms—expressed with allegiance to the Jesus of the Bible.

*Let’s bring this to an end here. In the end times there will be a battle for the truth about Jesus. Again, that is what David said in Psalm 2. There will be a great battle about the truth about Jesus. David said the kings of the earth will gather together and they will be against the Lord and His Christ. They will plot and scheme in unity together in order to overthrow the truth of Jesus in the earth, to resist it and defame it. Of course that is what is happening right now.*

* + 1. Tolerance that undermines God’s Word is one of the primary characteristics in the social and religious movements that will prepare the way for the harlot Babylon.

*Tolerance is a very clever word. We do want to be tolerant in the sense of giving people liberty to have the values they want and to have dignity as a human being with certain values. We honor their dignity, even though they have different beliefs and different values because they are human.*

* + 1. The body of Christ is to greatly value people with different beliefs and values. All humans possess great dignity and value in God’s eyes. The body of Christ must not be willing to let them perish in hell by refusing to tell them the truth about Jesus and His salvation and love. The Church must lovingly and tenderly share the truth even as they serve and honor those who are resisting it.

*The body of Christ is to greatly value people of all faiths. For example, I love people though they are involved in homosexual activity. I love them. I love people involved in false religions. They are human beings of incredible value. I do not look at people who have different values and say, “You are worthless.” No, I say, “You are so valuable that I am going to tell you the truth. That is how much I care about you. I will even bear you being mad at me because that is how valuable you are.”*

*The rhetoric of the day has made tolerance and the acceptance of their dignity and their intrinsic value to be the applauding their* ***value system****, rather than applauding their* ***value as a human being****. I can applaud the value of homosexual people, and yet not at all applaud the value system that they embrace. I really applaud the value of the people. I can see a man in a false religion and totally value that man or that woman, but not value their doctrines. I value them enough to serve them and pour myself out in tenderness and love because they are so important to the Lord.*

* + 1. Three truths that offend those with a humanistic mindset:

*There are truths that offend the humanistic mindset. This mindset will flow into the harlot Babylon one day in the days ahead, in the future, we do not know how long. It might be a ways down the road. It may not be. Who knows?*

The deity of Jesus and His right to establish absolute standards and the definitions of love and morality for which the nations are accountable to Him.

*We believe in the deity of Jesus. Jesus is God. He is fully man and fully God. As God, He has the right to define morality, and He has a right to hold all the nations accountable to the morality He defines. He has full rights to do that. That really makes people mad.*

The only way of salvation is through Jesus.

*Jesus is the only way of salvation. There is no other way of salvation besides Him. He is the only one who was innocent. He took the role of the guilty, and He took our sin and our judgment. He paid for our sin. There is no other religious leader who paid for the sin of the guilty, nor any religion that had an innocent man who paid for the sin of the guilty.*

Jesus possesses the wisdom and love to judge sin both in time and eternity.

*He is the only one who possesses the love and the wisdom to judge. He judges in time and in eternity. He has full rights to judge because He is the only one with enough wisdom and love to qualify to be judge.*

* + 1. Many today are resisting primary truths in the Scripture about Jesus and His salvation. We must not be intimidated by them, regardless if they are famous people who work in the White House, host popular talk shows, fill stadiums with concerts for the poor, or lead mega-churches.

*Many are resisting truths about Jesus. Do not be intimidated, regardless if they are famous people who work in the White House, famous people who host talk shows, famous people who fill stadiums with concerts, or famous people who lead mega-churches. Do not be intimidated by lies. We are to be faithful witnesses—I mean the body of Christ across the earth—millions of believers across the earth are called to be faithful witnesses.*

* + 1. The end-time Church will steward the greatest hope and justice movement in history. It will have a far superior hope than humanistic movements. Faithful witnesses of the truth about Jesus are the greatest hope-bringers in history. They will magnify Jesus’ love, wisdom, and tenderness.

*The end-time church will steward the greatest hope and justice movement in history. Some say this humanistic movement is filled with hope and justice. No. The greatest hope movement and justice movement in history is the one under Jesus’ leadership. Amen and amen.*