

“THE WOMAN RIDING THE BEAST”

Revelation 17:1-7

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INTRODUCTION

Immorality is rampant in our world. How fitting that the final world system of rebellion against God is described under the figure of a harlot.

Explain the Biblical picture of “harlotry” in relation to His professing people—

- Political—Israel military dependence upon other nations; can include commercial deals and relations with them also. Note here “the kings of the Earth” in v. 2;
- Religious—false gods and alliances
- Literal—actual immorality

Undoubtedly, all three senses are involved here.

“The many waters” here have reference as often in Scripture to the nations of the earth touched by these waters. Note that “those who dwell upon the Earth” (earth-dwellers again as a reference to unsaved and immoral people) are “made drunk”—i.e. are totally under her influence—commercially, religiously. (2)

“Wilderness”—depicting the barren spiritual landscape (3)

“Scarlet beast”—the political system mentioned in chapter 13.

- Scarlet due to the “blood” of wars and killings and martyrdom of believers
- “ due to the sexual immorality randomly practiced.

“Blasphemous names”—depicting the character of the political system that speaks against God literally & in practice.

“Seven heads and 10 horns—See discussion in chapter 13.

“Clothed in purple and scarlet, gold, pearls, precious stones”—royalty, richness, immorality

“Gold cup full of abominations and unclean things of her immorality”—from this cup she has made all peoples and nations drink and come under the spell of her influence.

Abominations and unclean show the depiction of God concerning her character, values, and practices

“Babylon the Great”—takes us back to the ancient kingdom with its corrupt religious influence (Gen. 11), continued in each successive world kingdom including Babylon itself through Rome—culminating in this final world empire and religious system.

“Mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth”—the interconnection of corruptions through time and practice.

“Drunk in the blood of the saints”—self-explanatory (v. 6).

“Of the witnesses of Jesus”—those who are His followers.

“Great wonder”—at the “mystery of godlessness”!

“Why do you wonder?” “I will tell you the “mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her.

We continue with the angel’s description next message.