

**THE FINAL VISION
OF THE END:
AN INTRODUCTION**

The final vision of the end that John received is recorded in Rev. 17:1-22:5.

It's a lengthy vision that summarizes all that has been revealed to St. John.



A Synopsis of the Final Vision

Rev. 17:1 – 18:24

**The Destruction of Satan's two
"henchmen" – The beast of the sea and
the harlot (beast of the land)**

Rev. 19:1-4

The Song of Victory

Rev. 19:5-10

The Marriage Feast of the Lamb

A Synopsis of the Final Vision

Rev. 19:11-21

The Second Advent of our Lord Jesus

Rev. 20:1-10

The Final Judgment of Satan

Rev. 20:11-15

**The Resurrection of the Dead and
Judgment**

A Synopsis of the Final Vision

Rev. 21:1 – 22:5

**The New Heaven and The New
Earth,
The Heavenly City – New
Jerusalem**

A Synopsis of the Final Vision



The Vision of the Harlot (vv. 1-6)

+ ***"And one of the seven angels who have the seven censers came..."*** - Some

identify this angel as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, which makes ZERO sense! Since

John tells us who leads him so that he may see the judgment of the "great harlot."



The Vision of the Harlot (vv. 1-6)

+ **“...the great harlot...”** – Certainly John sees this in his context and identifies her with Rome. But, we shouldn't see this as referring only to Rome, but rather as symbolizing all evil empires and peoples that go against God's will throughout every generation.



The Vision of the Harlot (vv. 1-6)

+ ***"...with whom the kings of the earth committed adultery"*** – The use of ***"harlot"*** is symbolic of the state of the apostate church due to their idolatry in the worship of false gods. This concept was very familiar to John and the early Church (e.g., Ps. 106:36-40; Is. 1:21-23; et al.). John will combine ***"harlot"*** and ***"Babylon"*** as that which is symbolic of the pseudo-church using political power to persecute and destroy the true Church of Jesus Christ. Thus, the harlot is the opposite of the Woman of Rev. 12, who represents the Church, the true believers of Christ, who are called the Bride of the Lamb.

+ ***"...with whom the kings of the earth committed adultery"*** – The Woman of Rev. 12 is despised, rejected, and persecuted by the world as motivated by the harlot and the beast (political beast). Because the Woman (Bride of Christ) denounces the harlot and beast as false due to their lifestyles of unbelief and ungodliness.

Therefore, the world will also despise, reject and persecute the true Church as they esteem the harlot and the beast, since she will flatter the ungodly and approve of their ungodly lifestyle.



+ ***"The adornments of the Woman"*** – Revelation unmasks things for what they are – great earthly military and political power are nothing before God; the earthly lusts and perversions are satisfying for the sinful human flesh, but are abominations before God. All the evils in the world seem like they are unstoppable, but they will come under God's wrath, be judged, and destroyed. Since, to the world, the harlot is beautiful; yet, to God, she is an abomination!



+ ***"She is seated on a scarlet beast"*** – The same beast in Ch. 13; the woman is an ally of Satan, who manifests himself as the beast (political beast). The best way to understand the Prostitute of Babylon is to contrast her with the Bride of Christ (the church). She represents all unbelief, just as the church represents all belief. All unbelievers are wed to the Prostitute, while all believers are wed to Christ. Her name, "Babylon the Great," is contrasted with the New Jerusalem (Satan's followers vs. the Church, made up of Christ's followers).



+ ***"She is seated on a scarlet beast"*** – The harlot's influence spills over to all nations of all times. In other words, to try to identify her with some specific country, city, or historical figure, is to misunderstand what she symbolizes, namely evil, unbelief, and blasphemy. For example, she is alive and well in the USA today, as evident in the crass sexual immorality and moral decline we see in the church, even as she was alive and well in the first century, manifesting herself through the immoral and evil emperors of the Roman Empire via their idolatry!



+ ***"She is seated on a scarlet beast"*** – What we also see depicted is another picture of Satan's attempt to mimic God with his "unholy trinity." The Woman represents the second beast (false church) and the "scarlet beast" she rides represents the first beast (cf. Ch. 13). The scarlet color of the beast is the same color of the Dragon (cf. 12:3), showing that Satan is behind the activities of the Woman and the Beast (political beast). Satan wants to be God. Thus, he creates his own Woman (Bride) to mimic Christ's Bride (the Church). Purple is the color of royalty and political power.



+ ***“Drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus”*** – Satan’s number one goal is to destroy God’s children (YOU!). His weapons are temptation and deceit. He uses the apparent beauty and attractiveness of the harlot to lure sinful human beings away from the truth. He convinces them that engaging in sexual immorality is perfectly fine and not sinful in any way. The fact that God does not condone such behavior shows, according to Satan, that He wants to rob men and women of pleasure and happiness (the same lie he used on Eve in the Garden).



+ ***“Drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus”*** – When the children of God fall into his deceitful temptations, there is great rejoicing in Satan’s kingdom. Even when Satan and his demons fail to lure God’s children away, they use the evil powers in the world to persecute and kill them. Of course, the whole point of Revelation is that God and His saints will have the last laugh, for those who have been slain for the faith will live forever in God’s Kingdom; while Satan, his demons, and all unbelievers will suffer eternal torment in Hell.



+ **“Seven heads”** – represents the perfect craftiness and cleverness of Satan through his beasts (Satan is very good at what he does!).

“Ten horns” – represents the governmental and political powers through which Satan works to achieve his goal.

Both of these also have specific historical identifications as well, as we will see.



+ ***"Mystery, Babylon the Great, Mother of Prostitutes and of Earth's Abominations"***

– This is the title given to the Prostitute of Babylon, for she, in the employment of Satan, is the source of all immorality in the world. Again, contrast her with the Bride of Christ, the Church, as they are complete opposites.



The Angel Explains (Vv. 7-14)

+ **“I will tell you the mystery . . .”** – The angel will not explain the mystery of the name written upon the harlot and of the beast that bears her!

+ **“The beast . . . was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction”** – This is a reference to the “little season” Satan will have when he is unleashed before the End. The beast “was” – before Christ came! Satan was allowed to stop the Gospel from going forth and was able enter the heavenly throne room to accuse God’s children. We see the success he had throughout the OT Era as the Gospel was confined to the Israelites, and, even more, to the remnant within the Israelite nation that believed.

The Angel Explains (Vv. 7-14)

+ **“The beast . . . was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction”** – The beast **“is not”** – When Christ died on the cross, He crushed the serpent’s (Satan’s) head, and when He rose from the tomb, He destroyed death and Hell, forever.

Satan was thus bound and no longer able to stop the Gospel and no longer had access to the heavenly throne room. Throughout the NT Era, the Gospel will be allowed to go throughout the world and Satan is powerless to stop it. We have seen the result of this, as there are Christians all over the globe.

The Angel Explains (Vv. 7-14)

+ **“The beast . . . was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction”** – Then he **“is about to rise . . .”** so Satan will be unleashed for a short time before the End to **“deceive the nations”** (cf. Rev. 20). During this “little season,” Satan’s war against the Church will be intensified. He will infiltrate the Church with many false teachers and turn a multitude away from the truth of the Gospel. But, all will be for naught, his fate is sealed! Satan and his kingdom will “go to destruction” in the End. The angel reveals all of this to John, and thus, to us, to warn us against that time to come, that we must remain steadfast in the Word and inherit the Kingdom prepared for us.

The Angel Explains (Vv. 7-14)

+ ***"This calls for a mind with wisdom..."*** – As with the number 666 in 13:18, the angel says that understanding these things requires godly wisdom. As we recall, 666 had an historical identification (Nero Caesar); yet, also represented all evil rulers of all time up to the End. So, in the same way, the ***"seven heads"*** has an historical identification and refers to the Rome (built on "seven hills"). According to the angel, this also refers to ***"seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does he must remain only a little while."***

The Angel Explains (Vv. 7-14)

+ ***"seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does he must remain only a little while"*** – While this may have some historical reference, the deeper meaning is symbolic and refers to Satan's activities through rulers in the world throughout history, not just Roman Emperors. The parallel between the beast that ***"was, is not, and will rise"*** cannot be overlooked. The ***"king"*** who ***"has not yet come"*** thus signifies the End-Time Antichrist through which Satan will ***"deceive the nations."*** This is clear given the statement that this last ***"king must remain only a little while."*** This is yet another reference to Satan's "little season" before the End.

The Angel Explains (Vv. 7-14)

Likewise, the ***“ten horns”*** refer to ***“ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast.”***

Again, this is a symbolic reference to Satan’s “little season” when the rulers of the world will unite with him to make war with Christ’s Church. The numbers ***“seven”*** and ***“ten”*** here indicate that Satan’s “little season” will be ***“perfect”*** and ***“complete,”*** i.e., just as God has planned, so that Jesus will be vindicated in the End and no one will be able to call Him unjust on Judgment Day.

The Angel Explains (Vv. 7-14)

+ ***"The Lamb will conquer them . . ."*** – As bad as things will get during Satan's "little season," the End is sealed. The Lamb has already conquered the Dragon. This will come to ultimate fulfillment when the Lamb returns in glory. To the entire world, it will seem as though the Dragon and his beasts have been victorious, but this is merely an illusion, for the Lamb will prove to all, at the End, that the victory is His. This provides great comfort for the Church, for all who believe in Him can rest assured that no matter how bad things get in this world, theirs is the victory with the Lamb forever and ever.

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AMEN! COME QUICKLY, LORD JESUS!

The Harlot is Destroyed (Vv.15-18)

+ This last section reveals that all will not be well in Satan's kingdom. There will be infighting and destruction from within. Evil does not have the capacity to live in peace and harmony. Thus, the evil alliance will be broken near the End, as those who belong to Satan's kingdom will lash out at each other and try to destroy one another. In the midst of this in-fighting, the Lamb will appear in great glory and all who belong to Satan's kingdom will be utterly destroyed.

Next Sunday

Next week we will hear of the complete destruction of the harlot in terrifying detail (18:1-8); followed by the dirge of her fall (9-19); the call of the saints to celebrate for the Lord has kept His promise and has vindicated His people; and, lastly, the dramatic vision of the Mighty Angel that illustrates the final destruction of Babylon!