

Resolve: Week 8

Big Idea: Remain faithful until the end

Read: Revelation 17-20

What stood out to you in this passage?

Things You Need To Know

Revelation 17 - The judgments now move to a specific recipient: Babylon, the Great City, which in this instance is symbolized by a prostitute.

- The shocking imagery is meant to emphasize the true hideousness of evil and sin in the world.
- Jerusalem and Babylon are contrasted as a bride and a prostitute.
- Verse 4: The prostitute was literally “dressed to kill”.
- Rome was regularly portrayed as “seven mountains.” (Remember, John’s readers would have understood Babylon as representing Rome).
- Many commentators view the prostitute as the evil world system that continues beyond Rome’s fall.
- In verse 10, the king who “is” would be Domitian, who was the ruler at the time of the writing of Revelation. The “eighth” king (v.11) who comes back would have been seen as Emperor Nero.
- The phrase “(who) once was, now is not, and will come” is a parody of the Lord “who is, and who was, and who is to come.”
- The ten horns from verse 12 simply refer to the continuing imperial system.
- Verses 15-18 show one evil doing away with another evil. In God’s sovereignty, he uses evil empires as agents of punishment (See the book of Habakkuk), but that does not mean that those empires will not also be judged.

Revelation 18 - Chapter 18 takes on the appearance of a funeral dirge over the fallen Babylon.



- Verses 1-8 function more as a curse than a lament.
- That other nations will mourn her destruction speaks to the extent of which her seduction has reached.
- Note that there is still a chance for repentance (v. 4) for those who opposed God.
- Verses 9-24 is a lament from the rulers and merchants who benefited from the prostitutes rule.

Revelation 19 - If chapter 18 was a funeral dirge, chapter 19 is a celebration of victory in heaven.

Revelation 20 - There are many views concerning the thousand year reign of Christ and where it falls on the historical spectrum. Some believe (premillennialists) that Jesus will return to establish a specific thousand-year kingdom. Others (amillennialists) believe that the thousand-year kingdom is symbolic for the present age. Postmillennialists believe that Christians help establish the thousand-year kingdom on earth prior to Jesus' return. There is not enough time or space to go through each of these in depth. It is my personal opinion that the thousand year reign will follow the Tribulation. One reason for that determination is that the saints have already been martyred which suggests that the Tribulation period precedes the Millennium.

Questions:

1. When examining your own heart, what are some of the things of this world that tend to distract you from God and His good plan for you?



2. How can Christians pursue faithfulness to Christ when so much of our society seems caught up in “Babylonianism”? How can we protect against the prostitute's seduction?

3. Revelation 18 shows the inability of sin to provide lasting pleasure. How have you seen the deceptiveness of sin in its failure to provide lasting joy and security?

4. Judgement in Revelation 18 is all the more severe because of the prostitute's pride. Why is God so opposed to arrogance and pride?



5. How does Revelation 19 show us that Jesus' prayer in Matthew 6:10 is being granted?

6. Why is it important to talk about hell?

7. How would your life look different if you lived in light of eventually giving an account to God for every thought, word, and deed?

