

Revelation 17:1-18



The text – Revelation 17:1-18

1. Read Revelation 17:1-18. This judgement vision extends from 17:1-19:10. Who or what is signified by the “great prostitute who sits by many waters”?
2. John sees the vision in 17:3-6. Describe what he sees. Take some time to imagine the images.
3. John is astonished! Then the angel interprets the vision in 17:7-18. What does the word “mystery” mean in 17:5 and 17:7?
4. In 17:8 the beast is described as “once was, now is not, and yet will come out of the Abyss and go to its destruction” and then as “once was, now is not, and yet will come”. What do these sayings mean? How do you compare them with descriptions of Jesus and of God in, for example, Revelation 1:8 and Revelation 1:18?
5. The descriptions of the beast’s heads and horns in 17:9-14 are notoriously difficult to interpret. Commentators have different views, ranging from specific emperors, kings and kingdoms to more general and symbolic meanings. Given this range of interpretations, what is clear as you read, concerning the fate of the beast and the outcome for God’s people?
6. Who is the woman on the beast according to Revelation 17:18? What is the fate of the woman?

The Scriptures – Revelation 17:1-18 as a portion of the Scriptures

7. Read Revelation 17:1-2 and compare it with Revelation 21:9-10. What do you notice about these two visions? How are they complementary?
8. What does it mean to be “carried away in the Spirit”? Compare John’s words in 17:3 with similar words in Revelation 1:10, 4:2 and 21:10.
9. Much of the imagery in Revelation 17 is shaped by the visions of Daniel 7. Read Daniel 7:15-28 and compare it with what John sees in Revelation 17. (Don’t try to understand all of the details so much as trying to understand the broad purpose of these visions.)

Our lives – walking the way of Jesus in response to Revelation 17:1-18 as a portion of the Scriptures

10. Revelation 17:6 and 17:14 are challenging texts for the church. How do they impact you as you think about your faith and discipleship?
11. How can we encourage and pray for you as a result of this study of God’s word?