



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

THE GREAT WHORE

Introduction: Much controversy swirls around Revelation 17 and the Apostle John's description of the Great Whore. For generations, Bible students have been taught and hold to the idea that this persona is none other than the Roman Catholic Church. However, in these last days of apostasy, many have back-pedaled on this identification. An in-depth look at Revelation 17 will uncover the Great Whore's identifiable marks, leading us to her true identity.

SHE IS UNDER GOD'S JUDGMENT (v 1)

SHE SITS UPON MANY WATERS (vs 2, 15)

SHE HAS COMMITTED SPIRITUAL FORNICATION (v 3)

SHE RIDES A "SCARLET-COLORED BEAST" (v 3)

- **The beast is "full of the names of blasphemy."**
- **The beast has seven heads and ten horns.**
 - **NOTE:** Babylon the great—Pope Benedict XIII, in his proclamation of the jubilee in A.D.1725 explains this sufficiently. His words are: *"To this holy city, famous for the memory of so many holy martyrs, run with religious alacrity. Hasten to the place which the Lord hath chose. Ascend to the this new Jerusalem, whence the law of the Lord and the light of evangelical truth hath flowed forth into all nations, from the very first beginning of the church: the city of the most rightfully called "The Palace," placed for the pride of all the ages, the city of the Lord, the Sion of the Holy One of Israel. This catholic and apostolical Roman church is the head of the world, the mother of all believers, the faithful interpreter of God and mistress of all churches."*
 - C.H. Spurgeon's response: *"These words are like a photograph of the Papacy; no portrait could be more accurate."*
 - Geneva Bible notes (A.D. 1599): *"That harlot, the spiritual Babylon, which is Rome..."*

SHE HAS SPECIAL ADORNMENTS (vs 4-5)

- **She is clothed in purple and scarlet.** (these colors denote majesty, royalty)
- **She wears gold, precious stones, and pearls.** (these items denote abundance and excess)
 - **NOTE:** From Jamison-Fausset-Brown commentary:

"... The color scarlet, it is remarkable, is that reserved for popes and cardinals. Paul II made it penal for anyone but cardinals to wear hats of scarlet; compare Roman Ceremonial [3.5.5]. This book was compiled several centuries ago by Marcellus, a Roman archbishop, and dedicated to Leo X. In it are enumerated five different articles of dress of scarlet color. A vest is mentioned studded with pearls.

The Pope's miter is of gold and precious stones. These are the very characteristics outwardly which Revelation thrice assigns to the harlot or Babylon."

- **She possesses a golden cup full of abominations.** (this denotes her hidden desire)
- **She has writing on her forehead.** (this denotes her outward declaration of wickedness).

SHE IS DRUNK WITH THE BLOOD OF THE SAINTS & MARTYRS (v 6)

SHE IS SEATED UPON SEVEN MOUNTAINS (v 9)

SHE IS DESTROYED BY THE TEN HORNS (vs 12, 16)

SHE IDENTIFIES AS "THAT GREAT CITY WHICH REIGNETH OVER THE KINGS OF THE EARTH (v 18)

Lesson Conclusion: Tying together this prophetic passage with historical context helps the believer to identify the traits of what the Apostle John describes as The Great Whore. In these final days of apostasy, believers should turn to Scripture for discernment and context. Doing so will help us continue to "earnestly contend for the faith..." (Jude 3).