

b) The Seventh Bowl; The Prostitute and the Beast - 16:17-17:18

1. The seventh bowl - 16:17-21

“It is done!” (16:17). Compare with the verses: 10:7; 15:1,8; 11:15; 11:7-10; This is not something different from all other announcement of God’s wrath and intervention - the same outpouring of wrath is repeated and seen from many angles. Notice the references to the wrath of God over Egypt when he came to save his people.

How are the words “it is finished” related to “it is done”?

Can God’s grace and forgiveness exist without his righteousness?

Babylon is destroyed (16:19); this will be described in coming chapters - but it is nothing different from 6:12-17, and 11:15-19.

The natural phenomena mentioned are the same as 6:12-17 and 11:19. They all refer to how God saved his people long ago from Egypt.

2. The vision of the Prostitute and the Beast - 17:1-6a

Discuss how Babylon is described (17.1-2) Compare with Isaiah 1.21-22; Jeremiah 2.20; Jeremiah 51.7.

3. The explanation - 17:6b-18

Now follows a long explanation of the vision John had - but not so much about the woman, but mainly about the beast with seven heads and ten horns.

How are the woman (Babylon) and the Beast similar? How are they different?

‘They will make war on the Lamb’. What chance of success do they have to win this battle? (17.14). What is the message for the persecuted church?

How strange... The beast turns against the woman. How is this described? (17.15-18)

How do you envision this?

How can we make sure we are not part of this evil Empire of either the beast or the woman?

