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Revelation 17

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Revelation 17.

Topics.

- The judgment of the great prostitute seated on many waters.
 - A blasphemous woman sitting on a beast with seven heads and ten horns.
 - Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations.
 - The beast that is not and is about to rise from the bottomless pit.
 - The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated.
 - The beast that was and is not, it is an eighth, but it belongs to the seven.
 - Ten kings who hand over their royal power and authority to the beast.
 - The Lamb and those with him conquer the beast, for he is King of kings.
 - The prostitute woman seated, upon multitudes and nations and languages.
 - The ten kings and the beast hate the prostitute and burn her with fire.
 - The woman the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth.
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A personal note: though I have always loved reading and studying the Scriptures and have now walked with Christ and in God's grace for around fifty years the following studies should not be taken to be dogmatic, inflexible or the final word on the matter since I am fully aware that my mind is limited by mortality and that greater understanding of God's revelation is continually becoming clearer before our eyes as we move closer to the time of Christ's glorious return in glory.

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The previous chapter: began with seven angels pouring out seven vial/bowls of wrath on earth. The first poured sores on those with the mark of the beast; the second made the sea like blood; the third turned rivers to blood; the fourth allowed the sun to scorch people; the fifth turned the kingdom of the beast into darkness; the sixth dried up the river Euphrates. The chapter ended with spirits like frogs assembling nations at Armageddon and the seventh angel, saying, "It is done!" After which there was a great earthquake and great hailstones fell on the great city of Babylon.

THE FIRST BEAST THE GREAT PROSTITUTE WOMAN

REVELATION 17:1-2

The Judgment of the Great Prostitute Seated on Many Waters.

- **Revelation 17:1-2:** Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute (the great whore in KJV) who is seated on many waters, ²with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality (fornication in the KJV), and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk."

When reading this book, it should always be kept in mind, that though it appears there is a general order of events, these are visions of the future that John is seeing and writing down in the present time, which means the symbolical representations may not always follow the exact chronological order. It is very likely that in some cases one event may overlap another so that some are mixed together until the final-end, while others are interludes that give greater detail of events already seen or are inserted to give encouragement to the church during troublesome times, especially for those living during the final antichristian global empire. This chapter is an interlude chapter that briefly gives an overview of the birth, the history, the future and the end of the three beasts that the book of Revelations speaks of. These three beasts are symbolised in the following way:

1. **The first beast:** is the great prostitute woman symbolizing corrupted global ecclesiastical denominations and false religious organizations. She is described as a woman drunk with the blood of the of the martyrs of Jesus. (Rev. 17:1, 4-6), clothed in rich robes of purple, scarlet and gold and arrayed with jewels and pearls and in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and sexual immorality, with the name, mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations," Written on her forehead.
2. **The second beast:** is the ten-horned beast rising out of the sea described as a scarlet colored beast full of blasphemous names, that rose out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. (Rev. 13:1) (Rev. 17:3). This beast signifies the capital global government and empire of the world. At its head is the man of lawlessness (man of sin in KJV) (an antichrist) (1 John 2:22) who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-4).
3. **The third beast:** is the two-horned beast like a lamb that spoke like a dragon rising out of the earth, who by signs deceive those who dwell on earth, to worship an image of the first beast and to be marked on the right hand or the forehead so that no one can buy or sell unless they have the mark, which is the number of its name 666. (Rev. 13:11-18). All three beasts are influenced by the same spirit which is the great dragon, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. (Rev. 12:9) (Rev. 20:2).

These three beasts, the great prostitute woman, the ten-horned beast and the two-horned beast are so closely linked that they are sometimes referred to as one beast. It could be said that these three are Satan's trinity. Over the process of time ungodliness greatly increases in all three beasts. This chapter is focused upon the great prostitute woman, and the two-horned beast, while the following chapter the focus is upon the ten-horned beast and the two-horned beast and its head the man of lawlessness (man of sin in KJV) (an antichrist) (1 John 2:22). (2 Thessalonians 2:1-4).

The great prostitute (the great whore in KJV): (v1) the primary beast in this chapter is ancient Pagan Rome which though brought to ruin by military warfare and internal decent the Papal Roman Church not only survived, but by political management, and all kinds of deceit and allurements of worldly honour and riches, prosperity, pomp and pride, that appeals to worldly minds rose up in great power keeping her rule over Rome's kings and the nations aligned with Rome. She is named according to her past deceptive religious practises as a mother of prostitutes and because, she trains her children up to idolatry and all sorts of deceptive teachings and had the faithful of Jesus who did not bow down to her authority and did not accept her false teachings imprisoned and put to death. She attained to such a great state of fame that kings of the earth and great men made use of her for their own advantage and gain. After Rome's decline and the fall of the seat of the empire, and the

successive loss of its opulence and provinces, its magnificence edifices were exposed to ruin and decay and the land of the once glorious empire was practically reduced to a barren land so much so that the name of Rome might have been erased from the earth, if the city had not been revived by the influence of the Papacy of Rome. It could be rightly stated that the Pontificate, resuscitated Rome as with a second birth and saved it from becoming a total waste. Nations and people all over the world came to adore and worship the Popes of the Papal Church as the perpetual head and the successor of Rome, of which they claim that the apostle Peter is the supreme pontiff of the Church. At the rise of Papal Rome, the magnitude of the new empire was not equal in power and influence too that of the old empire, but its character and nature was very similar, because all nations from East and West, venerate the Pope and in the latter days its influence will extend over kings, princes, nations and a sea of people worldwide. In this vision of John, we see that the global ecumenical churches under the umbrella of the Papal Church has become like Israel and Judah of old who the prophets likened to a whore (harlots in KJV), because they had allied themselves with the world and its pagan religions, idolatries and gods as the following verses show (there are many more):

- Long ago I broke your yoke (Israel) and burst your bonds; but you said, 'I will not serve.' yes, on every high hill and under every green tree you bowed down like a whore. (Jer. 2:20).
- You (inhabitants of Jerusalem) trusted in your beauty and played the whore (harlot in KJV) because of your renown and lavished your whorings (fornications in KJV) on any passerby; your beauty became his. (Ezek. 16:15).

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The kings of the earth have committed fornication: (v2) fornication here refers to spiritual adultery. In this chapter it refers to Papal Rome, being unfaithful to the Gospel and the true word of God, and in this way, has seduced rulers and inhabitants of the earth, and led them into a false idea of what the true Gospel and Christianity is. The prophets of the Old Testament often likened Israel, Judah and Jerusalem to playing the whore and committing adultery, because they polluted the land with a mixture of God's word and pagan religions as the following verses show.

- She (Judah) saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. ⁹Because she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree. (Jer. 3:8-9).
- How can I pardon you? (inhabitants of Jerusalem) Your children have forsaken me and have sworn by those who are no gods. When I fed them to the full, they committed adultery and trooped to the houses of whores. (Jer. 5:7).

History shows that in the same way as Judah, Israel and Jerusalem turned to false Gods and idols the Roman Papal Church has led princes and kings of Europe for many centuries to worship the Virgin Mary and the dead that they have exalted to sainthood and many other corrupt practises and even today multitudes from all nations are now entirely under the influence of papal Rome.

NOTE: the title: "The Great Prostitute Woman," is not limited to Papal Rome only, but embraces all ecclesiastical organisations who distort and corrupt the Gospel and are of the same character, all worldly religions that align themselves with the Vatican, its Pope, bishops, cardinals, clergy and priests, all other religious groups that proclaim a different Gospel and all religions who claim to have the truth but deny Christ. For further information concerning Papal Rome click or tap [Topics in Revelation](#) and select the title: Papal Church, the Pope and the Vatican.

Seated on many waters: (v2) verse fifteen tells us that the many waters that the prostitute woman is seated on, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. It is an expression used to highlight the vast power, control and influence this woman has over the inhabitants of the earth.

The wine of her fornication: (v2) wine in this context signifies:

- An extravagant show of religious adornment and finery and a pretentious show of religious pomp and ceremony.
- A showy appearance of statutes and golden ornaments and opulent religious buildings.
- Worship, of images of the virgin Mary, made of gold, silver, brass, and wood and of the dead who have been exalted to sainthood and lying miracles, and great pretensions to devotion and religion

By these allurements, influences and unfounded and misleading doctrines and teachings the Roman Papal Church entices those that are earthly, mystically and worldly minded, and the unlearned seeking God into the idolatrous communion of their church. In the early years of its growth those who had a zeal for the church of Rome and its Pope were not only deceived by these practises but were also often filled with zealous fury against true believers who proclaimed the true word of God and stood against the authority of the Papal Church and its Pope. What could better describe the influence of Papal Rome upon the masses than the expression, "The dwellers on earth have become drunk with the wine of her fornication," (v2), as if they had been intoxicated by the alluring cup held out to them. Under her pomp, delusions, great riches controlling powers and spiritual intoxication people of all nations are made incapable of sober judgment. It should be highlighted here that though the culmination of the things mentioned are all found in the Papal Church of Rome, it is not limited to the Papal Church only, but embrace all apostate churches (Roman, Greek, Protestant etc,) that have twisted and distorted the Gospel and to those who have abandoned the love they first had (Rev. 2:4) to Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, and given their affections to worldly pomp and idols, worldly riches and fame, power and importance.

THE SECOND BEAST WITH SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS

REVELATION 17:3

A Blasphemous Woman, a Beast with Seven Heads and Ten Horns.

- **Revelation 17:3:** And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns.

He carried me away in the spirit: (v1) not in body, as if he was removed from the isle of Patmos to some other place; but in a visionary way, just as Ezekiel was carried between earth and heaven, in the visions of God, to Jerusalem (Ezek. 8:3). It was represented to the mind of John as if he had been taken up by the angel and carried through the air into the wilderness and there a scene of desolation is laid. Why this scene is laid in a wilderness or desert is not mentioned and there may be no intentional significance in it, other than the following three facts:

1. She is represented as riding on a beast, so the imagery is fittingly adapted to the habitat of a beast.
2. It carries the idea that there was nothing of the world to distract John's mind, and that his whole mind was totally caught up and filled with this vision being played out as a movie in his mind.

3. The end of the vision presents a final scene of total-destruction, so a wilderness is a fitting backdrop.

The scarlet coloured beast seven heads and ten horns: (v3) The great prostitute woman is pictured riding upon this second beast, meaning the first beast is supported by this second beast. This same beast with ten horns and seven heads, is described in chapter thirteen as rising out of the sea (symbolizing the populations of the earth), but there it is described as carrying out its own plans and purposes, whereas here it is, connected with the scarlet prostitute woman. The woman sitting upon this ten-horned beast is an emblem of a church united with a nation and government governing an empire and in the latter days, the two together having authority over much of the world. In ancient coins, Rome is pictured, as a woman sitting upon a lion. Here the woman is pictured sitting on a ten-horned scarlet coloured beast signifying its bloodthirsty cruelty. Perhaps it is also an allusion to the distinguishing colour of the robes and garments the Pope and the bishops, cardinals and clergy of the Roman Papal Church adorn themselves with, which is the same colour as the robes and garments that the ancient Roman emperors and magistrates adorned themselves with.

The seven heads: (v3) in Daniels interpretation of the image of the metal man that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon saw in a dream (also mentioned in Revelation chapter thirteen) the seven heads are interpreted to be seven worldly kingdoms. The foundation of these seven kingdoms is the red dragon that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world (Rev. 12:9) (Rev. 20:2). Upon this foundation the following seven major world kingdom arose: -

1. Egypt (the first of the seven heads).
2. Assyria (the second of the seven heads).
3. Babylon (the third of the seven heads).
4. Media Persia (the fourth of the seven heads).
5. Greece (the fifth of the seven heads).
6. Rome. (the sixth of the seven heads).
7. Ten mixed nations (the seventh of the seven heads).

These seven heads are all full of blasphemous names since they all worshipped idols and pagan gods and were aggressively hostile toward God's people Israel. In Daniels vision Rome is counted as the fourth kingdom for his vision starts at the head of the image which was gold and symbolises Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. In John's vision in chapter thirteen Rome is counted as the sixth kingdom for his vision begins at the first world empire which was Egypt. We know that Rome is built upon seven hills and that in Daniels vision the legs of the image symbolise Rome, which means that the empire of Rome flows down to the ten toes, this carries the idea that Rome in some form and shape will be split into ten and these ten will form the final world empire.

The Roman Empire: was symbolized in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel chapter two by the legs of iron and feet and toes partly of iron and partly of clay of a great image, signifying that the empire of Rome would become a divided kingdom, with some of the firmness of iron in it mixed with the soft clay. (Dan. 2:33) (Dan. 2:42).

The ten horns: (v3) some commentators have supposed that the ten horns refer to ten kingdoms that arose after the fall of the Roman empire, the problem with this idea is that should that be the case they would be accurately known, but a careful study shows that this is not so, there are more than twenty different lists given by various commentators and interpreters. Added to this there has never been a kingdom or empire of

nations on earth that has fully fulfilled all that is spoken of concerning this ten-horned beast. Following is a far more fitting and likely scenario. The two legs of iron symbolise that the Roman Empire would be divided into two branches, being the Eastern and Western empires of Rome. The ten toes (five on each foot) signify that each branch of the Roman Empire would consist of five kingdoms. The heart of the Eastern Empire (also called the Byzantine Empire) is modern day Turkey with its capital in Constantinople (formerly Byzantium) now modern-day Istanbul. Though there are various ideas who these kingdoms are, the four most likely scenarios are:

The first scenario: supposes that the five kings from the Western Roman Empire embraces the following countries:

1. Britain
2. France
3. Spain (or the whole Iberian Peninsula, including Portugal)
4. Italy
5. Germany

While the five kings from the Eastern Roman Empire embraces:

1. Turkey
2. Greece
3. Syria
4. Egypt (including part of Sudan)
5. Libya

One of the kings from one of these kingdoms is the 11th horn who we now know will be the man of lawlessness (man of sin in KJV) who the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. (2 Thess. 2:8).

The second scenario: there are around two hundred nations that are part of the United Nations, for these nations to submit to only ten kings, seems hardly likely, for this reason many today believe the ten kings symbolise ten regions with one designated leader representing their region, mimicking the Roman Empire. The final makeup of the ten regional unions could be something like the following:

1. European Union.
2. Eastern European Union.
3. North American Union.
4. South American Union.
5. Central American/Caribbean Union.
6. Middle Eastern/North African Union.
7. African/Sub-Saharan Union.
8. South and Central Asian Union.
9. Eastern and South-eastern Asian Union.
10. Asian Pacific Union.

The third scenario: supposes that the ten regions will unite the entire world under a single form of government embracing the following:

1. The European union.
2. The Mediterranean union.
3. The African union.
4. The union of south American nations.
5. The Slavic union.
6. The gulf cooperation council.
7. The south and south east Asian association.
8. The north American union.
9. The Caribbean community.
10. The Arab league.

The fourth scenario: supposes that the ten horns, symbolise the following ten countries:

1. Spain.
2. Portugal.
3. France.
4. Britain.
5. Austria.
6. Italy.
7. Luxemburg.
8. Switzerland.
9. Belgium.
10. Netherlands.

All ten working in concert with earth other to bring about a New World Order for the survival of the planet and humanity and to bring justice and peace to all countries. Any one of these scenarios (or something similar) will form the global New World Order in the latter days. It will be a self-appointed organisation that is most likely composed of scientists, economists, businessmen, international high civil servants, heads of state and former heads of state from all continents. They will deal with a variety of international political issues and will be convinced that the future of humankind must be controlled for the survival of the planet and the human population and for the establishment of permanent justice and peace.

This New World Order of ten regions with one designated leader representing their region, will replace the old form of Government with a form of government that will not only have controlling power at a global level, but also have the power to enforce laws across all countries in the world. (Mimicking the Roman Empire). To achieve this ideal global sovereignty, individual and independent nations must be destroyed and replaced with a form of government that will have:

- Control over the world's natural wealth to assure equal access and distribution for all countries.
- Control at a global level of bank institutions, the financial international organizations and foreign investments.
- Control at a federal and regional level of external relations and the international trade practiced by the member states.
- Control over its own economic and military institutions to intervene anywhere in the world to re-establish peace and democracy.
- Control over agents that it can use around the world to frequently create crises.
- Control of people in high positions of the media to promote the crisis and create confusion and fear to bring an end to the old and open the way for the new.

The future New World Order regimes will occupy the highest political, financial and religious positions in the world. No one should think that chaos, especially the present chaos in Europe, will prevent the New World Order from bringing about this final world empire, since it is a principle of life that the New World Order understands very clearly that chaos is necessary to justify making the changes that are needed to achieve a required end.

David Rockefeller wrote: some even believe we are part of a secret cabal working against the best interests of the United States, characterizing my family and me as 'internationalists' and of conspiring with others around the world to build a more integrated global political and economic structure—one world, if you will. If that's the charge, I stand guilty, and I am proud of it." (taken from David Rockefeller, *Memoirs*, p. 405). Throughout most of human history, political organization has been at a tribal, city and state level and in more recent centuries a subcontinental level, however, now with the advent of superior transportation, weapons and instant worldwide communication there is

for the first time the ability for a union of member states to organize at a worldwide level. As the pieces of the New World Order fall slowly but steadily into place, it will become clear that its pattern of government will be according to how the Roman Empire governed its vast empire.

The ten horns: (v3) horns are emblems of power and denote that the dragon in some respects represented ten combined powers. The picture is of a wild beast (the dragon), representing a concentrated single hostile form with all the antichristian forces and power and authority of successive empires that have opposed or oppressed the people of God, and sought to destroy their efforts for good. All evil has its root in a spirit that is at enmity with God, therefore, the dragon symbolises all the sovereignties and powers which have been influenced and guided by that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. (Rev. 12:9) (Rev. 20:2).

The Christian story has a happy ending: no one in Christ's Kingdom should fear the greatness, might and power of this ten-horned beast kingdom since Daniel in the following verses show us that the Christian story has a happy ending:

- A stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. (Daniel 2:34-35).

The stone cut out by no human hand, refers to Christ, crushing the antichristian ten horned beast kingdoms under his feet until there is nothing remaining of them. The stone became a great mountain refers to Christ's gathering the faithful to himself and returning in glory to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his millennial reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

All the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD: those who look to the bloodstained cross of Calvary understand that God is good and loving toward sinful man, and though we don't fully understand His ways upon the earth understand that His judgments are just. All who accept His love and grace must also accept that there will always be a certain amount of obscurity concerning God's ways on earth, but all will be made plain when the Lord Jesus Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) and the following beautiful verses are fulfilled in their total and perfect fullness:

- Truly, as I (the LORD) live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. (Num. 14:21).
- They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).
- The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken. (Isaiah 40:5).
- The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Hab. 2:14).

The ten Kingdoms in their original forms: the details of the history of the first couple of centuries following the fall of the last of the Caesars, in A.D. 476 AD, are obscure. Quite a few scholars of biblical prophecy have claimed to be able to identify the ten Kingdoms in their original forms, only to be refuted by later scholars who pointed out details either in the prophecies or in the histories of the nominated kingdoms that did not correlate. The proper identity of the original ten Kingdoms has naturally led to further research on the part of many historicist writers over the past few centuries. As time goes on, continuing study exposes the flaws in some of these interpretations and the difficulty, since there have been ten kingdoms present at different periods of time.

It is possible that the ten refers to the following ten Roman Emperors who are known for their great fame and also for their extreme persecution of Christians.

1. The first was Nero. A.D. 64 or 66.
2. The second was Domitian about A.D. 93.
3. The third was Trojan. A.D. 104.
4. The fourth was Hadrian. A.D. 125.
5. The fifth was Marcus Antoninus. A.D. 151.
6. The sixth was Septimius Severus A.D. 197.
7. The seventh was Maximinus. in A.D. 235, 236, 237.
8. The eighth was Decius in A.D. 250.
9. The ninth was Valerianus. A.D. 257.
10. The tenth was Dioclesian. A.D. 303.

This tenth and final persecution under Emperor Dioclesian lasted around ten years, it was the greatest persecution that the early church ever endured and though there were many other persecutions none of them lasted ten years. Since it is not uncommon in prophetic writings, and in the book of the Revelation, to put days for years, some supposes that the ten days the Smyrna church was about to suffer to be prophetically referring to the ten years of this last Roman persecution of Christians.

Emperor Constantine: when the Roman Empire started, there was no such religion as Christianity. In the 1st century Pontius Pilate, the prefect of the Roman province of Judaea had Jesus the founder of the Christian faith crucified. It took followers of Jesus a few centuries to gain enough strength that they were, able to win over Roman support which began in the early 4th century with emperor Constantine, who stopped all forms of Christian persecution and established religious tolerance in the Roman Empire. Constantine was actively involved in Christian policy-making and gave Christians privileges that they did not have under the rule of pagan Rome. He oversaw major Christian religious disputes and took on the title of Pontiff (meaning, Pope as leader of the Roman Catholic Church). Over time Christianity superseded the old Roman religions and gods and Christian church leaders, became increasingly influential, eroding the emperors' powers until A.D. 390 when Constantine declared Christianity the official religion of Rome.

During this era the Roman Catholic Church proclaimed itself to be the true church and the Mother church over all the earth and universal church over all nations and all churches. By the outward show of pompous, hypocritical and theatrical religion and the high exaltation of the Pope for his supposed infallibility and holiness and the splendour of the Vatican and its worldly riches, grandeur and pomp, the false doctrines and practices of the Papal Church of Rome has spread worldwide. This same self-exalting superior religious spirit the Popes manifest is the same spirit the great prostitute woman and the man of sin and lawlessness will manifest in the latter days and the same adoration the Popes receive from their followers, is the same adoration the great prostitute woman, the false prophet and the man of lawlessness will receive from their followers.

Papal Church likened to the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes: The Papal Church of Rome could be likened to the religious rulers of Jesus generation, the prideful and hypocritical chief priests, Pharisees and scribes believed they were doing the work of God, but were so spiritually blinded that they enticed a secular Roman king (Pilate) to have his soldiers crucify their own Messiah the Son of God. Likewise, the Papal Church of

Rome wrongly believes they are upholding the true word of God and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, but rather than being rewarded, they will bring condemnation upon themselves, like the spiritually blinded religious leaders of Jesus generation, brought condemnation upon themselves. For further information concerning the power and influence of the Papal Church, the Pope and the Vatican click or tap [Topics in Revelation](#) and select the title: Papal Church, the Pope and the Vatican.

Names of blasphemy: (v3) it could be rightly said of all the seven and ten empires mentioned above that they have been filled with blasphemous names, since all worshipped idols, pagan gods and were hostile toward God's people Israel, but the empire in focus now in this chapter is the final global empire or kingdom of this world. It has previously been said that this ten horned-beast had blasphemous names on its seven heads. (Rev. 13:1), and later was given a mouth uttering blasphemous words (Rev. 13:5), and now we read that it is full of blasphemous names, because its hostile opposition toward God is now about to develop itself in all its intensity. The fact that pagan Rome came upon the faithful with cruel blows of slaughter, not with allurements, making them drunk with the wine of her fornication as in (v2). Some feel that this beast cannot refer to the final secular ten horned beast, but this idea is not necessarily so, since these two beast are so closely intertwined with each other that they cannot be so easily divided, especially when it is considered that secular nations are full of blasphemous names, and that the Church of Rome has had a great influence in many of these nations.

Full of blasphemous names: carries the idea of being all covered over with blasphemous titles and deeds is a fitting title of the Roman Pontiff and a fitting description of Papal Rome. The woman is pictured sitting on a scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns full of blasphemous names (v3). This highlights how worldly this woman (symbolizing corrupt Christianity), has become, for the One she confesses to be her Saviour, calls his people to come out of the world, whereas she like a beautiful prostitute full of charm and allurements entices the world to join with her in spiritual adulteries. The blasphemous titles of the Roman pontiff have been abundantly multiplied throughout the world as have the Vatican's blasphemous teachings and practices of which the following are just a few:

- The Catholic Church is the true church and the Mother church over all the earth and universal church over all nations and all churches and the titles given to the Pope such as God on earth, the vicar of Christ, the head, and husband, and foundation of the church, etc.
- The high exaltation of the Pope. The cardinals place the Pope in God's temple on the altar to sit there, and they kneel and kiss his feet. This ceremony is called by Romish writers, "the adoration."
- The multitude of images of the virgin Mary and the worship of her.
- The wine mystically turning to the literal blood of Christ and the bread to his flesh during the Eucharist (Communion during Mass).
- Attending mass and strictly adhering to the church's holy days, ceremonial rites and keeping its religious practises and traditions saves a person and secures their salvation.
- Celibacy and forbidding marriage to priests and the teaching, that purgatory is a place or state of suffering where the souls of sinners go to atone for their sins before going to heaven.
- To receive forgiveness of sins followers must confess their sins to a human priest rather than to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The worship of the dead exalted to heavenly sainthood and praying to them for help and the teaching that priests have power to pardon sins and Popes have authority to exalt the dead to sainthood.

The Papal Church has gained outward recognition, great riches and support by leaning on the world power (the beast with ten horns) which in its turn uses the Papal Church for its own purposes. The Papal Church (the great prostitute (the great whore in KJV) (v1) will continue to flourish in its ecclesiastic capacity by embracing other religions and enticing various Christian denominations or organisations to join with her, until the Man of sin and the ten-horned beast turn against her.

Scarlet: comes from the Greek word (*kokkos*) from the kernel-shape of the insect, that is crimson-colored. The colour crimson is a strong bright, red colour, inclining to purple. It originally meant the colour of the kermes dye produced from a scale insect, *Kermes vermilio*, but the name is now sometimes also used as a generic term for slightly bluish-red colours that are between black and rose. The colour is expressive of the following four entities:

1. Roman emperors, princes and military commanders for it was the colour of the robes that they wore.
2. Popes for the inner and outer colour of the robes they wear is scarlet; their carriage is scarlet; the carpet on which they tread is scarlet; their hats and stockings are scarlet; their body guards, the cardinals, the bishops and the priests wear scarlet coloured robes; on great public festival processions scarlet cloth is suspended from the windows of the houses along which processions pass and the entire body of the carriage of the cardinals is scarlet as the strappings on the horses are. It is said that Pope Paul the Second ordered by a public decree, that no man should wear a scarlet cap but cardinals; that cloth of the same colour, is to be put upon their horses and mules when they rode them, and that the cardinals' hats should be of scarlet silk:"
3. Scarlet and crimson being bright red in colour is a perfect symbol of the bloodshed of the faithful martyrs throughout the nations at the hands of Pagan and Papal Rome and a perfect symbol of the cruelty and hostile tyranny the latter days ten-horned beast and the man of sin and lawlessness will inflict against those who belong to Christ's Kingdom.
4. The dragon, who is pictured as a great red dragon, (Rev. 12:3) the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world (Rev. 12:9).

No other colour than the colour scarlet, crimson, red could better represent these four ungodly entities

The woman riding the beast: the woman is pictured as riding on a beast. In the same way that a horse and its rider can be viewed as one and the same, because they both travel together in the same direction and for the same purpose. Likewise, the great prostitute woman sitting on the ten-horned beast, can be seen as one and the same thing in the same way that the horse and the rider spoken of in the following four seals can be, seen as one and the same:

- The white horse and its rider went forth conquering. (Rev. 6:2).
- The bright red horse and its rider takes peace from the earth. (Revelation 6:3-4).
- The black horse and its rider brought famine to the land. (Rev 6:5-6).
- The pale horse and its rider brought forth death. (Rev. 6:7-8).

Together the rider and the horse have the same purpose and bring about the same event whether it was war, the withdrawal of peace, famine or death, some suppose this woman to signify the whole world of wicked humanity, but the world of the wicked are the inhabitants of the earth, that this woman has made drunk with the wine of her fornication, obviously she that made them drunk, and those that were made drunk by her, cannot be the same. Added to this we are commanded to come out

of this Babylon, but we are not commanded to go out of the world, meaning, though we are in the world, we are not to partake of the following two entities:

1. The religious doctrines and practises of the woman drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, that holds in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and sexual immorality. (Rev. 17:4-6).
2. The sins of the Great City of Babylon spoken of in the following chapter, such as: involving ourselves in worldly religious, spiritual and mystical teachings contrary to the Gospel of Christ; oppressing others to gain great wealth and riches; bathing ourselves in excessive self-indulgent luxurious living; taking part in any form of sexual immorality (i.e., rape, orgies, prostituting oneself for financial gain, pedophilia, using other for selfish sexual gratification and such like things); allowing extreme pride and selfish ambition to be the motivating force in our lives; squandering excessive wealth on oneself without any thought for the poor and less fortunate and growing rich and famous upon the suffering of others. These all come under the banner of worldliness, we are all in the world, but if we do not partake of these things we are not part of the world.

The beast with seven heads (v3) for further information concerning these seven heads see verse nine (below).

The ten horns: (v3) are the very same beast which is described in the first part of chapter thirteen, (Rev. 13:1-10) while the woman, in some measure, answers to the two-horned beast like a lamb (i.e., the false prophet) mentioned in the second part of the same chapter (Rev. 13:11-18). These two beasts are together occurring at the same time with each other, during his last period.

REVELATION 17:4-7

Babylon the Great, Mother of Prostitutes and Abominations.

- **Revelation 17:4-7:** The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality.⁵ And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations."⁶ And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I marveled (wondered in KJV) greatly.⁷ But the angel said to me, "Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her.

The golden cup: (4) in this context signifies something that appears beautiful on the outside, but what it contains is full of toxic and poisonous abominations. Likewise, this great prostitute woman appears to be a woman of great beauty and charm on the outside. She is clothed in the royal robes of kings, emperors and princes, surrounded with religious statutes of Mary and paintings of world fame; she dwells in her own city of opulence, grandeur, pomp, power and great wealth, but is on the inside, like the golden cup is full of abominations. It is by her deceptive appearance of outward beauty and charm and her claim that she is the universal Mother of all churches and the upholder of the true faith and the true Gospel that she seduces others to drink with her from the golden cup of her abominations.

Upon her forehead: (v5) in contrast to the name, "Holy to the LORD," engraved on the gold the mitre that was worn on the high priest's forehead (Exod. 28:36), the name "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations," is pictured as a circlet around this woman's forehead. It is the expression of her nature, meaning that it was so clearly obvious, to those who have their name written in the

Lamb's Book of Life and before heaven that her mind and thoughts were opposed to the true word of God and the Gospel and her religious practises and traditions to His ways and laws that it was as if it was written on her forehead in blazing capitals. It carries the idea that her abominations before the eyes of God were notable and unmistakable. It should be noted here, that before the eyes of the world this great prostitute woman, will not appear as a beastly creature, but one of beauty and charm (i.e., proclaiming peace and the well-being of mankind and the planet) that will appeal to a great portion of the world. The allusion maybe to the ancient practise of prostitute woman who openly put their names over their doors, or wore them on their foreheads, so that men seeking such woman would easily know who they were. The name, "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," is expressive of the openness, and boldness of the Papal Church of Rome, in her idolatrous worship practises, the bread of the Eucharist/Communion that the worshippers partake of during mass is believed to turn to the literal flesh of Christ and the wine to his blood, and she openly declares, and invites and ensnares unsuspecting people to join with her in this mystical cultic practise.

Mystery: "Babylon the great," (v5) the name Babylon is not to be understood of the ancient city of Babylon, but of a society and a political entity under the guise of Christianity. In the same way that the great city Jerusalem was symbolically called Sodom and Egypt, (Rev. 11:1-19), likewise, in a spiritual and mystical sense the prostitute woman is called Babylon, because Babylon was not only full of worldliness and idolatry, but also brought about the ruin of Jerusalem and her inhabitants. The word mystery tells us the following two things:

1. The name is not literal, but symbolical.
2. Something lies behind the name; it denotes that there was something hidden and obscure that was not easily seen but will be made manifest in due time.

During the early years of Jesus generation, the Synagogue and its religious leaders the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes adorned themselves in royal robes, sat in the highest places of honour and filled their services with pomp and traditional religious ceremony. Too much of the nation they appeared to be holy men of God, that held in their hands the keys to the Kingdom of God and as such the people of Israel esteemed and honoured them. Yet, they plotted to have Jesus crucified and aggressively attempted to destroy his true church. Likewise, in the early era of the Roman Papal Church the Popes, Bishops and Cardinals appeared to much of the population to be holy men of God, as the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes did, yet they imprisoned, tortured and killed faithful Christians who did not bow down to their authority and exposed their false doctrines. The mystery in the context of this chapter would seem to refer to the ability of this great prostitute woman to not only appear to be God's universal church to the ten horned beast nations, but also to be holy and proclaiming the true word of God and yet be totally contrary to the teachings of Christ and the Gospel of grace. To those who truly understand the wonderful message of the bloodstained cross of Calvary and the Gospel of grace it is difficult to fully understand why people would embrace such a worldly religion. This is the great mystery, throughout all ages people of all nations have preferred to embrace false gods, mystical religious teachings and cults etc., rather than embrace the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations: (v5) in the language of prophecy spiritual apostasy is often referred to as adultery, it embraces hypocritical and prideful religious leaders, false preachers and ministers who proclaim God's word for their own gain and such like things. The title: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes," is not limited to Papal Rome only, but embraces all that is corrupt in Christendom. In the Old Testament the nation of Israel became as a prostitute woman before the LORD, the true believers were dispersed in and amongst the vast outward visible church. The apostle Paul said:

- Not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel (Rom. 9:6).

And John wrote:

- Many antichrists have gone out from us, but they were not of us. (1 John 2:18-19).

Likewise, Christendom has spread throughout the world, but not all within it are true Christians in the same way that not all descended from Israel belong to Israel and that not all who went out from the apostles teaching were of the apostles. The church of true believers is dispersed in and amongst the visible world of Christendom spread throughout the earth.

The title, Babylon: embraces worldliness in extent and contents and is in Scripture often symbolized by the name of the famous ancient world city, "Babylon." It comprehends the external breath, width and depth of the whole world and conformity to it. It is the call of the church to let her light shine upon all the earth, but as time moves forward toward the latter days much of Christendom in attempts to Christianise the world, has instead allowed itself to be seduced by the world. Due to this worldliness, the churches universality or catholicity is not that of the New Jerusalem the Mother of all the faithful spoken of in the following verses:

- I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Rev. 21:2).
- The Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. (Gal. 4:26).

But, the Mother of Babylon, the world-wide prostitute city. In the same way that Babylon was destroyed, and the Jews returned and restored Jerusalem by the order Cyrus (the LORD'S anointed shepherd) (Isaiah 44:28) (Isaiah 45:1), so our anointed Shepherd will bring the true and faithful church the New Jerusalem the Bride of Christ to her husband at his coming.

Mother of prostitutes: (v5) meaning she is not just a prostitute herself, but one that breeds up prostitutes, and nurses them up to idolatry and error and teaches them to communicate it to others from generation to generation.

Drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: (v6) carries the idea of celebrating over their death. The following chapter we are told that:

- In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth." (Rev. 18:24).

This manifests the cruel spirit of persecution that marked old Pagan and Papal Rome. Though both Pagan and Papal Rome shed the blood of many faithful Christians and rejoiced over their deaths, the expression "drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," should not be limited to mean that all the blood shed on the earth would be found in Pagan or Papal Rome, but that from heavens view the dominant persecuting spirit, whatever nation or confederacy of nations it is in, is driven by the same hostile spirit that killed the martyrs of Jesus during the era of Pagan and Papal Rome.

I saw her, I marvelled (wondered in KJV) greatly: (v6) this does not mean that it was wonderful to see the vision, but that it was stunning to the mind of John to see this woman representing Christendom being in such close alliance with a secular worldly ten-horned beast. The true calling of the church is to cleave to Christ and become like him in character, and its right state is to be higher than that of the world. When it falls, to the level of the world it sinks before heavens eyes lower than the godless state of the world, so when John saw the faithful bride become a prostitute, it was to him a monstrous thing, and it is in this sense he wondered and marvelled as his godly eyes saw much of the church conforming to the world. It is easy to understand why such a godly man would be stunned with such amazement.

The Beast that is Not and is About to Rise from the Bottomless Pit.

- **Revelation 17:8-10:** The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction (perdition in KJV). And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.

The expression, "he was, and is not and yet is," (v8) carries the following three ideas:

1. **He was:** means the power before this had an existence.
2. **It is not:** means that it had become practically extinct.
3. **Yet is:** means the power though greatly diminished was not fully dead.

It refers to seven great powers of the world that are separated from the ten world powers represented by the horns (called kings, Rev. 17:12). This beast that was, and is not and yet is," symbolise seven great world kingdoms that have had a major influence upon Israel, the first being Egypt then, Assyria, Babylon, Media Persia, Greece, Rome with the seventh being the final global antichristian beast powers. This vision strongly resembles Daniels vision in chapter seven. There Daniel saw four great beasts different from each other rising-up in succession from the great sea that four winds of heaven had stirred up (Dan. 7:2-3), signifying the four nations springing up out of a state of commotion, disorder and anarchy. In Daniel's vision, the ten refers the last period of world power, that rises-up out of the fourth kingdom (Rome) which is, connected with and reaches forward to the seventh and final head of the beast, as the following verse shows.

- The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. (the eighth beast). (Rev. 17:12).

Here in chapter seventeen the angel tells John that the beast that he saw is seven kings, five who have fallen, one is and the other has not yet come, and when he does come, he will remain for only a short while. (Rev. 17:10). The following list, shows who the seven kings of John's vision are; who the five that have fallen refer to; who the fourth kingdom of Daniel's vision is and who the one to come refers to. The first of the seven is: -

1. **Egypt (fallen):** is the first great power of John's vision, that had major influence over the people of Israel. The Hebrew people were in bondage to Egypt for over four hundred years, and when God by mighty plagues bought them out of Egypt a nation (Israel) was born.
2. **Assyria (fallen):** is the second great power of John's vision, that had major influence over the people of Israel. Assyria's armies invaded the land of Samaria and overthrew the ten tribes of Israel dwelling there and ruled over them.
3. **Babylon (fallen):** is the third great power of John's vision, and the first world kingdom, that Daniel saw in his vision of the iron man symbolised by his head of gold (Dan. 2:32) (Dan. 2:37) and a lion that had eagle wings, that were torn off (Dan. 7:4), meaning it could not fly or stand up, to arise again on its feet, but had to be lifted-up by others and once standing again it was given the mind of a man (v17-18). The inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the land of Judah had become so corrupt God used Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon as His servant to bring His judgment upon Jerusalem and the land of Judah. The armies of Babylon invaded Jerusalem burned the city destroyed the temple and took the people captive for seventy years. (Jeremiah 25:8-9).

4. **Media Persia (fallen):** is the fourth great power of John's vision, and the second world kingdom, that Daniel saw in his vision of the iron man symbolised by his silver chest and silver arms (Dan. 2:32) (Dan. 2:39), and by a ferocious bear destroying and conquering multitudes of nations. (Dan. 7:17-18). Media existed as a kingdom in its own right prior to Persia, but Cyrus the Great king of Persia toppled the Median rulers and turned Media into the Kingdom of Persia. The LORD not only called Cyrus the king of Persia His anointed shepherd and called him by name, but also equipped Cyrus for battle (Isaiah 45:1, 28). Added to this the LORD says, even though Cyrus (a secular king) does not know Him, He will go before him (Isaiah 45:2-3). Cyrus invaded and defeated Babylon and gave Israel written permission to return to their homeland and rebuild their beloved city Jerusalem and the temple of God.
5. **Greece (fallen):** is the fifth great power of John's vision, and the third world kingdom, that Daniel saw in his vision of the iron man symbolised by the middle and thighs being bronze (Dan. 2:32) (Dan. 2:39), and by a leopard with four heads (i.e., four kings over four kingdoms) and four wings on its back with enormous governing authority and ruling power, influence and control. (Dan. 7:17-18). Media Persia fell to Alexander the Great after which the empire of Greece became firmly fixed under his control, and the city of Alexandria grew into one of the greatest cities of the ancient world. Alexandria's death created enormous problems, because there were no plans for a succession, so his empire went to the four strongest generals who were, Ptolemy 1 the King of Egypt, Cassander King of Macedonia, Lysimachus King of Thrace and Seleucus I, King of Syria. Although Alexander is not named in the Bible, but he is described prophetically in Daniel chapter eight as the great horn between the he-goat's eyes. (Dan. 8:5-8) (Dan. 8:20-22).
6. **Rome (one is):** is the sixth great power of John's vision, and the fourth world kingdom, that Daniel saw in his vision of the iron man symbolised by his legs, feet and toes, (Dan. 2:33) (Dan. 2:40-41) (Dan. 2:42-43). It, is said to be different from the previous kings and their kingdoms, in that it appears terrifying and exceedingly strong. It had iron teeth and anything it didn't destroy with its teeth it crushed with its feet. (Daniel 7:7). This is the legs, feet and toes that Daniel saw in his vision in chapter two which was Rome the fourth world kingdom (Dan. 2:40-41) (Dan. 2:42-43). The legs of iron continue down to the feet and ten toes mixed with iron and clay, which signifies that the final beast is Rome with all its affiliated nations (some strong some weak) and Papal power extending on through history to the last days when it will in some form rise again as the final world power. The early history of the small, but powerful city-state of Rome began with its gradual domination of Mediterranean powers, especially many of the states and nations of Greece. They built up their empire between the 3rd century BC and the 3rd century AD., and at Rome's height the Empire stretched from North-Western Europe to the Near East and encompassed all the lands of the Mediterranean.

Rome and Religion: Roman state religion was considered the formal link between men and the gods. Their religion was a type of contract between Rome and the highest god amongst all their gods. They held that their highest god would look after Rome's security and progress, providing the state looked after the god's needs by supplying the proper sacrifices and worship. In (Rev.13:2) John sees a ten-horned beast rise-up out of the sea, like a leopard, a bear and a lion which are all symbols of Daniels vision with the leopard symbolizing Greece, the bear Media Persia and the lion Babylon. The natural idea in these visions is that in the latter days the ten-horned beast will embrace the nations of the ancient Roman empire.

7. **The final world power (still to come):** is the seventh great power of John's vision symbolised by the ten horns of the beast and is the sixth world kingdom, that Daniel saw in his vision of the iron man

symbolised by his ten toes. Counting from Babylon the first kingdom of Daniels vision Rome is the fourth Kingdom, counting from Egypt the first kingdom of John's vision, Rome is the sixth kingdom (falling one short of God's perfect number seven). In John's vision Rome, is the successor of the five that had fallen (1) Egypt, (2) Assyria, (3) Babylon, (4) Media-Persia and (5) Greece). All these great world-kingdom were of the same mind and the same spirit in that they were all founded in unrighteousness (i.e., all worshipped pagan gods and were in violation of Gods law). In the previous chapter these beast kingdoms are collectively pictured as a great red dragon (Rev. 12:3), with seven royal heads, symbolising that they are of the same antichristian spirit and aggressively hostile toward Israel, and by extension the church. Historically Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media Persia, Greece and Rome were all major capital cities and empires of the world. Both Daniel and John's vision highlight the truth that that the spirit of the dragon has flowed through history and will continue to do so from generation to generation until its evil power climaxes in the latter days of the final antichristian beast kingdoms and the stone that was cut from a mountain by no human hand (the Lord Jesus Christ), breaks in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold and brings all these kingdoms to an end, after which God's Kingdom which will never be destroyed will stand forever. (Daniel 2:44-45).

The seven heads (1) Egypt, (2) Assyria, (3) Babylon, (4) Media Persia, (5) Greece, (6) Rome and (7) the ten toes (mixed empire) are all full of blasphemous names since they all worshipped idols and pagan gods and where aggressively hostile toward God's people Israel. In Daniels vision Rome is counted as the fourth kingdom for his vision starts at the head of the image which was gold and symbolises Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. In John's vision in chapter thirteen Rome is counted as the sixth kingdom for his vision begins at the first world empire which was Egypt. We know that Rome is built upon seven hills and that in Daniels vision the legs of the image symbolise Rome, which means that the empire of Rome flows down to the ten toes, prophetically this carries the idea that Rome in some form and shape will rise again as ten nations (or an alliance of ten sovereign nations or countries, (perhaps something like NATO today) and these ten will form the final world empire. The feet and toes of the great image are partly of iron and partly of clay signifying that latter day ten horned empire would be made up of some strong nations and some weaker nations (Dan. 2:33) (Dan. 2:42).

For further information concerning this final beast power that was, and is not, and is about to rise and who they might be, see the notes under the title:

- The Ten Horns, following (v3) (above).

The Book of life: (v8) the expression, "whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world," refers to those who are truly the friends of God and carries the idea that they will not be enticed or seduced into admiring this beast, or in bowing down to it.

Shall ascend out of the bottomless pit: (v8) following are the only five time the bottomless pit is mentioned in Scripture:

1. The bottomless pit is opened, and smoke darkens the sun and the air, and those who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads are torment as if stung by a scorpion. (Chapter 9).
2. A king named Apollyon (meaning destruction) arises from the bottomless pit (Chapter 9).
3. A beast arises from the bottomless pit and makes war on God's witnesses and conquers and kills them. (Chapter 11).
4. A beast arises from the bottomless pit and goes into destruction. (Chapter 17).

5. The dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, is bound in the bottomless pit. (Chapter 20).

From these five, it becomes clear that, torment, destruction, war and the dragon, the serpent, the devil and Satan are all associated with it. The idea is that evil comes up from the earth, symbolised in these verses by the bottomless pit, in contrast to this good and Christ comes down from heaven, which highlights the holiness and goodness of his character and nature and his good works, while wickedness and the evil one comes up from below highlighting his evil character and wicked works.

Go into destruction (perdition in KJV): (v8) carries the idea that the end of this beast will be destruction. This is the same blasphemous beast spoken of in (Rev, 13:1), with seven heads and ten horns that is influenced by the dragon, (Rev. 12:3). There are two enormously powerful beasts, the first being the great prostitute woman and the second, the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries the woman (Rev. 17:7) (i.e., supports her). The beast that John saw is a reference back to (v3 above), for further insight into these two beasts see the notes following verse three at the beginning of this chapter and onward.

REVELATION 17:9-10

The Seven Heads are Seven Mountains on which the Woman Sits.

- **Revelation 17:9-10:** This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; ¹⁰they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while.

Here the great prostitute woman full of abominations (v4) is said to sit on seven mountains which refers to Rome, while the expression, "was, and is not, and is about to rise," (v8) refers to the ten-horned beast (ten toes in Daniels vision), which arises out of Rome, being the fourth kingdom of Daniels vision and the sixth kingdom of Johns vision. This clearly evidences by two witnesses that, both secular (or pagan) Rome, and religious (or Papal) Rome is the focus. Rome is the only city in the world founded upon seven hills (mountains in KJV) were the metropolis of its empire is seated. The names of the seven hills are:

1. Palatinus.
2. Quirinalis.
3. Aventinus.
4. Celius.
5. Viminalis.
6. Esquilinus.
7. Capitolinus.

Both this chapter and chapter thirteen show that though there are two distinct beast powers (the prostitute woman and the ten-horned beast) together they form one great formidable power. Though they manifest themselves differently they are both heavily influenced by the great dragon that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. (Rev. 12:9) (Rev. 20:2), and because of this, could be given the same name, "the beast," even though they outwardly appear somewhat different to each other.

This calls for a mind with wisdom: (v9) the interpretation is given in such an obscure manner, that it is only understood by the mind that has spiritual wisdom (i.e., biblical wisdom), while it continues to remain to the carnal mind a mystery, in the same way that the Gospel itself does.

The Beast that Was and is Not, is an Eighth.

- **Revelation 17:11:** As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction.

The eighth: (v11) this eighth refers to the man of sin spoken of in the following verses:

- The man of lawlessness (man of sin in KJV), the son of destruction (of perdition in KJV), who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God, who the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. (2 Thess. 2:3-8).

He arises out of the ten, which is the final seventh empire made up of ten mixed nations or ten consortiums of regions with one designated leader representing their region, working together. He does not fall like the other seven, but is destroyed, going to his own destruction (perdition in KJV), by the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This eighth can be counted as being of the seventh in the following ways:

- Counting from the first world empire: (1) Egypt (2) Assyria (3) Babylon (4) Media Persia (5) Greece (6) Rome (7) Ten nations with the eighth being the head of the ten in continuing order and in keeping with the character, sovereignty, entity and power of the previous seven and in this sense, can be viewed as a continuance of one and same sovereign power.
- The underlying spirit of the seven kingdoms was idolatry and hostility toward Christianity and persecution against Christians, which is the same spirit of the eighth, so in this sense it is of the seventh.
- Though all seven kingdoms came to ruin, their ungodly character remains and the eighth, embraces this same character and in this sense, is of the seven.
- The eighth is not merely one of the seven restored, but a new person that embodies all the God-opposed features of the previous seven manifested in the eighth, (i.e., the man of sin and lawlessness) and in this sense, he is of the seven.

He is spoken of as the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth, because he arises out of the ten kingdoms that came out of Rome which at the time of John was not, but in the latter days will again emerge as the final world power, symbolized in Daniels interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image of the metal man whose legs of iron symbolize ancient Rome, which reach down to the feet with ten toes symbolizing the rise of Rome in some form in the latter days of which the man of sin and lawlessness will be the head. It is in this sense he is referred to as the eighth of the seven previous kingdoms symbolized by the different metals of the image, the first being (1) Egypt, (2) Assyria, (3) Babylon, (4) Media Persia, (5) Greece, (6) Rome, (7) ten mixed nations symbolized by the toes, and lastly the eighth the man of sin and lawlessness.

He is the final antichrist, the lawless one whom the Lord will destroy with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:3).

Ten Kings who Hand Over their Royal Authority to the Beast.

- **Revelation 17:12-13:** And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast (the eighth beast). ¹³These are of one mind and hand over their power and authority to the beast.

The ten horns (v12-14), the ten kings, have received no kingdom as, yet. This means that they were not in existence at the time of John's vision, which history shows that they weren't since the Roman empire was not divided into ten kingdoms until sometime after it had become Christian during the time of Emperor Constantine. Though ten kings and kingdoms may have been before there has not previously been ten kingdoms or horns that have embraced the prostitute woman's religion and submitted to her authority. She strengthens them, and they in turn strengthened her. It is upon the seventh or last head of the beast (being Rome) that the ten horns are seen growing, but not, like the previous successive heads before them, but growing together as kingdoms.

This ten-horned empire is the Roman empire in its seventh and last form of government. At this present time these ten beast empires are growing, but will not be established in their full power, prior to the rise and full establishment of the prostitute woman.

One hour: (v12) carries the idea of a definite limited short duration of time, and that ten kings and the beast are working together at the same time, and for the same length of time.

Have not yet received royal power, as kings for: (v12) this does not necessarily mean that these empires are not existing since the focus is upon the fact that they have not yet received royal authority and power.

Ten horns: (v12) symbolise ten kings, but not necessarily, as we understand individual kings, but rather as:

- Ten empires, nationalities or governments each with their own leader working together with the man of sin and lawlessness.
- Ten groups made up of various nations, with each group of nations having their own leader, that work together as a counsel of ten with the man of sin and lawlessness as the head.
- Ten consortiums of regions each with a designated leader representing their region, working together with the man of sin and lawlessness.

Though the ten are separated powers, they are one in mind. This consortium of powerful ungodly nations will manifest on a grand scale the insidious spirit of antichristian sin, the flesh and worldliness. United together with one mind they move as this eighth beast (the man of sin and lawlessness) directs them, which is to foolishly attempt to make war against the Lamb.

REVELATION 17:14

The Lamb Conquers the Beast, for He is King of Kings.

- **Revelation 17:14:** They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful."

The ten kings and the princes and states aligned with them will give their power and strength (armies and weapons of war) to the man of sin and lawlessness (v13). It is certain that the secular ten horned kings will differ in many respects, but despite their political differences they will give their authority and power (i.e., armies and weapons of war) over to the man of sin and lawlessness. The man of sin and lawlessness with the ten kings will make war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them (Rev.

17:13-14), which clearly shows that though certain events may have been partially fulfilled in the past, they will be more fully fulfilled in a future time. This final world power attempts to annihilate the true church of Christ, but the true church with its Saviour and King will in the end prevail and victoriously triumph over them.

The Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings: (v14) this will not be a battle that is fought with weapons of war, for in Thessalonians we are told:

- The lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. (2 Thess. 2:1-17)

When the chief priests and elders sent Judas, and a great crowd with swords and clubs to Jesus they seized him and one of those who were with Jesus drew his sword and cut the ear of a servant of the high priest off, then Jesus said to him:

- Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword.
⁵³Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? (Matt. 26:52-53)

In Ephesians we are told when God raised Jesus from the dead, He seated him at His right hand:

- In heavenly places far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²²And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. (Ephes. 1:20-23).

In chapter nineteen we read of One whose name is, "The Word of God," returning on a white horse as the King of kings and Lord of lords to judge and makes war and that:

- From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. (Rev. 19:15)

This means when Jesus returns, he will return with all the power of his heavenly Father available to him. there will be no need for weapons of war, Jesus will speak the word and the armies gathered against him will be destroyed, perhaps by an earthquake like the earthquake that swallowed Korah and his company:

- The ground under them (Korah, Dathan, and Abiram) split apart. ³²And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods. ³³So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. (Num. 16:31-33).

Or by great hail stones like the ones spoken of in the following verse:

- Great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe. (Rev. 16:21).

The important thing to know here is not how Christ destroys these armies, since we are not told, but that he does, not by weapons of war, but by speaking and by what he says he brings some form of destruction upon those gathered against him.

Those with him are called and chosen and faithful: (v14) not the external call by the ministry of the Gospel, for the Gospel calls many to Christ, and yet not all accept the invitation and call, but the call of the Spirit which convicts those with a right and humble heart attitude of sin that brings about true repentance of the heart and a change of behaviour that honours God and brings a good testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ.

They are those:

- Who are faithful followers and whose names are written in the Lambs Book of Life.
- Who are not enticed by pride or driven by greed, fame and self-glory and who stand against the admirers of the beast.
- Who have integrity of heart and hold fast to the true Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Who endeavour to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Who by faith trust in Christ's righteousness to be counted worthy and not their own self-righteousness?

By these godly traits they prove they are on Christ's side and will follow him even unto death; and by their godly character show that they are of those who are chosen and called faithful even to the end.

The great question for us all is: "when do these ten powers make war with the Lamb?" To proclaim a time or date would be anti-scriptural and foolish, all we can say for sure is that it will be during a time when the collective consciousness of the world is worldliness, loose morals, oppression of workers (especially the poor) to enrich the wealthy and a time when evolution is favoured rather than God and there is an obvious absence of God in society, especially of Christ. Whenever, nations or individuals allow the secular spirit of worldliness to influence all their thinking and all that they do, they have no interest in God or with Christ. The following verses led us to believe that this collective spirit of hostility toward Christ will reach its climax on the eve of his return in glory:

- On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.
¹⁷Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, ¹⁸to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great." ¹⁹And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. (Rev. 19:16-19).

When the face of the earth is covered with lawlessness, crime, drugs and anti-Christian laws the way will be paved for such a battle. The great crisis will be between secularity and spirituality, between the kingdoms of man and the kingdoms of God. It is not necessary to define the ten kings, since the number ten symbolise completeness and when this battle is completed a New World of righteousness, justice, joy and peace will begin with Christ and his government ruling over the remaining subdued nations.

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon: saw in a dream an image of a man made of various metals that symbolised the seven major world kingdoms from Egypt to the end of the world as we know it. The following verses are Daniels interpretation of the end of Nebuchadnezzars amazing prophetic dream:

- As you (Nebuchadnezzar) looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. (Dan. 2:34).
- In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, (Dan. 2:44).

The stone smote the image upon his feet (i.e., upon the ten toes), which are spoken of in the following verses:

- As you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. ⁴²And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so

they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, (Daniel 2:41-44).

The ten toes (ten horns in Revelation) are here interpreted to be ten kings. After these ten toe Kingdoms are crushed by the stone, signifying the Lord Jesus Christ, there are no more worldly kingdoms, since the kingdom that immediately follows is the millennial Kingdom age of the Lord Jesus Christ. This truth shines a spotlight upon the fact that the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy refers to the final world kingdom prior to Christ's return. Though many commentators and theologians have presented for valid reasons these ten toes (horns in Revelation) to have been ten kings, nations and powers of the past they can only be, seen as partial fulfillments, since the final and complete fulfilment must be the final worldly global government of nations prior to Christ return in glory.

NOTE: it should be mentioned that the spirit of the man of sin and lawlessness, has been in existence from the time of the fall of Adam and has manifested itself in various powerful world kings and rulers, which can be viewed as a prelude to the final man of sin who will be openly manifested to the global world when the prostitute woman and Babylon the Great reach their peak. He will be different from all others in that he will exalt himself above all that is called God, meaning above all religious organisations, churches and individuals who confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is the King and Saviour.

The dragon, the serpent, the devil and Satan: it is said that the dragon, that ancient serpent, the devil and Satan) (Rev. 20:2) gave his power to the beast as well as his seat of authority (Rev. 13:4). This on the surface seems to imply that the dragon, the serpent, the devil and Satan have control of the future destiny of the world. But it should be kept in mind that the high and exalted position of kings and world rulers is from God, who at, this time patiently suffers evil kings and rulers and gives them up to the foolishness of their own will and own egotistic and vain ambitions to rule the whole world. Throughout the history of mankind kings and rulers have vainly strived to establish a vast global empire that controls all nations and has authority over the whole world with themselves being the head of such an empire. However, as much as they might plot, plan and strive to achieve such an empire the Scriptures clearly tells us that there will only ever be one King that will establish himself as King of all the earth, and his name is the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God.

REVELATION 17:15

The Prostitute Woman Seated, upon Multitudes and Nations.

- **Revelation 17:15:** And the angel said to me, "The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.

Water is fluid and forever moving, in this context they symbolize the easily-moved passions and the fickle emotions of the masses whose heart and belief is not founded upon the solid rock, but upon the false teachings and practises of the great prostitute woman.

REVELATION 17:16

The Ten Kings and the Beast Hate the Prostitute and Burn Her.

- **Revelation 17:16:** And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast (the eighth beast) (v11) will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour (eat her

flesh in KJV) her flesh and burn her up with fire. ¹⁷for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.

NOTE: though the title: "The Great Prostitute Woman," primarily refers to the Vatican City, its Pope its bishops, cardinals, clergy and priests, but also embraces:

- All ecclesiastical organisations and churches (Roman, Greek, Protestant etc,) and religious groups that claim to have the truth but have twisted and distorted the Gospel and teach salvation by works.
- All who claim to be Christian, but inwardly have abandoned the love they first had (Rev. 2:4) to Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom and instead, have set their heart and affections upon worldly riches, fame, power and importance.
- All that is corrupt within the entire global world of Christendom and contrary to Christ's word and the Gospel.

The ten-horned beast: refers to powerful and dominant secular world kingdoms, nations or confederacies of nations.

The beast: refers to the eighth beast spoken of in verse eleven, the man of sin and lawlessness who belongs to the seven. Concerning him Paul told the Thessalonians:

- Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day (the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ) will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness (man of sin in KJV) is revealed, the son of destruction, 2 Thess. 2:3

For further information concerning the man of sin and lawlessness, see the notes under the title: "The Beast that Was and is Not, it is an Eighth, but it Belongs to the Seven," following (v11) (above). The purpose God has put in the heart of the ten kings: (v17) is to be of one mind and hand over their royal power and military might to the man of sin and lawlessness, until the words of God are fulfilled (v17), meaning until Christ returns (v12-14).

They will devour her flesh (eat her flesh in KJV): (v16) means that the man of sin and lawlessness with the ten horned beast nations will turn against the great prostitute woman and strip her of her adornments; take all her property; bring to ruin her dignities, popes, bishops, priests and clergy etc; carry away her goods and expose all her secret and hidden wicked works and her lies and deceptive character and in this way completely-destroy her so that it could be rightly said that the flesh of the beast was fully consumed. The image is most likely taken from wild animals eating the flesh of their prey which highlights the utter destruction of this corrupt religious power.

They will burn her up with fire: (v16) fire brings to ashes everything in its path and is therefore often used as a symbol of complete annihilation, utter destruction and total extinction. When the words, burn her with fire are added to the expressions, make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh (eat her flesh in KJV) (v16) it denotes absolute ruin and total-destruction. Burn her with fire alludes to the following Levitical law:

- The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by whoring, profanes her father; she shall be burned with fire. (Leviticus 21:9).

Under the law if the daughter of a priest behaved as a prostitute she was to be burned with fire. In the context of the great prostitute woman it carries the idea that after her flesh was eaten, what remained would be thrown into the fire and consumed, highlighting the absolute and total-destruction of this formidable religious power. God used Egypt, to bring His judgment upon rebellious Israel and then Egypt itself was punished, likewise, Babylon was used as God's servant to punish rebellious Judah

and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Jer. 25:1-9 and chapter 49, 50, 51, 52), and then God used Cyrus king of Persia who He called His anointed shepherd who will fulfil His purpose. (Isaiah 44:28) (Isaiah 45:1) to punish Babylon and set His people free. In the same manner God will use the ten-horned world power and the man of sin and lawlessness to bring His judgment upon the great prostitute woman and afterward Christ will destroy the ten-horned world power and the man of sin and lawlessness. It could be said that the following three are Satan's trinity.

1. The prostitute woman and the false prophet (i.e., the two-horned beast).
2. The ten-horned beast.
- 3 The man of sin and lawlessness.

REVELATION 17:18

The Woman the City that has Dominion Over the Kings of Earth.

- **Revelation 17:18:** And the woman that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth."

The two-horned beast, the false prophet and Pope of the Church of Rome does not have military might over the ten-horned nations, but it does have religious authority and power that these ten kings acknowledge and submit to. At the time of John, the city that reigned over the kings of the earth; was the metropolis of the Roman empire, to which the majority of the world was subject; and therefore, it is called all the world as the following verse shows:

- In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. (Luke 2:1).

At the time of John kings and emperors were the heads of Rome, but since the time of emperor Constantine all the kings of the Roman empire were under the jurisdiction of Papal Rome of which Constantine was the self-appointed head Pontiff. Popes, became the rulers and heads of the new Rome and the condition of the beast was changed. The woman is Rome, in a new form and shape of its dominion, she is the great city of Babylon of the past living again in Rome in a new shape and form. It would be difficult to find a better title, "the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth," that designates the city of Rome more clearly and more perfectly.

Added to this, almost all theologians and expositors agree in supposing that the great prostitute woman is pagan Rome which later became corrupted Christian Rome which began during the reign of emperor Constantine who made it illegal to persecute Christians and declared Christianity the state religion of Rome and himself its head Pontiff. Even today almost all kings and rulers of the earth visit the Vatican and pay homage to the Pope. The chapter shows that no matter how great a city, is and how wealthy and powerful when it comes before God all its great glory, wealth and power counts as nothing. For purposes which God sees to be wise, He allows Papal Roman and the nations of Europe and their allies to have a wide and strong influence over the nations of the earth, yet, in His own appointed time, the very powers that have sustained the prostitute woman that has dominion over the kings of the earth will combine and become its enemies. The mighty powers of Europe have at various times led hostile armies to the very gates of Papal Rome and will in the latter days again be aroused in a hostile manner against her. Until that day her large control over a great part of the nations of Europe and her influence over many others from generation to generation will continue, until those she has rode on the backs of for so long turn against her and destroy her.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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