

Revelation Chapter 17 Continued

Revelation 17:9 "And here [is] the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth."

The "seven heads" of the Beast represent "seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth". The city of Rome was known throughout the ancient world as a city built on seven hills or mountains. John notes that the wise "mind", will make the proper identification. The woman apparently represents idolatrous, anti-God civilization, centered at Rome but with worldwide influence (compare verse 15). The identification of the seven heads as Rome shows that the Beast will have his major base of operations at Rome also (compare Dan. 9:26), the "people of the prince that shall come" are the Romans (in A.D. 70).

"Seven mountains": The Greek words often used of hills (Matt. 5:1; 15:29; John 6:15; 8:1). Many commentators interpret this expression to mean Rome, which sits on 7 hills. It is true that the final worldwide system of false religion includes, but is not necessarily limited to Rome; but specifically, the 7 mountains in context likely symbolize the 7 kingdoms and their kings of verse 10.

We will see in this scripture that the city of seven hills is where this evil system has its headquarters. This is a marvel to the world who are not fully aware of the implications of the Bible it shows. Of course, the bride of Christ, the Christians who have their names written in the Lamb's book of life since the world began, are aware of all of this and why it happened.

The antichrist is a copycat. Just as God has a trinity, so does the devil. God's trinity is: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Devil's trinity is: antichrist, beast, and false prophet. You see, the false prophet has to be involved in leading a church. He will be proclaiming Jesus on one hand, but denying the power on the other.

It is interesting to note that the Catholic church and the National Council of Churches united in the early 1950's to make the church one physically. God does want us to be one, but not physically. He wants us to be one in the Spirit. There are people in all churches that will be saved as individuals. We must remove ourselves from the apostate church if possible.

This National Council of churches has come out with a Bible that waters Jesus down to the point that it indicates that Jesus is not God. This is very dangerous. They would have us believe that Jesus was just a man walking down here on earth. My Bible says He was Immanuel; "God with us" (Matthew 1:23).

It says (in 2 John 1:7) "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

In (John 1:14) we read "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

You see by all this, that Jesus was in fact God the Word, who came and inhabited the body of a man, so that it could be possible for His body to die on the cross for our sins. Anyone or anything that denies Jesus as God manifest in the flesh is not of God. The sad thing is, that most people proclaiming to know Jesus have accepted this new Bible and its teachings.

Every time you pick up a brochure on Rome, the very first thing they tell you is that they are the city of seven hills. Here we see that the headquarters for the ten common market nations is here as well. You see anything that you would like to believe here, is located in Rome. The "wisdom" of this is that anyone, who can read a brochure or hear an advertisement on Rome, knows what is spoken of here.

The identification of the seven heads as Rome shows that the Beast will initially have his major base of operations at Rome. It is thought by many studying the end times that after the Harlot has been killed, the beast will move his headquarters to the actual city of Babylon during the last three and one half years.

Revelation 17:10 "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, [and] the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."

"Seven kings": Representatives of the 7 great world empires (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and that of the Antichrist). Compare Daniel's image in (Dan. 2:37-45).

"Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come": When John wrote this, the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Media-Persian and Greek empires had gone out of existence; Rome still existed, and the Antichrist's empire had not yet come. When it does, it will be brief (12:12; 13:5), and he will end in perdition (verse 11; see note on verse 8).

This could speak of the empires of old such as the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and the Greeks which make up the past tense kingdoms. The power to be, when this was written by John, was the Roman government which falls shortly thereafter and then is restored again in the ten common market nations banning together, reviving the old Roman empire.

The seven heads of this beast mentioned, according to Tim LaHaye, are kings of the Roman Empire. The best definition is that they represent five kings up to the time of John; the sixth, Domitian, was the Roman king at the time of John, who then skips forward to the end time for the seventh head, which will bring the king of the revived Roman Empire. This Roman Empire was in great power; it fell, and will be revived again. Then (see verse 11), as this is describing the antichrist who will be the eighth and final king who will rule the entire world (kingdom).

A rather interesting scripture regarding the Holy Spirit's description of the beasts that represent kingdoms appears in the book of Daniel. When one thinks of world governments, they take on a beautiful shape, as did king Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel. In his dream, the beast contained 4 different types of metals. Each section of that image represented one of the four coming world kingdoms which at that time were coming (Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon was already there and was the first of the four).

Two governments had already come and gone at that time which were Assyria and Egypt.

Those 4 beasts found (in Daniel 2:35), are explained as Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream for him. The four beasts in his dream is Babylon represented by head of gold. The two arms of silver represented the kingdoms of Media and Persia. The belly and thighs of brass (or bronze) represented Greece. And the fourth kingdom described the Roman Empire as the legs of iron. When God describes the coming world kingdoms, He uses beasts to symbolize them. Human beings look favorably on government as a great help to them, whereas God looks on government as a great hindrance to them, as does anyone who has studied history and observed government's bestial treatment of humanity.

Whether this scripture is describing kings or empires doesn't matter as they still mean the same which makes up the beast described here. The seven kingdoms or empires throughout history that have ruled over Israel and much of the known world are:

- (1) Egypt;
- (2) Assyria;
- (3) Babylon;
- (4) Medo-Persia;
- (5) Greece;
- (6) Rome - The Roman Empire existing at the time of John which ceased to exist;
- (7) And then the seventh, the revived Rome which has not yet come;
- (8) Then the eighth and final will be the Antichrist (see verse 8).

This revived Roman Empire is represented in the book of Daniel by the 10 toes in the image of (Daniel 2:41-44), and by the 10 horns on the fourth beast of Daniel (Dan. 7:7, 20, 24), and in Revelation by the 10 horns on the first Beast (13:1; 17:3, 12, 13). It will exist as a major power only a short while, since it will then give its authority to the Beast (11-13).

Revelation 17:11 "And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

“The beast”: The final world kingdom ruled by the Antichrist, is “the eighth” king or kingdom. He “is of the seven” in that he is the culmination of all the previous, pagan, idolatrous empires. But he will go “into perdition”, the lake of fire (compare verse 8; 19:20).

“Was, and is not ... an eighth”: The Antichrist’s kingdom is said to be both the seventh and eighth kingdoms because of his supposed demise and resurrection. He is the seventh king before and the eighth king after his “resurrection” when he destroys the harlot’s religious empire and demands exclusive worship of himself (verse 16).

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reason many think the Antichrist will arise up out of the revised Roman Empire. But then he will go into perdition, the lake of fire.

Put another way, the beast that John saw is the Antichrist, the satanic ruler of the last and most powerful empire in human history, who will serve as Satan's instrument to attack Israel, persecute believers, conquer the world for Satan and oppose Christ.

Scripture portrays him as an intellectual genius (Dan. 7:8); an outstanding orator (Dan. 7:20); a military leader without parallel in human history (Dan. 7:23); a shrewd calculating and manipulating politician (Dan 8:25, 11:21); and the ultimate religious charlatan (2 Thess. 2:4). The angel briefly reviews the detailed description of him given (in Rev. 13:1-10).

Verses 12-14: "The ten horns" on the Beast represent "ten kings" of the future revived Roman Empire (compare Dan. 2:41-44; 7:24). Their worldwide "power" will come in association with the "beast". "One hour" indicates a relatively short time (compare 18:10, 17, 19). These rulers of a 10-nation federation will unitedly give their political authority and military power to the beast to conquer the earth and "make war" against Christ (compare 16:14; 19:19). The purpose of Satan through the Beast and fellow kings is to establish an invincible kingdom that Christ cannot overcome when He returns. But Christ is "King of" all "kings" and will "overcome" the Beast and his kingdom when He returns (compare 19:11-21). Those who follow Christ are "called and chosen" by Him, and "faithful" to Him (compare 19:7-8, 14).

Revelation 17:12 "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast."

"Ten kings" (see notes on 12:3; 13:1; compare Dan. 2:41-42). These kings are sub-rulers under the Antichrist, whose empire will apparently be divided into 10 administrative districts.

Here we see that ten separate countries make up this evil group. This one hour here, means a short period of time.

Reading (in Daniel 2:45), the ten toes of the fourth beast (Roman Empire), were made of iron and miry clay making a brittle substance. This is speaking of the 10 kingdoms or kings which will emanate from the Roman Empire and be in existence at the time of Christ's return. Their worldwide power will come in association with the beast. One hour indicates a relatively short time (18:10, 17, 19).

This is speaking of the reforming of the old Roman Empire. Presently the old Roman Empire has been reformed by ten common market nations in Europe today. There are more currently, but only 10 will come to prominence during the end time. In my opinion, these "ten horns" are those ten common market nations. The headquarters for these ten nations is in Rome.

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“Which have received no kingdom as yet”: Thus, the kings cannot be identified with any historical figures.

“One hour”: Symbolic of the brief 3-1/2-year period of time (compare 11:2-3; 12:6, 12, 14; 13:5; 18:10, 17, 19).

At this point in his career the Beast will have total control of the world, for he will command ten "kings" who rule the nations of the earth: The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

Revelation 17:13 "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast."

These are of one mind, “and shall give their power and strength unto the beast”. Then the Beast's kingdom starts to come apart. He hears rumors of insurrection, which fill him "with great fury to destroy and annihilate many," in Daniel's terminology (Dan. 11:44).

It is to fulfill prophecy. Kings and Kingdoms, good and evil, have to do exactly what God wants. Sometimes they are not even aware of why they are doing it. God puts the idea into their head, while all the time, they think it is their clever idea.

He marches to the Valley of Megiddo, where he meets other armies of the world, and there they do an amazing thing as we see in the next scripture.

Revelation 17:14 "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him [are] called, and chosen, and faithful."

“Make war”: A referenced to the battle of Armageddon (16:14-16), where the Lamb will destroy the kings (19:17-21).

Lord of lords, and King of kings”: A title for God (19:16; 1 Tim. 6:15; compare Deut. 10:17; Psalm 136:3), that emphasizes His sovereignty over all other rulers to whom He has delegated authority.

These shall make war with the Lamb. This will occur when these kings kill His faithful followers and come out to fight against Christ in the Battle of Armageddon. Those who join with Christ to overcome them are called "chosen, and faithful," titles used in other Scriptures to describe true believers (1 Pet. 2:9).

You see, as has been said so many times before, we Christians are in a battle. Our leader is the Lamb (Jesus Christ). We are fighting a very real enemy. The devil and his demons are our enemies. This war we are in is a war of the spirit. We must come against the devil in hand to hand combat every day. Our weapon is the two-edged sword (Bible).

This war is fought by an army of believers who always have their weapon (Bible), at their side. Besides having it at their side, they have its contents inside of them (their food is the Word of God). When they are in hot combat, the sword comes from their mouth. They are willing to lay down their lives for the cause of Jesus.

The flag we Christians fly is the banner of righteousness. It is red because of the blood of our leader, it is white because of the righteousness of believers, and it is blue for our heavenly calling. This is a voluntary army. This battle is in the final hours before the return of the Lord. This army will be made up of boys, girls, men and women. God has called a vast army, as He did in Gideon's day.

This group will be sold out completely to God. They will be willing to give up homes, family, friends, wealth, and position in their community to work for God. They will be loyal to Jesus even to the death. They will have a peculiar uniform described (in Ephesians chapter 6, this is the Christian's armor). This uniform will be provided to us by our Lord (Jesus). Loins girded about with truth, breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

The big difference is that this army will have patches on their knees. This battle will be fought with much prayer (on our knees). You see this victory is the Lord's. We must fight the good fight. Give it everything you have. The war is peaking now. God needs good Christians who will not compromise for any reason. The battle is hard, but the rewards are beyond comprehension; a home in heaven forever with Jesus and the opportunity to hear Him say, "Well done thy good and faithful servant".

You see, we soldiers shall be kings and priests (Rev. 1:6; Rev 5:10), but He will be Lord and King over all. We are the called, chosen and faithful. Hallelujah!

Verses 15-18: "The whore" has been described as sitting;

- (1) On many "waters" (verse 1);
- (2) On the Beast (verse 3); and
- (3) On seven mountains (verse 9).

Revelation 17:15 "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."

Here the waters are identified as "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues", indicating the worldwide influence and authority of the harlot. (In verse 18), she is identified as "that great

city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth”, referring probably to a worldwide, idolatrous pagan system centered at Rome.

See note on verse 1.

The Prostitute Explained. Then the angel explains to John the meaning of the water on which the woman is sitting: It is the peoples of the earth. Peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages designate all humanity in the book of Revelation. As in the saying, "sea of humanity".

Those who are followers of the evil system will be from all nations. There will be hundreds of millions lost.

Revelation 17:16 "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

“These shall hate the whore”: After using the false religious system to unify the world kingdoms and gain control of all, the Antichrist, with the help of his 10 sub-rulers, will turn against the system, plunder and destroy it, and seize all power and worship for himself. They will be carrying out God’s will (verse 17; compare Gen. 50:20).

The Coming Destruction of the Babylonian Prostitute. The Antichrist will permit the one world (apostate), church to govern his actions during the first three and one half years of the Tribulation while he is gathering more and more power. But in the middle of the Tribulation, when he feels he can become an autocratic ruler, he and the ten kings will throw off the prostitute because, in reality, while being dominated by her, they "hate the prostitute".

None of the world's political leaders have enjoyed subjugation to religious leaders, but have continued in a servile role only for expediency. When it is no longer necessary, the ten kings will "bring her to ruin and leave her naked", meaning they will confiscate her temples, her gold, and her costly apparel. In so doing, they will unwittingly be the instruments of God in destroying this awful Babylonian system once and for all: "For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose."

Here, we see these evil ten nations turning against the world and the world church. This power, these evil nations have been, and are being used to rule the little people. This fire speaks of war. These ten nations will do away with this church, even though it is the apostate church.

When Will the Prostitute Religion Be Destroyed? The religious Babylon (of Rev. 17), which is destroyed, comes in two parts. One occurs during the first part of the Tribulation when the governmental system of Babylon (pictured as this ugly "beast"), is gaining world control but has to permit the "prostitute" to sit on and ride the beast. We see this as meaning she exercises a degree of control over the Babylonian system by bringing the nations of the world under her idolatrous religious power.

During the first half of the Tribulation she incurs the wrath of the ten kings who see her use the authority of the Antichrist to advance her religious causes. So they plot to kill her. The reason we know this killing of the prostitute of "mystery Babylon" is done in the middle of the Tribulation is twofold:

1. "The deadly wound" of Antichrist is healed by the indwelling of Satan himself, simulating the resurrection of Christ, in the middle of the Tribulation.
2. From then on the world does not worship mystery Babylon but the image of the beast. The False Prophet will do away with all religion except the worship of Antichrist Satan, which he will enforce. That begins at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, that's described (in Rev. chapter 13). This is the time when people will have to take the mark of the beast and swear their loyalty to the beast or face death. No middle ground, either accept Jesus or accept the beast.

Since the woman who rides the beast gets her authority from the beast, the Holy Spirit uses this description to show how religious Babylon and governmental Babylon are so intertwined they are presented together. However, they are destroyed at different times. The prostitute (religious Babylon) is destroyed by "beast and the kings of the earth," who "hate the prostitute" and kill her.

This clears the way for Antichrist to fulfill the lifetime dream of Satan to get people to worship him. She is destroyed in the middle of the Tribulation. Then Babylon the governmental system will be destroyed at the end of the Great Tribulation, when commercial Babylon is destroyed (Rev. 18).

With "Mystery Babylon the Mother of Prostitutes" out of the way, "all inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast, all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

Religious Babylon Destroyed. Archaeologists tell us that Babylon is the cradle of civilization. Located on the shores of the Euphrates River, the ruins of this city have revealed some of the most ancient documents of past generations. This city begun by Nimrod, who was a rebel before the Lord, authored some of the greatest evils ever to fall on humankind. Two of these evils will be destroyed during the Tribulation period, according to (Rev. chapters 17 and 18).

In ancient days Satan seemed to make Babylon the capital of this evil operation. From this headquarters was started false religion, humanity's attempt for self-government in defiance of God's will and city dwellings for commercial and social purposes contrary to God's command to "be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth." (Gen. 1:28). These great evils, which have damned the souls of millions by substituting counterfeit solutions to natural human problems that would ordinarily lead a person to God, will all be destroyed at the end of the Tribulation period.

Chapter 17 describes the judgment of God on the religious system that has enslaved the human race in superstitious darkness for centuries.

Revelation 17:17 "For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

Toward the end of the Tribulation period, however, the 10 kings (compare verse 12), will destroy the harlot system (compare 18:6-24). They will do this as God's "will", and will turn their total devotion and worship to the "beast" himself (compare 13:12; 17:13; Dan. 11:36-39). The 10 kings will be God's instrument to destroy the harlot Babylon (compare 16:19; 18:5-6; 19:2). The destruction of the "woman" or harlot is pictured as the destruction of a "great city" (in chapter 18).

You see, all are subject to God whether they are following the beast or God. Even the devil has to do exactly what God tells him to do. Some of this has happened to fulfill God's word. The devil is not only subject to God, but he is subject to us, as well, through the mighty name of Jesus. We may dismiss the devil, just as Jesus did. The only difference was that Jesus used His own power, and we have no power of our own. We do it in the name of Jesus. It is Jesus' power.

Revelation 17:18 "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

"Great city": Here is another identification of the capital city of Babylon, centerpiece of Antichrist's empire (compare 18:10, 18, 21).

Many have taken this to mean that the woman represents the capital city of Antichrist's kingdom, but this cannot be, for Antichrist himself rules over the kings of the earth.

If then, the woman is not the Antichrist, what other possible explanation can we have for such unanimous world dominance? The only answer is the one system before which all kings, dictators, and nations have been forced to bow down throughout history, that is, the Babylonian religion of idolatry. One cannot go anywhere in the world without being confronted with some semblance of the idolatry.

No system in the world's history has enslaved more people than this awful religion. It should not take us by surprise that this prostitute woman, the religious system, is referred to as a city. When used symbolically, a woman is always intended throughout the Scripture to signify a spiritual or religious movement. If a good woman, it is "Jehovah's wife" or "the bride of Christ". If an evil woman, such as "a prostitute," it represents the evil religious system of idolatry.

Here we see again, Rome. In its heyday, Rome was thought of as the capital of the world. They truly did reign over all of Europe.

We conclude, then, that chapter 17 describes the destruction of the religious system, whereas chapter 18 denotes the destruction of "Satan's seat," the commercial and governmental city of Babylon, marking the prelude to the consummation of the Tribulation.

No longer does the seer John have the ecclesiastical religious system in view but now turns the spotlight of God's judgment on the commercial and governmental systems that originated there.

Babylon has had the most harmful effect on mankind of all the cities of the world. For all idolatrous religion, greed-based commerce, and secular government were begun there. At the end of the Tribulation, God will destroy them all in the seventh or last vial judgment in fulfillment of the prophecy (in Isaiah 47:1-9; 21:9).

Revelation Chapter 17 Continued Questions

1. What are the seven heads symbolic of?
2. Name the trinity of God.
3. Name the false trinity of the devil.
4. What do we know about the false prophet?
5. What two bodies of churches are trying to unite?
6. Is this God's plan for the church becoming one?
7. Who put out a Bible that waters down Jesus?
8. What does the author mean by watering down?
9. What does Immanuel mean?
10. In 2 John chapter 7, we read that deceivers enter into the world who deny Jesus as whom?
11. In John 1:14, we read that "who" was made flesh and dwelt among us?
12. Anyone or anything that denies that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh is _____.
13. What is the sad thing that most people proclaiming Jesus have accepted?
14. Every time you pick up a brochure on Rome, what do you immediately see?
15. Who are located in Rome that pertain to this lesson?
16. Name the empires these "five fallen" stand for?
17. Who was in power when John wrote this?
18. What is probably the revival of the old Roman Empire?
19. In verse 12, we see the ten horns as what?
20. What is this one hour symbolic of?

21. We see in verse 13, their loyalty is to the _____.
22. Who will these evil ten make war with?
23. Who will win?
24. What are we, who are with the Lamb? Two things.
25. Who are our enemies?
26. We believers in Jesus Christ make up God's _____.
27. What kind of war is this?
28. What is our weapon?
29. When in hot combat, the weapon comes from where?
30. Describe our flag.
31. Who will make up this army?
32. Describe these soldiers of God.
33. Describe their uniform.
34. Why will we have patches on our knees?
35. What is the pay for being a soldier in God's army?
36. Who are the waters?
37. Who turns against the whore?
38. Why did they do this?
39. What great city is mentioned here?
40. Give your views on the physical oneness of the church and being one in the Spirit.