

79. The Book of Revelation—17:10-18

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(5-11-22)

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Revelation 17:7-9 (NKJV)

⁷ But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. ⁸ The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. ⁹ Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

Many associate the *seven mountains* with Rome and the Papacy—because Rome is well known for being the city on 'seven hills'.

However, the Greek word used by John here means mountains—not *hills*.

Let's focus on what verses 1, 9, and 15 say about what this woman is sitting on that will help us correctly interpret what the mountains represent:

Revelation 17:1 (NKJV)

¹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters...

Revelation 17:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

Revelation 17:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: **The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits [different metaphor].**

Therefore, the **seven mountains** that the angel says the harlot is sitting on—are not literal 'hills' (Rome)—they are associated with "*peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues*."

Or more specifically they refer to *kingdoms* or empires—

Revelation 17:9-10 (NKJV)

⁹ Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. ¹⁰ **There are also seven kings...**

Let me stop and say that the word '**There**' at the start of verse 10 isn't there in the Greek—and would make more sense if the word "**They**" was used instead of "*There*".

Revelation 17:9-10 (NKJV)

⁹ Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

¹⁰ [They] are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

Mountains are often used figuratively in the Bible to represent *governments* or *kingdoms* (see Psalm 30:7 and Daniel 2:31-35). It's probably best to see the '**seven mountains**' as seven *kings and kingdoms* described in verse 10—and not as referring to the Roman Catholic Church headquartered in Rome.

Now, as I've already said—I personally think that *Mystery Babylon* (Revelation 17:3-5) is bigger than just the Roman Catholic Church (RCC). Remember, *Mystery Babylon* has been around since Nimrod and the Tower of Babel—thousands of years before the RCC came into existence. We are told that she spawned all false religions on planet earth ("**mother of all harlots of the earth**")—including the RCC.

I think that the RCC is going to play a major role in organizing the world into a one world church bringing people of all faiths together—but it won't be limited to just the Roman Catholic Church.

But getting back to verses 9 and 10—there has to be more to it than the '**seven mountains**' simply referring to the city of Rome in John's day. I mean, the angel's call for spiritual discernment ('**wisdom**') would have been pointless if the seven mountains were an obvious reference to geographical Rome.

So, the angel tells John that the beast the woman is riding represents *seven kings and kingdoms*—

Revelation 17:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ ...Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

There have been six 'world' empires that have existed in history—Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Technically each of these kingdoms or empires didn't encompass the whole world—but the whole *known* world of their day. Having said that—the final world empire (the seventh) will be a true *world* empire encompassing the whole world.

Let me say it again—there have been six 'world' empires that have existed in history—Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

In John's day five had come and gone—the sixth one (the Roman Empire) was currently in power.

So as the angel told John concerning these kingdoms—"**Five have fallen and one is** (the Roman Empire) **and the other** (the seventh world empire) **has not yet come**" (a reference to the final world empire under the Antichrist).

Revelation 17:9-10 (NKJV)

⁹ Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

¹⁰ [They or these] are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

Now, this is difficult to understand in that each '**mountain**' (kingdom) is ruled by a '**king**' (not 'kings')—and yet each kingdom (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome) lasted for several centuries each.

This being the case—how can you have one earthly king ruling over each kingdom for that length of time?

Well, obviously you can't—so let me give you what I believe is the answer (interpretation) which solves this problem.

The use of the word “**kings**” in verse 10 could be a reference to the *demonic entities* over these world powers (kingdoms) seeing as they continued for centuries each—and no one human king could have ruled each one for that length of time.

→ Reference Daniel 10:13, 20; Ezekiel 28:11-19 where God addresses the demon (king) over Tyre...

This seems to be the case with the Antichrist who has a demon over his kingdom—a demon who possesses him—(although many believe he will be possessed by Satan himself):

Revelation 11:7 (NKJV)

⁷ When they finish their testimony, the beast [*here used of a demonic entity*] that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.

Revelation 17:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. **And when he comes, he must continue a short time.**

This final world empire controlled by Antichrist will not last centuries like the others that came before it—it will only last 3 ½ years (the last half of the Tribulation Period—“**a short time**”).

Revelation 17:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ **And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.**

Again, I'm so glad for this angel who is explaining these difficult things to us and making them 'clear!' The **sixth mountain** (world empire) is the Roman Empire which was in power in John's day.

It eventually died (476 A.D.) but will be '*resurrected*' as the **seventh and final world empire** composed of ten regions that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream as the ten toes made up of iron and clay and Daniel interpreted as the revived Roman Empire (Daniel 2).

Out of this *seventh empire* will arise an eighth king who will be of the seventh kingdom (the final one-world empire)—of course this eighth king is none other than the Antichrist.

When the Antichrist first comes to power—he will be seen as a kind of '*world ambassador*' who will work to bring the nations of the world together, helping to organize the world into a global government consisting of ten-regions.

For most of the first 3-½ years the Antichrist will not be the absolute ruler of this ten-nation confederation or global government—he might be seen as the '*unofficial world leader*' like the leader of the United Nations (António Guterres), is kind of seen by many now. But eventually, he (the Antichrist) will rise up and take over this final world empire by force (after he is demon or Satan possessed), setting himself up as king or absolute ruler—by claiming divinity for himself.

So, he starts out as a '*man of peace*' but eventually he becomes a demon possessed bloodthirsty tyrant who will seek to kill all who oppose him (especially the Christians living at that time). This will take place around the midpoint of the Tribulation Period.

Daniel 7:7-8 (NKJV)

⁷ After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast [*Daniel saw the world empires starting with Babylon in his day. He doesn't see Egypt and Assyria. Therefore, the fourth beast he speaks of is actually the sixth beast (kingdom) that John sees in Rev.17—i.e., the Roman Empire*], dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. [*the Roman Empire was so strong that it just 'steamrolled' over everything in its path*]. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns [*now Daniel's vision telescopes into the future and he now sees the final world empire of the Antichrist which will be a revival of the old Roman Empire made up of ten kings—i.e., 'horns'*]. ⁸ I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them [*speaking of the Antichrist*], before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots [*apparently three nations of the ten don't want him to be the absolute ruler over them—so he just 'rips them out by the roots'—i.e., never to rise back to power again*]. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words [*again, referring to the Antichrist and his big mouth*].

Daniel 7:23-25 (NKJV)

[now the interpretation is given] ²³ "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth [*Roman Empire*], Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces. ²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom [*the final world empire under the Antichrist*]. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time [*the final 3 ½ years of the Tribulation Period called 'great tribulation' by Jesus in Matthew 24:21*].

Revelation 17:12 (NKJV)

¹² 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.

The angel further explained that the ten horns which John saw are “ten kings.”

One commentator said—

“What or who they are actually going to be cannot be known to any earlier generation because they have not yet received a kingdom, since they are part of Antichrist's future empire.”

Under the Antichrist the world will be divided up into 10 regions each having a king or a president or a prime minister over it.

Many believe that there are groups like the Club of Rome, the Bilderbergers, the Trilateralists and the Council on Foreign Relations that have already divided the world up financially into ten regions—which is the first step to eventually turning them into ten political regions of a one world government.

The North American Union (America, Canada, and Mexico) is the first region with the European Economic Union being the second, etc.

The angel tells John this final world empire will only continue “one hour” which is an idiom for ‘a short time’ (3-½ years—Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5). Their empire will be cut short by the return of Jesus to the earth to establish His kingdom. (Daniel 2:35, Revelation 19:11-21)

As we just read, when the Antichrist takes power over the final world government—three of the ten kings oppose him and so he “pulls them out by the roots.”

The agenda of the remaining kings, like that of Satan and Antichrist, will be to hold on to power by waging war against the Lamb at the Battle of Armageddon.

Revelation 17:13-14 (NKJV)

¹³ These [the remaining seven kings] are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ These will make war with the Lamb...

Why are they going to be so enamored with this world leader where they think they can go to battle against Jesus Christ (God) and win?—for two reasons:

Revelation 16:13-14, 16 (NKJV)

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty...¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

So, the first reason is that they will be demonically deceived.

Revelation 13:3-4 (NKJV)

³ And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. ⁴ So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

The second reason is because his 'resurrection' will cause many to believe that he is God, having supernatural powers—which seem to include the power over life and death (kill him and he comes back to life).

Revelation 17:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful."

We will see this clearly when we get to Chapter 19. We've already looked at verse 15—

Revelation 17:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

Once his power has been consolidated, the Antichrist no longer needs the help of religious Babylon—and now (along with his followers) he turns on her to destroy her and her global one-world religion—this takes place at the mid-point of the Tribulation Period.

Ultimately, the Antichrist will not tolerate the worship of any God but himself—

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 (NKJV)

³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Matthew 24:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ "Therefore when you see the '*abomination of desolation*,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...

Daniel 11:36 (NKJV)

³⁶ "Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.

So, the Antichrist not only breaks his covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:27)—but he also breaks his relationship with the apostate church.

J. Vernon McGee—

"The hatred of the Antichrist and his followers against the apostate church is so violent that the reaction is described as the cannibalistic picking of her bones, then burning them with fire!"

Revelation 17:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ **For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.**

"God Has Put It Into Their Hearts..."

God has directed the judgment against religious Babylon by the Antichrist and his followers teaching us that—God will sometimes use a wicked group (here, the seven remaining kings of the ten) to be an instrument of His judgment against another wicked group (here, religious Babylon).

God did this very thing in using the Babylonians as an instrument of judgment against the apostate southern kingdom of Judah (Habakkuk 1:5-11).

"Is it fair that God would put it into one groups hearts to come against and be used to judge another group—that doesn't seem right?!"

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 (NKJV)

⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

Revelation 17:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ **And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth."**

It's best not to see the "**seven mountains**" as referring to geographical Rome. The **seven mountains** refer to the seven world empires that started with Egypt and will culminate with the final world empire led by the Antichrist.

But here in verse 18 we are told that '**the woman**' who is riding the beast is that "**great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.**" In John's day, there was no doubt which city *reigned over the kings of the earth*—it was Rome the political, economic, and religious center of the world at that time.

Again, the association of this harlot (religious Babylon) with Rome doesn't mean that the Roman Catholic Church is identical to religious Babylon. The fact that it is associated with Rome tells me that the Roman Catholic Church will lead this apostate world church but will not be exclusive of it.

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