

# **The harlot and the seven-headed beast**

**An exposition of Revelation Chapter 17**

# Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Structure of Revelation Chapter 17 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The harlot.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Identifiers of the harlot .....	5
1. Attire .....	5
2. A golden cup.....	6
3. The wine of Babylon .....	7
4. The name <i>Mystery</i> on her forehead .....	8
5. Mother of harlots and abominations .....	9
7. Persecutor .....	10
8. Babylon the Great.....	12
The harlot judged.....	12
<b>Babylon regains her power .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Fornication .....	13
Drunkenness.....	14
<b>The restoration of the beast .....</b>	<b>15</b>
A riddle solved .....	15
Significance of the bottomless pit .....	16
Parallels between the beasts of Revelation Chapters 13 and 17 .....	16
<b>Identity of the seven heads .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Seven mountains? .....	17
Seven kings? .....	17
Seven kingdoms .....	18
<b>Identity of the first five kingdoms .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Identity of the sixth kingdom .....</b>	<b>20</b>
A false interpretation .....	20
The true interpretation .....	21
Significance of the number 'six' .....	23
<b>Identity of the seventh head.....</b>	<b>24</b>
A riddle solved .....	24
Babylon's political power restored .....	25
Powers comprising the seventh head.....	25
The powers unite .....	28
War with the Lamb.....	29
The Lamb overcomes .....	30
The harlot's support evaporates .....	30
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>32</b>

<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Appendix A - Significance of the term <i>abomination</i> .....	33
Appendix B - Contrasts between the beasts of Revelation Chapter 11 and of Chapters 13 and 17 .....	34
Appendix C - Comments on Isaiah 23:13 .....	34
Appendix D – Five are fallen.....	35
Appendix E – Imperial Rome as the dragon power .....	36
Appendix F – The sixth and seventh heads.....	37
Appendix G – Connection of the Illuminati and High-Freemasonry with the Papacy .....	38
Appendix H – The ten New World Order regions .....	38
Appendix I – Identity of the Dragon .....	39
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>40</b>

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## Introduction

Revelation Chapters 17 and 18 focus specifically on Babylon which is first mentioned in the second Angel's message of Revelation Chapter 14:

*And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Revelation 14:8*

In Revelation Chapters 17 and 18 two symbols are used to represent Babylon: an immoral woman (Chapter 17) and a dominating city (Chapter 18). These symbols combine in the following verse, demonstrating that they represent the same power:

***And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. Revelation 17:18***

The woman – a harlot - depicts Babylon's corruption and her ripeness for destruction. The city depicts Babylon's oppressive power. Both symbols portray a powerful religious organization.

The Book of Revelation features two women and two cities. This imagery is drawn from the Old Testament, where two women are used to represent the two literal cities of Babylon and Jerusalem.

*Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon... Isaiah 47:1*

*I have likened the daughter of Zion to a lovely and delicate woman. Jeremiah 6:2*

In Revelation the two women represent in turn spiritual Babylon, the counterfeit church (the *synagogue of Satan*) and then spiritual Jerusalem, the church of God - two opposing religious organizations.

## Structure of Revelation Chapter 17

Verse	Topic
1	Theme of the chapter – judgment (or punishment) of the Woman
2 - 6	Identification and description of the Woman and her crimes
7–11	Identification of the Beast who supports the Woman
12–14	Identification of the seventh head and the Woman's aspirations
15 -18	How the seventh Head turns on the Woman to punish and destroy her

## The harlot

***The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. Revelation 17:4 -5***

Historically the great majority of biblical scholars have affirmed that the woman of Revelation Chapter 17 represents the Church of Rome. This is because there are a number of specifications by which the woman may be identified and every one of these fits that organization perfectly. (Note: In identifying the Church of Rome or any other religious entity, this exposition is not referring to individuals, but to a system).

### Identifiers of the harlot

#### 1. Attire

*...arrayed in purple and scarlet...*

Scarlet is the most arresting colour that greets the eye in the city of Rome. It is the colour which is typically worn by the pope. The cardinals also wear scarlet.

In the Basilica of *St. Paul's Outside the Walls* in Rome, 109 popes are portrayed around the ceiling. Every pope is dressed in scarlet. The Pope's throne room is also decked out in scarlet, including the floors, walls and ceilings. Scarlet typically portrays regality. However in Scripture scarlet denotes sinfulness.

*...Though your sins are like scarlet... Isaiah 1:18*

Paul symbolized the Papacy as

*...the man of sin (or lawlessness)...who sits (is enthroned) as God in the temple of God (the Christian church) showing himself that he is God.  
2 Thessalonians 2:3-4*

Purple is the official colour of Rome's bishops and archbishops. In Catholic festivals the colours purple and scarlet are prominent.

It is understandable why Protestant commentators through the centuries have mostly agreed that the Babylon of Revelation Chapter 17 can only be the Church of Rome.

*...adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls...*

It has been the practice of the Church of Rome to adorn her leaders as well as her altars, images and statues with precious stones and pearls. This was especially true during the Middle Ages. However much of this jewelry was stolen or destroyed at the time of the Protestant Reformation. Motley, in his *Dutch Republic* states that at the time of the great image-breaking crusade in the Netherlands in 1566:

*...pictures, statues, organs, ornaments, chalices of silver and gold, reliquaries, chasubles, copes, ciboria, crosses, chandeliers, lamps, censors, all of richest material glittering with pearls, rubies and other precious stones, were scattered in heaps of ruin upon the ground.<sup>1</sup>*

In Catholic countries depictions of the infant Jesus and other images in the principle churches are decked with gold, pearls and other precious stones. For example, in Spain images and statues laden with jewels can be observed. Even in Jerusalem, at the traditional site of Calvary, the image of the Virgin on the altar of the church is adorned with precious stones.

In 1512 a book was compiled by Archbishop Marcellus of Rome and dedicated to Pope Leo X. It enumerates five different articles of scarlet dress that only popes and cardinals can wear. A vest studded with pearls is also mentioned. The Pope's mitre is made of gold and precious stones. These are the very characteristics which Revelation repeatedly ascribes to Babylon.<sup>2</sup>

Another Roman Catholic authority wrote:

*Pope Paul II wore vestments decorated with diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, chrysolites, jaspers....and all manner of precious stones.<sup>3</sup>*

## **2. A golden cup**

*...a golden cup in her hand...*

Two cups are brought to view in Scripture - God's cup and Rome's cup. God's cup is *the cup of salvation*.

*I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. Psalm 116:13*

In contrast the cup of Rome is a cup of damnation:

*... a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. Revelation 17:4*

It is a striking fact that the Church of Rome has officially represented herself as a woman, holding a golden cup in her hand. The Church has struck at least two medals depicting this fact.<sup>4</sup> The first medal depicts the Church of Rome as a woman standing at Rome, in her left hand is a cross and in her right hand a cup containing the host - the wafer - which she is extending to the world. The cross and the cup are the two leading symbols of the Church of Rome.

The second medal depicts the Church of Rome as a woman seated on a world globe with a cross in her left hand and a cup in her right hand, which she is also extending to the world. The inscription on the medal reads *sedet super universum* which means *the whole world is her seat*.

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<sup>1</sup> JL Motley, *Rise of the Dutch Republic* (London: J. Chapman, 1856),1:567.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Jamieson et al., *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1871),1414.

<sup>3</sup> B. Platina, *Lives of the Popes* (London: 1645),

<sup>4</sup> The first medal was struck by Pope Innocent XI in 1680 AD and the second by Pope Leo XII in 1825.

While water in the Bible symbolizes dense populations, the globe or world on which the woman is seated, as we all know consists of about seventy percent water. This official symbol of Rome therefore doubly reflects the detail in the prediction:

**...the great harlot who sits on many waters. Revelation 17:1**

### 3. The wine of Babylon

*...a golden cup...full of abominations...*

Outwardly, spiritual Babylon has a splendid appearance and is essentially very impressive. However within are *abominations and the filthiness of her fornication*. This imagery is accentuated by a further statement that inside the cup is the *wine of her fornication* (v2). In Scripture wine represents doctrines and teachings. In this case these are referred to as an *abomination* to God, meaning that Rome's teachings and influence are corrupt and offensive to God.

It needs to be remembered that this sobering description does not refer to individual members of the Catholic Church. The divine prediction refers rather to its religious system. It is therefore extremely important to know what constitutes the wine of Roman Babylon. Here are a number of the doctrines and teachings that constitute her *wine* and that are offensive to God:

1. The Pope has primacy as head of the church – rather than Christ as Scripture teaches.
2. The primary authority of the church is tradition – rather than Scripture alone.
3. An earthly priesthood replaces the heavenly priesthood of Christ.
4. Mary and the Catholic priesthood are proclaimed as mediators, rather than, in reality, Jesus Christ alone.
5. The immortality of the soul – the teaching that the human soul cannot die.
6. Prayers to and for the dead.
7. The notion of Purgatory.
8. Eternal torment in hell fire, instead of the Scriptural teaching of everlasting destruction.
9. The doctrine of original sin – in that all are born guilty of Adam's sin.
10. Infant baptism by sprinkling.
11. Sunday sacredness.
12. The celebration of Christmas, Easter and Lent and other pagan festivals under the cloak of Christianity.
13. The sacrifice of the Mass, in place of the memorial of Christ's death.
14. Auricular confession, penance, and absolution through an earthly priest.
15. The use of material aids in worship, such as the altar, the representation of the cross as well as images, etc in violation of the second commandment. This commandment is included in the Douay (Catholic) version of Exodus Chapter 20 but is omitted in all Roman Catholic catechisms.

#### 4. The name *Mystery* on her forehead

*And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

This is highly offensive language, but it is the solemn language of inspired Scripture. It is God speaking, not human beings, so we do well to take heed and to try to understand what it means.

In ancient times it was customary for harlots to bear their name on their foreheads. This imagery is used here to identify the harlot church – Satan’s church.

It is interesting to note that originally, on one of the Pope’s tiaras there was a golden plate with an inscription in Latin, *Mysterium* which means *mystery*. The Protestant reformers drew the attention of the world to this inscription, showing how it was a fulfillment of Revelation 17:5. This Protestant exposure was so powerful that Pope Julius III (1550-1555) had the inscription removed. In its place he had engraved upon his next crown the words *Vicarius Filii Dei*, which means *Vicar of the Son of God*.<sup>5</sup>

Astonishingly the Pope had figuratively jumped from the frying-pan of Revelation Chapter 17, into the fire of Revelation Chapter 13. Revelation 13:18 declares that *the number of the beast, is the number of a man and his number is 666*. *Vicarius Filii Dei* is the official title of the bishop of Rome and it adds up in Latin to exactly 666.<sup>6</sup>

The word *mystery* has more significance than just a title on one of the crowns of the Pope. Babylon itself is associated with mystery. This is because the religion of Rome is the same as old Babylon’s. As Dr Alexander Hislop states:

*It has been known all along that Popery was baptized paganism, but God is now making it manifest, that the paganism which Rome has baptized is, in all its essential features, the very paganism which prevailed in the ancient Babylon.... The essential character of her system, the grand objects of her worship, her festivals, her doctrine and discipline, her rites and ceremonies, her priesthood and their orders, have all been derived from ancient Babylon.*<sup>7</sup>

Revelation Chapter 13, in portraying the papacy, states that the leopard beast had *the mouth of a lion*. In Daniel Chapter 7 we discovered that the lion represented Babylon. From this we deduce that when the Papacy speaks, it is Babylon speaking. Dr Grattan Guinness, the famous 19<sup>th</sup> century Anglican preacher and scholar, has demonstrated that Romanism and paganism bear an exact and extraordinary resemblance. He lists eighteen parallels.<sup>8</sup>

The Babylonian mysteries were invented by Semiramis, or Ishtar, queen of Babylon. Ishtar was the widow of Nimrod who had been slain. Sun worship had been outlawed, so Semiramis invented the *Mysteries* - a diabolical system inspired by Satan, in which sun worship, or Satan worship, was continued secretly. Its true nature was concealed until it could practice its perverted rites in safety.<sup>9</sup> The same practices are followed today in

<sup>5</sup> Edward B. Elliot, *Horae Apocalypticæ*, 5 ed.(London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, 1862),4:35.

<sup>6</sup> See A.P. Cooke, *Antichrist 666*, 2nd ed.(Sydney: Self-published, 2010),

<sup>7</sup> A. Hislop, *The Two Babylons* (New York: Loiseaux Brothers, 1945), 2-3.

<sup>8</sup> Grattan Guinness, *Romanism and the Reformation* (London: Harley House, 1887),323-324.

<sup>9</sup> A. Hislop,5-9.



witchcraft, which emanates from the identical source to the mysteries of the Church of Rome - from Babylon. In fact, it can be proven that the religion of Roman Catholicism is actually Witchcraft under a Christian cloak. This is revealed by the use by the Popes of the crooked crucifix, one of the symbols of witchcraft.

There are two mysteries mentioned in Scripture. One is *the mystery of godliness*. This is the invisible union of Jesus Christ with His church, which is described as a *great mystery*.

*...This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.  
Ephesians 5:31-32*

In contrast the Babylonian mysteries involved a union of apostate people with Satan. In Scripture this is called *the mystery of iniquity* (2 Thessalonians 2:7). It is a system of intellectual philosophy which is in opposition to the Christian philosophy. It has permeated the thinking and the religions of the post-Biblical world.

*...on her forehead a name was written, MYSTERY...*

The forehead positioning denotes that *mystery* is not only her name, but also her character. Just as ancient harlots wore their names on their foreheads, indicating their lifestyle, so the Papacy, having the name *mystery* upon her forehead, declares in symbolic significance her lifestyle, her union with Satan.

Jewish high priests had *Holiness to the Lord* inscribed on the frontlet worn on their foreheads, but in contrast Rome's inscription is *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth*.

## 5. Mother of harlots and abominations

The term *mother of harlots* indicates that the Church of Rome is a mother church. The true church of Christ is also called the mother church.

*... Jerusalem... which is the mother of us all. Galatians 4:26*

The Church of Rome - the counterfeit mother church - has officially titled herself as the Mother Church. In the sixteenth century the Roman Catholic Council of Trent decreed:

*I acknowledge the holy catholic apostolic Roman church the mother and mistress of all churches.*<sup>10</sup>

The Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome was the leading Roman Catholic Church for centuries before St. Peter's basilica was built. On the façade of this church are the Latin words:

*The mother and mistress of all churches of Rome and the world.*

In 1725 AD Pope Benedict XIII, in his declaration of a jubilee, described the Church of Rome as

*...the mother of all believers and the mistress of all churches.*<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> J. Waterworth, ed. *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (London: Dolman, 1848).540-542.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Jamieson et al.,1415.

It is interesting to note that in the original Greek there are two strikingly contrasting expressions in the Book of Revelation:

1. The harlot and the beast
2. The bride and the lamb<sup>11</sup>

The descriptor *mother...of abominations* is also significant. Firstly, in Scripture the word *abomination* is associated with idolatry, which is detestable, abhorrent and offensive in the sight of heaven. The fact that the harlot is termed *the mother of abominations*, indicates that she is, above all else, the originator of false worship, of idolatry, of astrology, of Witchcraft, of satanic worship, all of which originated in ancient Babylon.<sup>12</sup>

Secondly, this descriptor indicates that spiritual Babylon has been the inspirer of false worship. By her union with satanic power she has propagated this distortion. Through the centuries Rome has been notorious for her encouragement of degeneracy.

Finally, the description *mother of harlots* indicates that Rome has daughter churches - religious organisations that came out of her and now imitate her - and certainly there are such churches today. The significance of spiritual harlotry or adultery will be explained further on.

**Note:** The term *abomination* as used in prophecy is a term that applies to both Imperial Rome and Papal Rome (See Appendix A).

## 7. Persecutor

***I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus...***

This terrible depiction coincides with the prophetic pictures of the Papacy in Daniel Chapters 7 and 8 and also in Revelation Chapters 12 and 13:

*He (the Papacy)...shall persecute the saints of the Most High... Daniel 7:25*

*...He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. Daniel 8:24*

*And those of the people who understand (the saints)...for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. Daniel 11:33*

*...when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered....  
Daniel 12:7*

*So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. Revelation 12:15*

*It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. Revelation 13:7*

These tragic predictions were grimly fulfilled during the reign of the Papacy during the Middle Ages. This has been acknowledged by both Protestant and Catholic historians.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> A. Hislop, 12.

<sup>13</sup> Edward McCabe, "Catholic Encyclopedia," (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910). 8:34.  
Pope Gregory IX, "The Decretals of Gregory IX," (Strasburg: Heinrich Eggesteyn, 1582). Bk 5.

The destruction of God's people by Papal persecutors is also confirmed by paintings, medals, and memorials, both Catholic and Protestant. Today many Catholic writers deny these historical facts, and they do so with the permission of their church. In his book *The Catholic Church, the Renaissance and Protestantism* Roman Catholic scholar Cardinal Baudrillart has stated:

*Indeed, even among our friends and our brothers we find those who dare not look this problem in the face. They ask permission from the church to ignore or even deny all those acts and institutions in the past which have made orthodoxy (Catholicism) compulsory.*<sup>14</sup>

Cardinal Baudrillart's book bears the sanction of Roman Catholic authorities and of the Catholic Censor. This is an admission that Roman Catholics have been given permission by their church to deny the terrible persecutions of the past. This is why current history books are void of reference to the persecutions of the Middle Ages. Catholic history has been whitewashed and the truth about the awful guilt of Rome is kept from the people.

A classic example of Papal guilt is revealed in the accounts of the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of August 24, 1572. That massacre was planned by the Church of Rome in conjunction with Spanish and French Catholic kings. At the tolling of a bell, the Roman Catholic population set themselves upon the unsuspecting Protestants of France and, according to the Catholic Archbishop of Paris, Hardouin de Perefice, one hundred thousand Protestants perished.<sup>15</sup> Sully, the Huguenot/Protestant historian recorded that seventy thousand perished. The author of the book *The Great Controversy* also states that seventy thousand died.<sup>16</sup>

The learned Dr James Wiley states:

*Sully, from his access to official documents, and his unimpeachable honour, has been commonly reckoned the highest authority.*<sup>17</sup>

A medal illustrating the terrible slaughter was struck by Pope Gregory XII to celebrate the massacre. Three frescoes were also ordered by the same Pope and displayed in the hall of the Vatican.<sup>18</sup> Notable historians estimate that the total number of martyrs executed by the Church of Rome during the Middle Ages was at least sixty million.<sup>19</sup> Other commentators claim that there were many more.

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Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica: A Concise Translation*, ed. Timothy McDermott (Grand Rapids MI: Christian Classics, 1991), 2a, 2ae.

Father Phelan, *The Western Watchman* 1908. December 24.

John Dowling, *History of Romanism* (New York: Edward Walker, 1845), 541-542.

W.E.H. Lecky, *History of Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe* (London: Longman Green & Co, 1866), 2:32. J.L. Motley, 1:626

<sup>14</sup> Alfred Baudrillart, *The Catholic Church, the Renaissance and Protestantism* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd., 1908), 182-184.

Andrew Steinmetz, *History of the Jesuits* (London: Richard Bentley, 1848), 1:588-597.

<sup>15</sup> J.A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism* (London: Cassell and Co. Ltd., 1878), 2:588-597.

<sup>16</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1898), 272.

<sup>17</sup> J.A. Wylie, 604.

<sup>18</sup> These frescoes may still be seen in the Vatican, but they are covered by drapes when tourists pass through, apparently to hide the awful truth of these events.

<sup>19</sup> John Dowling, 541-542. W.E.H. Lecky, 32.

The woman was indeed

*...drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.*

***...And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. v6***

***But the angel said to me, why did you marvel?'*...**

The appalling record of the Papacy is perhaps the most amazing phenomenon of history. It is baffling that Rome has deluded mankind for so long. The Papal Church was exposed in 1798 and received the deadly wound, yet now she is being restored to greater favour than previously. No wonder the Revelator was amazed.

It appears that John the Revelator views the woman after the time of the Middle Ages persecutions because she is *drunk* (past tense) *with the blood of the saints*. The statements made by the angel could indicate that John views the woman when spiritual Babylon is in the process of being restored to power, that is, after 1798 AD.

## **8. Babylon the Great**

In Revelation 17:5 Babylon is also called *Babylon the Great*. In the Old Testament, which the book of Revelation is based upon, ancient Babylon was called *great* when she had conquered the world:

*The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" Daniel 4:30*

Likewise spiritual Babylon becomes *great* when she gains world support, when she is restored to power, when she *sits upon many waters* (v1), when she is supported by the peoples of the world, when she rides or controls the beast, uses the beast to do her bidding (v3) and when she says *I sit a queen and am no widow* (18:7).

## **The harlot judged**

***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." v1***

The angel who explains *the great harlot* - Babylon - to John is one of the angels who deliver the seven last plagues. This angel reveals to John the judgment or punishment of the woman. The woman is located in the wilderness.

***...he (the angel) carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness and I saw the woman... v3***

Revelation Chapter 12 has revealed that God's woman was also in the wilderness for 1260 years from 538 -1798 AD. However in Revelation Chapter 17 there is no mention of this time period. The reason is that Revelation Chapter 17 applies after the period of the 1260 years, when Rome's power has been restored. It applies to the time after the healing of the wound. This woman – *the great harlot* - is pictured as being in the wilderness because she is under punishment. She no longer sits on many waters. She has lost her support.

The punishment of Babylon is administered during the final three of the seven last plagues. As noted in earlier topics, these plagues apply particularly to Babylon. We briefly recap here.

In Revelation 16:10 we see that the fifth plague was poured upon the *throne (seat) of the beast and his kingdom became full of darkness*. While the *throne of the beast* is the Vatican his kingdom will involve the whole world. The central power of Babylon is the beast.<sup>20</sup>

In Revelation 16:12 we read that the sixth plague is poured upon Babylon's river, the Euphrates, and it is *dried up*. That means that the peoples who have supported Babylon around the world withdraw their support.

In the seventh plague, Babylon is divided into three parts in order to apportion punishment. Some sections of Babylon are guiltier than others.

When the angel says in Revelation 17:1 that he will show John *the judgment of the great harlot (Babylon)*, this indicates that the chapter deals with the punishment of Babylon.

It may be that the angel who speaks to John is the angel with the sixth bowl, because he says *Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters*. The *waters* comprise the great river Euphrates (Revelation 16:12), and in Revelation 17:15 the Euphrates or *waters...where the harlot sits* are interpreted as *peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues*. We have already learned that it is these waters that dry up in the sixth plague. Revelation 17:16 tells us how this happens, how the support of people worldwide will be turned away from Babylon's leaders:

***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. v16***

The supporters of the false church will finally turn on her and bring about her destruction.

## Babylon regains her power

### Fornication

In Revelation 13 we learned that the world will be united under the harlot (Babylon).

*...all the world marveled and followed the beast (Revelation 13:3).*

This is reinforced by Revelation 17:1 where we read how the harlot *sits on many waters*, meaning that she is supported by the peoples of the world.

Now we observe the method she uses to accomplish this remarkable objective:

***... with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication. v2***

*For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury. Revelation 18:3*

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<sup>20</sup> Ellen G. White, 628

*The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her...  
Revelation 18:9*

The term *fornication* is used here in a symbolic sense. It refers to the illicit union of the *kings* - or governments - of the earth with the false church.

The term *harlot* is also used in a symbolic sense. According to Scripture there are three ways by which a church can be guilty of spiritual fornication or harlotry.

1. By the practice of idolatry which is spiritual unfaithfulness to Christ.

*You...made yourself male images and played the harlot with them. Ezekiel 16:17*

By this practice ancient Israel was unfaithful to God.

*...Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot.  
Jeremiah 3:6*

2. By becoming friendly with the degenerate world.

*Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James 4:4*

3. By the union of church and state.

Fornication is illicit union, and when the rulers or civil powers of the state unite with the church, or support the church by exercising its authority, it is an unlawful union. It is spiritual fornication in the sight of God. According to Scripture the spiritual husband of the church is Jesus Christ. Thus if a church unites with or receives favors from one who is not her husband, she commits spiritual adultery. The kings and rulers who are involved in this practice are also guilty of spiritual adultery with this harlot church.

The most effective method of restoring Babylon's power will be the union of church and state. The state will eventually support the false church and make effective the desires of that church through the formation of civil laws.

## **Drunkenness**

The second method by which Babylon is being restored to power is by earth's inhabitants being *made drunk with the wine of her fornication* (Revelation 17:2). Wine symbolises the doctrines or teachings of a church. Fermented wine consequently is false doctrine or erroneous teaching.

The alcohol in wine is poisonous: it numbs the senses and clouds the brain. So it is with false teachings. They dull the spiritual senses of those who believe them. This reveals the tremendous importance of pure doctrine and of correct teachings. Unfortunately many today claim that doctrine is inconsequential. This portion of Verse 2 implies that true doctrine is vital, especially in the end-time when millions will be deluded by the wine of Rome's errors.

*Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. The enemy has great power over minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth.<sup>21</sup>*

*It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the mind.<sup>22</sup>*

*The mind in which error has once taken possession can never expand freely to truth, even after investigation.<sup>23</sup>*

The wine of Babylon leads to spiritual fornication or adultery. It is exhibited in idolatrous practices and in friendship with the world: through the union of church and state. Today millions are being deceived and led into various forms of idolatry and worldliness: this situation is preparing the ground for the dominance of Rome.

## The restoration of the beast

### A riddle solved

***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. 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.” Revelation 17:7- 8***

This passage is one of the enigmas of Revelation Chapter 17. It is explained as follows:

<b>The riddle</b>	<b>The explanation</b>
<i>The beast...was...</i>	It existed previously
<i>...and is not...</i>	It is dead
<i>...and will ascend out of the bottomless pit...</i>	It comes back into existence – it returns from the dead.

The three tenses used in the description of the beast of Revelation Chapter 17 will assist in revealing the time-setting of the chapter.

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<sup>21</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1948),5:292.

<sup>22</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1898),671.

<sup>23</sup> EG White., *Medical Ministry* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1932),89.

## Significance of the bottomless pit

The term *bottomless pit* or abyss is used seven times in the book of Revelation. Five times it is used in a symbolic sense and twice in a literal sense.

- In Revelation Chapter 9 the term is used three times to describe the source and inspiration of the symbolic locusts that are inspired by Satan to bring woe to the inhabitants of the earth under the fifth trumpet.
- In Revelation Chapter 11 the term bottomless pit is used to describe the source from which Revolutionary France received its inspiration for its attack upon Christianity. This inspiration was Satanic.<sup>24</sup>
- In Revelation Chapter 20 the term is used twice in a literal sense to describe the prison house of Satan during the millennium when this earth will be turned into a worldwide graveyard - a place of death.

In Romans 10:7 the same Greek word is translated *deep* and is used to describe the grave, the place of death.

All of the above usages display two features:

1. Satan is the inspirer and controller of the bottomless pit, or abyss.
2. The abyss is a place of death.

Satan's realm is the place of death and the prison-house of the grave.<sup>25</sup> This is his stronghold or arsenal. Thus the term *bottomless pit* symbolises Satan's realm. Any person or power depicted as rising from the *bottomless pit* is inspired by him. In Scripture the things of God are described as coming *from above*, while the things of Satan are described as emerging *from beneath*.

*This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.*  
*James 3:15-16*

The beast of Revelation 17:8 ascends *out of the bottomless pit*. This means that it emerges from the place of death. It experiences a resurrection, a restoration to power.

This beast does not represent Communism. There is no evidence in Scripture to support the notion of a role for Communism or the Muslim religion in the final conflict. However Scripture does show that the beast represents the political powers supporting the false church (the Vatican). This beast is identical with the beast of Revelation 13:1.

## Parallels between the beasts of Revelation Chapters 13 and 17

The Book of Revelation employs the principle of repetition and enlargement. Revelation Chapter 17 enlarges on Revelation Chapter 13. There are eight parallels between the beasts of Revelation Chapters 13 and 17, demonstrating that they are the same power.

1. Both have seven heads and ten horns (13:1; 17:3)
2. Both are blasphemous (13:1; 17:3)
3. Both persecute the saints (13:7; 17:6)

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<sup>24</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 269.

<sup>25</sup> Hebrews 2:14.



4. Both are slain. (13:3 *deadly wound* or *slain* - margin 17:8 *is not*, that is, it no longer exists. It is dead.)
5. Both revive (13:3 wound healed; 17:8, *yet is*, and *shall ascend out of the bottomless pit* or place of death.)
6. *...all the world marveled and followed the beast* (13:3) and *...those who dwell on the earth will marvel...* (17:8).
7. *...whose names have not been written in Book of Life* (13:8 and see 17:8)
8. The beast of Revelation 13:1-10 is fulfilled only in the Papacy.<sup>26</sup> The beast of Revelation Chapter 17, and especially as represented by its sixth head, is also fulfilled in the Papacy.

It is claimed that because the beast of Revelation Chapter 11 also emerges from the abyss, or bottomless pit, that it must therefore be the same beast as that of Revelation Chapter 17. However this one parallel between the beasts of Revelation Chapters 11 and 17 is not sufficient evidence that these chapters are referring to the same beast. In fact, there are many contrasts between the beasts of Revelation Chapters 11 and 17, proving conclusively that they are not identical<sup>27</sup> (See Appendix B). The parallels listed above show that the beast depicted in Revelation Chapters 13 and 17 is distinct and altogether different from the beast of Revelation Chapter 11.

## Identity of the seven heads

The following verses in Chapter 17 have also caused some confusion.

***Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. <sup>10</sup>There 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. Revelation 17:9 -10***

### Seven mountains?

Some have interpreted the seven mountains to be literal mountains or hills. Because Rome is situated on seven hills, the beast symbolism was applied to the city of Rome or the Papacy. During the Protestant Reformation the Protestant reformers used this application with telling effect. However Constantinople (Istanbul - the new Rome) was also built on seven hills. Likewise, Moscow is situated on seven hills. Therefore the historic Protestant application needs to be re-examined.

### Seven kings?

Some apply the seven heads to seven kings and claim that they represent seven popes since 1929. This claim is pure speculation and cannot be sustained.

<sup>26</sup> A.P. Cooke,(note 15 proofs that the beast of Revelation Chapter 13 is the Papacy)

<sup>27</sup> A.P. Cooke, *The Beast from the Abyss*, 2nd ed.(Sydney: Self published, 2010),

## Seven kingdoms

In Revelation 17:9-10 we find a double symbolism – the heads are represented as mountains. There is another double symbolism later in verse 18 - the woman and the city, both of which are symbols representing a religious organization. The angel said that *the seven heads are seven mountains*. However a mountain is a symbol of a kingdom.

*I am against you, O destroying mountain. Jeremiah 51:25*

This passage alludes to the kingdom of Babylon.

The kingdom of God is also likened to

*... a great mountain which filled the whole earth. Daniel 2:35, 44*

The seven mountains and the seven heads represent seven political kingdoms or empires.

The angel then says

*...Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. Revelation 17:10*

This statement reveals that the seven kingdoms are successive - one follows the other. To identify these seven kingdoms, we note that they are symbolized by seven heads on the beast which the Woman (the false church) sits on - or controls.

Two facts can be ascertained regarding the seven heads:

1. They are seven political powers which support the great pagan religion of Babylon through the centuries.
2. They are agents of Satan in opposing God and His people.

In an endeavor to identify the seven kingdoms comprising the beast, some have arbitrarily concluded that the guide for such identification is the book of Daniel alone. Because Revelation complements the book of Daniel, it is argued that Daniel Chapter 7 and especially the four beasts of Daniel Chapter 7 provide the key to the seven heads of Revelation Chapter 17.

Such a conclusion is unjustified. The Book of Revelation is not based on Daniel alone, but on the whole of the Old Testament. It has been correctly described as a *mosaic of the Old Testament*. More than five hundred Old Testament quotations are to be found in the Book of Revelation. Therefore the whole of the Old Testament should be employed in seeking the identification of the seven heads.

## Identity of the first five kingdoms

The leading kingdoms which supported Babylonian sun worship and opposed God's people can easily be identified in the Old Testament.

1. **Babylon.** The first of the seven political entities is the original Babylonian empire as recorded in Genesis Chapters 10 and 11. This was founded by the infamous rebel Nimrod.

Nimrod and his queen Semiramis initiated and established sun worship.

According to the historian Charles Rollin, Nimrod's empire was one of the most

powerful in the ancient world and extended over all of the Fertile Crescent.<sup>28</sup> This means that it encompassed Egypt, Palestine, Assyria, down to the Persian Gulf and across to Batriana and India. It was Nimrod's empire that was involved in the building of the Tower of Babel and from there the worship of the sun spread over the entire inhabited world.

Ancient Babylon must therefore be included as one of the seven heads or empires upholding Babylonian sun-worship and opposing God and his people.

2. **Egypt.** After ancient Babylon, the second empire that fits the symbolism is Egypt. It was in Egypt that Babylonian sun-worship flowered into a highly sophisticated civilization. At times the Pharaohs of Egypt controlled most of the Fertile Crescent. As the book of Exodus records, Egypt was a leading opponent of the true God and His people.

Egypt is referred to seven hundred times, in twenty-seven books of the Old Testament and she played a major role in Old Testament history. For at least sixteen hundred years Egypt was a dominating power. Both Isaiah and Ezekiel distinctly describe her as a dragon power.

*Are You not the arm that cut Rahab (Egypt) apart, and wounded the serpent (KJV: dragon)? Isaiah 51:9*

*Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt, O great monster (KJV: dragon) who lies in the midst of his rivers.... Ezekiel 29:3*

In that the seven-headed beast of Revelation Chapters 12, 13 and 17 is alluded to as the dragon, it is logical that Egypt should be counted as one of its seven heads.

Interestingly, the Revelator himself employs the nation of Egypt to symbolize Revolutionary France. It is described as *the street of the great city and the tenth part of the city*. The symbolic city represents spiritual Babylon. Revolutionary France, spiritually called *Egypt* (Revelation 11:7-8, 13), was one of the ten kingdoms of spiritual Babylon.<sup>29</sup>

3. **Assyria-Chaldea.** The third head is most likely the Assyrian-Chaldean, or Neo-Babylonian, empire. The Assyrians relocated the Chaldeans to Assyria in order to infuse new blood into the Assyrian armies. Ultimately the Chaldeans gained supremacy and formed the Neo-Babylonian Empire.<sup>30</sup> (Also see Appendix C).

The Assyrians and Chaldeans were zealous devotees of sun-worship and fiercely opposed Israel and the true God - as revealed in the Old Testament books of Kings, Chronicles and Daniel.

Historians categorise the Assyrians and Chaldeans as one empire, the Assyrian-Chaldean. The Chaldeans are also described as Neo-Babylon because under the brilliant Nebuchadnezzar the ancient metropolis of Babylon was rebuilt and enlarged and became the glorious centre of the ancient world.

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<sup>28</sup> Charles Rollin, *The Ancient History of the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Assyrians Etc* (New York: George Dearborn, 1836), 2:44-46

<sup>29</sup> Revelation 11:7-8. In this prediction of Revolutionary France, that nation was described as, "Spiritually is called ... Egypt". The Revelator draws his imagery, not from the Book of Daniel, but from Exodus.

<sup>30</sup> The prophet Isaiah classes the Assyrians and Chaldeans as one power. See comment by Jamieson, Fausset and Brown on Isaiah 23:13, Appendix 3.

4. **Medo-Persia.** The fourth head is the empire of Medo-Persia. It was under this head that Babylonian sun-worship assumed new forms under the names of Zoroastrianism and Mithraism. This religion spread southward into India as Zoroastrianism and westward into the Roman Empire as Mithraism. Later Mithraism became a serious threat to Christianity. Finally it amalgamated with apostate Christianity and developed into the great apostasy of the Church of Rome – Catholicism.
5. **Greece.** The fifth head is Greece. Babylonian sun-worship had been firmly established among the Greeks from earliest times. The famous *wisdom* or philosophy of the Greeks originally emanated from ancient Babylon. Even the renowned Greek architecture was of Babylonian inspiration.

The Grecian system of belief was called Gnosticism and also originated with Babylon. Gnosticism developed into a strong and difficult opponent of the early Christian church. It finally infiltrated Christianity and was one of the main catalysts of the great apostasy.

The above five empires comprise *the five that have fallen*. All of them supported sun worship and dominated the world of their day. They were powerful agents of Satan in opposing the true God and his people, but all have fallen (see Appendix D). When the Revelator declared *five have fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come* (v10), he was therefore referring to the period of the sixth head (kingdom).

## Identity of the sixth kingdom

Determining which kingdom or empire comprised the sixth head is an interesting exercise.

### A false interpretation

Some commentators try to align the sixth head of Revelation Chapter 17 with Atheism, claiming that it represents this philosophy. This claim is based on a faulty interpretation of the beast of Revelation 11:7-8 which slays the Two Witnesses. This prophecy, however, was fulfilled by Revolutionary France. In the prediction, the political power is symbolized as *Egypt*. At one period in the Old Testament, Egypt rejected the existence of the true God. This was a form of Atheism. The wording of the prophecy implies that the nation featured in Revelation Chapter 11 would be atheistic. This was true of Revolutionary France.

The claim by some that the sixth beast is Atheism also clashes with a fundamental principle of prophetic interpretation. In prophecy a beast represents a political kingdom, not a religion or a philosophy per se.

*These great beasts...are four kings (kingdoms)... Daniel 7:17*

*The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth... Daniel 7:23*

In attempting to shore up the above error, the Spirit of Prophecy is misused or misapplied. When applying the prediction of Revelation 11:3-11 to Revolutionary France, *The Great Controversy* described France's rejection of the true God as *a new manifestation of satanic power and this is Atheism*.

However the passage goes on to read:

*...and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance.*

*This prophecy has received a most exact and striking fulfillment in the history of France.<sup>31</sup>*

The beast, consequently, according to the book *The Great Controversy*, represents an atheistic political power, not just a philosophy.

A further reason why atheism cannot be represented by one of the seven heads is that the heads represent political powers which uphold, or are controlled by, the harlot - the Babylonian religion. Atheism has never upheld the Babylonian system, nor have they accepted guidance from, or been controlled by, the harlot church. Atheism is not represented as one of the seven heads.

## The true interpretation

The kingdom comprising the sixth head is the Roman power. Interestingly, in this situation there is no difference between Rome under the Caesars and Rome under the Popes. Both Scripture and secular historians class Imperial Rome and Papal Rome as one and the same power. Therefore the sixth head is Rome in both Imperial and Papal formats.

With only one exception, Imperial and Papal Rome are counted as one power in the books of both Daniel and Revelation.

- In Daniel 7:8, 20, 24 the little horn (the Papacy) is represented as coming out of the fourth beast (Imperial Rome). In this depiction the little horn is a continuation - or part of - Imperial Rome.
- In Daniel Chapter 8 the little horn power finds its fulfillment only in Imperial and Papal Rome combined: Heaven counts them as one entity.
- In Daniel Chapter 11 the King of the North represented both Imperial and Papal Rome. Both are termed *the king of the north*.
- In Revelation 12:3-4 the dragon power that tries to destroy the Christ child is Imperial Rome (see Appendix E).
- Revelation 12:13-16 reveals that during the 1260 years the dragon cast water out of its mouth to sweep away the Woman. This was during the reign of Papal Rome. The dragon power of verses 15-16 involved the ten horns. These, we recall, were a part of the dragon (Revelation 12:3). They also formed a part of the Papal beast of Revelation 13:1. However in Revelation 13:1 the ten horns are crowned, indicating that ten kingdoms were ruling when the Papacy was supreme. The ten kingdoms were the political supporters of the Papacy and they persecuted the saints on her behalf. Therefore the ten kingdoms of Europe should correctly be classed as part of the dragon. This harmonizes with the Spirit of Prophecy which states

*Kings and rulers and governors, have placed upon themselves the brand of antichrist, and are represented as the dragon who goes to make war with the saints.<sup>32</sup>*

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<sup>31</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 269

Revelation Chapter 13 is the only occasion where a clear distinction is drawn between Imperial and Papal Rome.

*...The dragon gave him his power, his throne and great authority. Revelation 13:2*

The distinction is made in this instance in order to make an indisputable identification of the Papacy. In this prediction however, Imperial Rome was still closely connected with the Papacy. Re-reading the passage will make this clear.

*...The dragon (Imperial Rome) gave him (the Leopard beast - the Papacy) his power, his throne and great authority. Revelation 13:2*

In other words, without the support of the Roman Empire, the Papacy could not have been established. History confirms that it was Constantine the Great who gave the seat of the empire to the Bishop of Rome when Constantine transferred his capital to Constantinople.<sup>33</sup> It was the emperor Justinian who established Papal authority. In 533 AD Justinian pronounced the Bishop of Rome as *the Universal Bishop of the World and the Corrector of heretics*.<sup>34</sup> In 538 AD Justinian militarily, began the destruction of the Arian Ostrogothic power in Italy and compelled all in his domain to accept Catholicism or forsake the empire. This gave the Papacy freedom to exercise its political power.<sup>35</sup>

Both secular and ecclesiastical historians class Imperial and Papal Rome as one. Thomas Hobbes, English historian and philosopher stated:

*If a man considers the original of this great ecclesiastical dominion, he will easily perceive that the papacy is no other then the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.*<sup>36</sup>

German theologian and church historian Adolph von Harnack states:

*The Roman church in this way, privily pushed itself into the place of the Roman world empire, of which it is the actual continuation; the empire has not perished, but has only undergone a transformation...that is no mere 'clever remark' but the recognition of the true state of the matter historically, the most appropriate and fruitful way of describing the character of this church. It still governs the nations...It is a political creation, and as imposing as a world-empire, because [it is] the continuation of the Roman Empire. The Pope, who calls himself 'King' and 'Pontifex Maximus' is Caesar's successor.*<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 3rd ed.(Boise, ID.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1962),39.

<sup>33</sup> Francis P. Hays, *Papal Right and Privileges in Their True Light* (London: R. Washbourne, 1889),13-14.  
Alexander Flick, *The Rise of the Medieval Church* (New York: G. P. Putnams and sons, 1909),168.

<sup>34</sup> "Constitutions of Justinian," Vol. XVII, 9th Collection, Title 14, chapter 2.) 533AD.

<sup>35</sup> George Finlay, *Greece under the Romans* (London: Clarendon Press, 1877); Belmont & Monod, *A Medieval History of Europe* (New York: H.Holt & Co, 1902),120.

Nicholas Summerbell, *History of the Christian Church* (Office of the Christian Pulpit, 1873), 310-311.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: Andrew Crooke, 1651), 457.

<sup>37</sup> Adolph von Harnack, *What Is Christianity* (New York: Harper & Brothers, tr. 1957), 2<sup>nd</sup>ed, 269-270.

Philip Schaff, church historian, says:

*When the western empire fell into the hands of the barbarians, the Roman Bishop was the only surviving heir of this imperial past or in the well-known dictum of Hobbes, "the ghost of the deceased Roman empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof."<sup>38</sup>*

Dr Arthur Stanley, Dean of Westminster and author declared:

*The Popes filled the place of the vacant emperors at Rome, inheriting their power, prestige, and titles from paganism.... Constantine left all to the Bishop of Rome...the Papacy is but the ghost of the dead Roman empire sitting crowned upon its grave.<sup>39</sup>*

Many other reliable historians confirm that Imperial and Papal Rome are one and the same.<sup>40</sup> Finally J.P. Conroy stated:

*Meekly stepping to the throne of Caesar, the Vicar of Christ took up the sceptre, to which the emperors and kings of Europe were to bow in reverence through so many ages.<sup>41</sup>*

It is clear that the sixth head is Rome – both Imperial and Papal.

## Significance of the number 'six'

Rome – both Imperial and Papal - is closely associated with the number six.

1. Six was originally the number of Babylon, and Rome has rightly been termed *The Second Babylon*.
2. The name of the pagan sun god from the whom the Romans claimed descent was *Lateinos*, which in the Greek language adds up to exactly 666.
3. The Greek term for *the Latin Kingdom* in the Greek language adds up to the number 666.
4. The original Roman numerals: *I, V, X, L, C, D*, were six in number and added up to 666.
5. The official seal of the Roman Empire was of Babylonian origin. It was called *Sigillum Solis*- the Seal of the Sun. It was comprised of a series of numbers which added up to 666.
6. The official title of the Pope of Rome is *Vicarius Filii Dei*. In Latin, this name adds up to 666.

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<sup>38</sup> Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (New York: Charles Scribner & Company, 1867), 5<sup>th</sup> ed 287.

<sup>39</sup> Arthur P. Stanley, *Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1862), 40.

<sup>40</sup> WW Hyde, *Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1946), 6-7  
Alexander Flick, 148-150, 413.

Philip VN Myers, *General History* (Boston/London: Ginn and Company, 1888), 316.

J. Garnier, *The True Christ and the False Christ* (London: G. Allen and Sons, 1900), 2:85-96.

HW Wilberforce, *The Church and the Empires* (London: Henry S King and Co, 1874), 45-46.

Henry E Cardinal Manning, *The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ* (London: Burns and Lambert, 1862), 123-128.

W.F. Barry, *The Papal Monarchy* (New York, 1902), 45-46.

<sup>41</sup> *Two Romes*, by James P. Conroy, in *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, Volume XXXVI (36), edited by James Andrew Corcoran, Patrick John Ryan, Edmond Francis Prendergast, 1911, pgs. 193-194.

7. The Hebrew term for the Roman power was *Romiith* which in the Hebrew language adds up to exactly 666.
8. The Pope's official signature is *Dux Cleri - Chief of the Clergy*. In Latin this also adds up to 666.<sup>42</sup>

## Identity of the seventh head

***...the other (seventh head) has not yet come; and when he comes he must continue a short time. Revelation 17:10***

The identity of the seventh head is intimated in verse 11:

***The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going into perdition. Revelation 17:11***

This is another riddle.

The original Greek reads, *even he is eighth*. There is no definite article. This may denote that the number eight does not refer to an eighth head or kingdom, but is a symbol. The number *eight* in Scripture generally denotes regeneration, newness of life or resurrection.<sup>43</sup> This implies that the seventh kingdom would experience regeneration, resurrection or restoration. Only one kingdom has experienced death and resurrection, and that is Rome.

*I saw one of his heads, as if it had been mortally wounded (Margin: Greek = slain) and his deadly wound was healed... Revelation 13:3*

This experience concerning Rome is repeated three times in Revelation Chapter 17 and is expressed in the form of a tantalizing riddle.

### A riddle solved

Existed in the past	Non-existent (dead)	Exists again (resurrected)
<i>v8a the beast that you saw was</i>	<i>and is not</i>	<i>and will ascend out of the bottomless pit</i>
<i>v8b the beast that was</i>	<i>and is not</i>	<i>and yet is</i>
<i>V11 the beast that was</i>	<i>and is not</i>	<i>is himself also the* eighth</i>

*...is himself also the\* eighth and is of the seven...*

\* In the original Greek there is no definite article, but translators include the definite article. It is taken for granted. However in the above instance of Revelation 17:11 this can read: *is himself also eighth*.

<sup>42</sup> R.A. Anderson, *The Antichrist 666* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc, 1980),137-153.

<sup>43</sup> EW Bullinger, *Number in Scripture* (London: Ayre & Spottiswoode, 1894),196-204.



The Greek reads *out of the seven*. Correctly read then, this means that the head that was wounded or slain, on returning to life, becomes the seventh head. Therefore the seventh head must be Rome resurrected, Rome restored, Rome after the deadly wound is healed, Rome reaching world power in the end time.

## **Babylon's political power restored**

There is a clear distinction between the harlot woman and the beast. The harlot represents Babylon's (Rome's) religious element. The beast, or any one of its heads, represents the political or civil element of the Roman power. The harlot is featured in Revelation Chapter 17 but not in Revelation Chapters 12 and 13. The reason is that in Revelation Chapter 13 the religious element is already evident because the Papacy is a union of church and state. Chapters 13 to 19 are an enlargement of Revelation Chapter 12, especially 12:17, where the dragon makes war on the remnant.

Revelation Chapter 17 goes into more detail concerning Babylon's punishment and reveals how the woman, the religious element of spiritual Babylon, comes to her end.

*...I will show you the judgment (punishment) of the great harlot who sits on many waters. Revelation 17:1*

In 1798 the political element of Rome was wounded - not the religious element. The head of the beast – the sixth head, the Roman head - was wounded to death (Revelation 13:3). Political and civil power had been stripped from the harlot because the beast on which she rode to power had been wounded to death and she was made a widow. At that time, no political powers supported her. The healing of the wound represents the restoration of the political element that had been stripped from the church.

## **Powers comprising the seventh head**

The next section of Revelation Chapter 17 reveals more fully all the powers that comprise the seventh head. These are the powers that will support the Papacy in the final drama of the end time.

***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. These are of one mind and they will give their power and authority to the beast. Revelation 17:12-13***

The ten horns or kingdoms of verses 12-13 were originally the ten divisions of Western Europe. This is the initial and primary application. However in the end-time, symbols apply in a world-wide sense so these end-time predictions affect the entire world. The final conflict is a global conflict and every person will be involved.

**The USA.** Some commentators claim that the seventh head is the second beast of Revelation Chapter 13 (see verse 11) which represents the United States of America (USA). It is true that the USA is to play a leading role in the final conflict and this prediction does reveal that the USA is the prime player in the global movement.

*And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. Revelation 13:12*

The above verse confirms that the USA gains a position of global control and wholeheartedly enforces Babylonian worship. This country becomes an agent of Satan in oppressing God's people.

*He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. Revelation 13:15*

However the USA is only one of the entities comprising the seventh head. **All nations** are involved in the final conflict. All will support the USA in enforcing Papal policy. As *The Great Controversy* has clearly stated:

*Romanism in the Old World (Europe and Asia) and apostate Protestantism in the New (The Americas, South Africa, Australasia) will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts.<sup>44</sup>*

The prediction declared

*...all the world marveled and followed the beast.*

*All who dwell on the earth will worship (obey) him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life... Revelation 13:3, 8*

This reveals that the final powers supporting the Papacy involve the whole unsaved world. While the USA plays a leading role, ultimately the real power is spiritual Babylon whose leader is the Papacy.

*In both the Old and the New World, the Papacy will receive homage in the honour paid to the Sunday institution that rests solely upon the authority of the Roman church.<sup>45</sup>*

In the terminology of Revelation the seventh head encompasses:

*...the dragon...the beast and...the false prophet. (Revelation 16:13)*

*...the kings of the earth... (Revelation 16:14; 17:2; 18:3,9; 19:19)*

*...the whole world... (Revelation 16:14)*

*...all nations (Revelation 18:3; 14:8)*

*...the merchants of the earth... (Revelation 18:3,11)*

*...the inhabitants of the earth... (Revelation 17:2)*

*...all whose name have not been written in the Book of Life ... (Revelation 13:8)*

*...all the world... (Revelation 13:3)*

*...the earth and those who dwell in it... (Revelation 13:12)*

*...the false prophet... (or apostate Protestantism). (Revelation 19:20; 13:14 -15)*

*...another beast ...[who] had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. (Revelation 13:11)*

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<sup>44</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*,616.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*,579.

...an image to the beast... (Revelation 13:14-15)

...ten horns...(or kingdoms)... (Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 12-14.

(See Appendix F).

**The Illuminati** is a global organization which supports the fulfillment of the prophecy regarding the ten horns. The Illuminati arose in 1776 in Bavaria, Germany, under the guidance of a Jewish Jesuit university professor Dr Adam Weishaupt. Posing as a Freemason, he established the Illuminati (*the enlightened ones*) and connected it with the Grand Orient Masonic Lodge of France. Its members were initiated into the secret teachings of Lucifer. Its aim was to create a new world order through the policy-making circles of European government. Although officially banned in the 1870's, it continued in disguise under the mantle of High-Freemasonry.<sup>46</sup>

While Freemasonry in general has been perceived to be in opposition to the Papacy, it has now been revealed that the leaders of High Freemasonry are answerable to the Pope.<sup>47</sup> (See Appendix G)

The Illuminati inspired the formation of the Jacobin Society in France in 1789, which was notorious for its policy of conspiracy and revolution and was responsible for organizing the French Revolution.

In 1913 America was unwittingly led into creating The Federal Reserve System which led to the Illuminati gaining a permanent controlling role in America's finances. Earlier in the same period there was union between the Illuminists and the one-world interests of the Rothschild-Warburg-Rockefeller cartel.

After the Great War of 1914-18 the same group played a major role in the formation of The League of Nations. This was the first political attempt to form a one world government.<sup>48</sup> The next step involved the establishing of a group to advise the group's respective governments on international affairs.

In 1921 **The Council of Foreign Relations** (CFR) was officially formed in the USA with counterparts in London, Paris and Hamburg. This organization stated publicly:

*We shall have world government whether or not you like it - by conquest or consent.*<sup>49</sup>

From its inception this organization has employed the term *New World Order* in describing the coming world government. The United Nations is the brainchild of the CFR. The European counterpart of the CFR is known as the Bilderbergers. This group began to function in 1954 and is responsible for the unification of Europe. Another step was the formation of the Club of Rome in 1968. It is responsible for the regionalization and unification of the entire world. (See Appendix H)

Most of the directives for world government have emanated from the CFR. In 1973 it released a highly confidential report titled *Regionalized and Adaptive Model of the World Global System*.<sup>50</sup> This document divides the world into ten political-economic regions

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<sup>46</sup> Gary H Kah, *En Route to Global Occupation* (Lafayette: Huntington House, 1992),29.

<sup>47</sup> See Appendix 7.

<sup>48</sup> Gary H Kah,29.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.,30-31.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.,40.

which it initially called *kingdoms*. In 1974 the word *kingdoms* was changed to *regions*, allegedly to conceal the true nature of the plan.

The next step was the formation of **The Trilateral Commission** by David Rockefeller. This was in reaction to the exposure of the CFR in the USA.<sup>51</sup> (The CFR is New Age in its philosophy, which means it is deeply involved in the occult.<sup>52</sup>) Its mission is *to promote world government by encouraging economic interdependence among the super powers*. The USA government is under the control and guidance of the CFR<sup>53</sup> and the Trilateral Commission.

**The Fabian Society**, founded by George Bernard Shaw, is another organization bent on establishing the New World Order. Its motto is *A wolf in sheep's clothing*.

The New World Order is also being strongly promoted in the religious world with phenomenal success.

**The Ecumenical movement** is a worldwide religious association. It has infiltrated almost every religious group and is involved in promoting the one world government of the new world order. The Ecumenical movement is basically aiming for the union of all churches of all persuasions and of all religions - Christian or non Christian. The ultimate aim is union with the Vatican, which will be the dominant power.

**The Charismatic movement** involves millions of Christians of all persuasions and is popular in many Christian churches. It is hugely successful. It is however, unwittingly under the control of the occult via the so-called *gift of tongues*. This has been exposed as inspired by the occult. The ministry of healing which it possesses is inspired by evil spirits posing as good agencies. They claim that only God can heal, and consequently millions are deceived and many become possessed by evil spirits. Exorcists acknowledge that many of the cases they deal with involve those caught up in the charismatic scene. Similar admissions are made by some mental health authorities concerning the inmates of psychiatric institutions.

All these phenomena demonstrate that behind the various bodies aiming for world union is the occult – *the spirits of devils* in disguise.

## The powers unite

The ten horns are ten kingdoms who...receive authority for one hour as kingdoms with the beast.

This one hour does not require a specific period of time but, according to the Greek, it can mean *in the same era*. It means that the ten kingdoms are contemporaneous with the seventh head of the beast.<sup>54</sup>

According to the economic-political model of the New World Order, the whole planet is to be organized into ten distinct regions. These are to cooperate with the Papacy in the proposed design for world government and the third millennium of peace.

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*,44-46.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*,41.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*,47-56.

<sup>54</sup> George Croly, *The Apocalypse of St John* (New York: G&C Carvill, 1827),264-265.

The question may arise as to why the ten horns don't give their power and strength to the woman. There is no difference, for the beast supports, or carries, the woman and the woman rides and controls the beast. The ten horns therefore, being part of the seventh head of the beast, would naturally come under the control and direction of the woman.

There is to be a vast worldwide union of the political powers represented by the ten kingdoms or regions. This united body comprises the seventh head. Today, the union of world political powers is occurring before our eyes. The regions listed above are moving closer together through the manipulation and the pressure of powerful organizations that seek world government. As predicted by the Revelator they are being aided and abetted by the powers of the occult. (See Appendix I)

## War with the Lamb

### ***These will make war with the Lamb...***

The Lamb represents Jesus Christ. This means that the united powers of earth, led by Rome, attack Jesus Christ.

Babylon makes war on Christ by attacking the saints - the followers of Christ and the Woman's *offspring*.

*And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 12:17*

The word *war* in Greek is the same as that used for *battle*.

At the time when Babylon proclaims *I sit a queen and am no widow and shall see no sorrow (Revelation 18:7)*, she persuades her supporters to rid the world of all dissent.

*And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Revelation 19:19*

This is a symbolic picture of the final conflict. Babylon's supporters make war against Christ by persecuting His followers. But he that touches a true believer touches Jesus Christ. Jesus said

*Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me. Matthew 25:40*

Jesus said to Saul of Tarsus

*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? Acts 9:4*

*He that touches you touches the apple of His eye. Zechariah 2:8*

Whoever touches a saint of God in the final conflict touches Christ, and this will result in divine intervention.

## The Lamb overcomes

**...and the Lamb will overcome them... Revelation 17:14**

The Lamb overcomes Babylon during the sixth and seventh plagues, initially by *the drying up of the waters of the great river Euphrates* (Revelation 16:12). The angel explains what these waters represent:

**...The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are people, multitudes, nations and tongues. Revelation 17:15**

## The harlot's support evaporates

During the sixth plague the support of all these millions of peoples around the world evaporates: it is withdrawn. The Lord accomplishes this when the harlot (represented by the religious leaders) is revealed as the one who has deluded and manipulated her followers.<sup>55</sup> Verse 16 tells how this support is removed:

**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. Revelation 17:16**

Those who will finally turn on the harlot and destroy her are those who were previously her most devoted and staunchest supporters. In their fierce rage at being duped and thereby losing eternal life, they are symbolized as taking four actions against the harlot. (The number *four* in Scripture denotes universality - embracing the whole world). These actions will not only be aimed at the Vatican, but also at other religious leaders world-wide.

1. They *make her desolate*. The word *desolate* comes from the same word as *wilderness* used in Revelation 17:3, and means *to be made an outcast*. The world religious leaders become outcasts. They are universally scorned and damned.
2. They *make her... naked*. This means the harlot's erstwhile supporters strip her of her gaudy and splendid apparel, tearing away her cloak of pretended piety and religious fraud. Her real character is made public. She is recognised as the arch hypocrite, the great satanic counterfeit.
3. They *shall eat her flesh*. This denotes the consuming of her spoil. The Greek suggests *eating masses of flesh*. This imagery is borrowed from the Old Testament description of the fate of Jezebel, of whom *the harlot* is the ultimate anti-type. When Jehu went to bury Jezebel he found no more of her than her skull, her feet and the palms of her hands - in fulfillment of the prediction of Elijah that *the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel* (2 Kings 9:35-36). The figure in Revelation 17:16 means *to despoil*, to be *violently and pitilessly destroyed*.

*For they have eaten up Jacob, devoured him and consumed him, and made his dwelling place desolate. Jeremiah 10:25*

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<sup>55</sup> A.P. Cooke, *The Drying up of the Great River Euphrates* (Sydney: Self-published, 2010),

4. They will *burn her with fire*. This imagery is drawn from the Book of Leviticus:

*The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be burned with fire. Leviticus 21:9*

The mother and daughter churches of spiritual Babylon, because of their spiritual harlotry, suffer the penalty of being burnt with spiritual fire. The religious leaders are destroyed by the burning anger of their supporters.

One author portrays the final drama as follows,

*The people see they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who keep it holy. Now in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. "We are lost," they cry, "and you are cause of our ruin"; they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords that were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.<sup>56</sup>*

These four judgments on the harlot depict her complete exposure and destruction. All this is according to the plan of Heaven.

***For God has put it in their heart to fulfill His purpose... Revelation 17:17***

Heaven has ordained that the very supporters of spiritual Babylon should be the ones who will bring about her end. They will be the agents of destruction.

***And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. Revelation 17:18***

This final verse in Revelation Chapter 17 introduces us to Chapter 18, where the symbol for Babylon changes from a woman to a great city. The reason for this is that a great city is a more fitting symbol by which to picture the total destruction of the gigantic religious-political system of spiritual Babylon.

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<sup>56</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 655-656.

## Conclusion

In these last days, there are two calls to mankind - the call of Babylon the harlot and the call of Christ. The harlot calls to earth's inhabitants to drink of the cup of her wine of false doctrine. Christ invites people to drink of the pure water of everlasting life. One cup will render you spiritually incapable (Revelation 17:2). The other will give you heavenly wisdom and discernment. One will keep your name out of the Book of Life. The other will keep your name in the Book of Life.

The harlot calls for complete loyalty and obedience, and so does Jesus Christ. The harlot's followers are popular and in the majority. Jesus' followers will become increasingly unpopular and in the minority. One side is united against Jesus Christ. The other is united with Jesus Christ. Those with the harlot finally face disillusionment and disaster. Those with Christ face conflict, victory and translation to the kingdom of God.

If we are faithful to the Lamb now, He will be faithful to us in the coming conflict and will deliver us. The choice is ours.



## Appendices

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### Appendix A - Significance of the term *abomination*

The term *abomination* is used three times in the book of Daniel.

1. **Daniel 9:27** refers to Imperial Rome in her destruction of old Jerusalem in 70 AD.
2. **Daniel 11:31** refers to Papal Rome setting up its idolatrous system of worship and mediation.
3. **Daniel 12:11** refers to the same event in connection with the 1290 and 1335 days which began in 508 AD. In that year the Church of Rome set up her counterfeit idolatrous system of mediation.<sup>57</sup>

The term *abomination* is used six times in the New Testament.

1. **Matthew 24:15** This is a reference to the Imperial Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem with their idolatrous standards. The author of *The Great Controversy*, in commenting on this says,

When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in holy ground - which extended some furlongs outside of the city walls - then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight.<sup>14</sup>

The term *abomination* was connected with Rome's idolatry.

2. **Mark 13:14**. Here it is applied to the same event involving the Roman armies.
3. **Luke 16:15**. This refers to mankind in general.
4. **Revelation 17:14**. Here it applies to papal Rome.
5. **Revelation 17:5**. Again the term *abomination* is applied to papal Rome.
6. **Revelation 21:27**. Here it is applied to all idolaters.

The term *abomination* is therefore applied twice to Imperial Rome and twice to Papal Rome, but each time it refers to idolatrous worship. This is the main significance of the term *abomination* as used in Scripture.

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<sup>57</sup> A P Cooke, *The Identity of the Daily of Daniel* (Sydney: Self Published, 1988),

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 26.

## Appendix B - Contrasts between the beasts of Revelation Chapter 11 and of Chapters 13 and 17

Revelation 11	Revelation 13 and 17
Beast arises about 1798	Beast wounded or slain 1798
Beast is only one of the ten kingdoms.	Beast's territory included the ten kingdoms
Beast makes war on the Papacy	Beast makes war on the saints.
Beast is <i>Egypt</i> - atheistic, anti-religious	Beast is controlled by the Babylonian religion (the scarlet woman)
Under this beast the two witnesses are slain.	Under this beast the two witnesses <i>prophesy in sackcloth</i> .

## Appendix C - Comments on Isaiah 23:13

**Behold** - calls attention to the fact, which was humiliating to Tyre, that a people of yesteryear, like the Chaldeans, should destroy Tyre, the most ancient of cities.

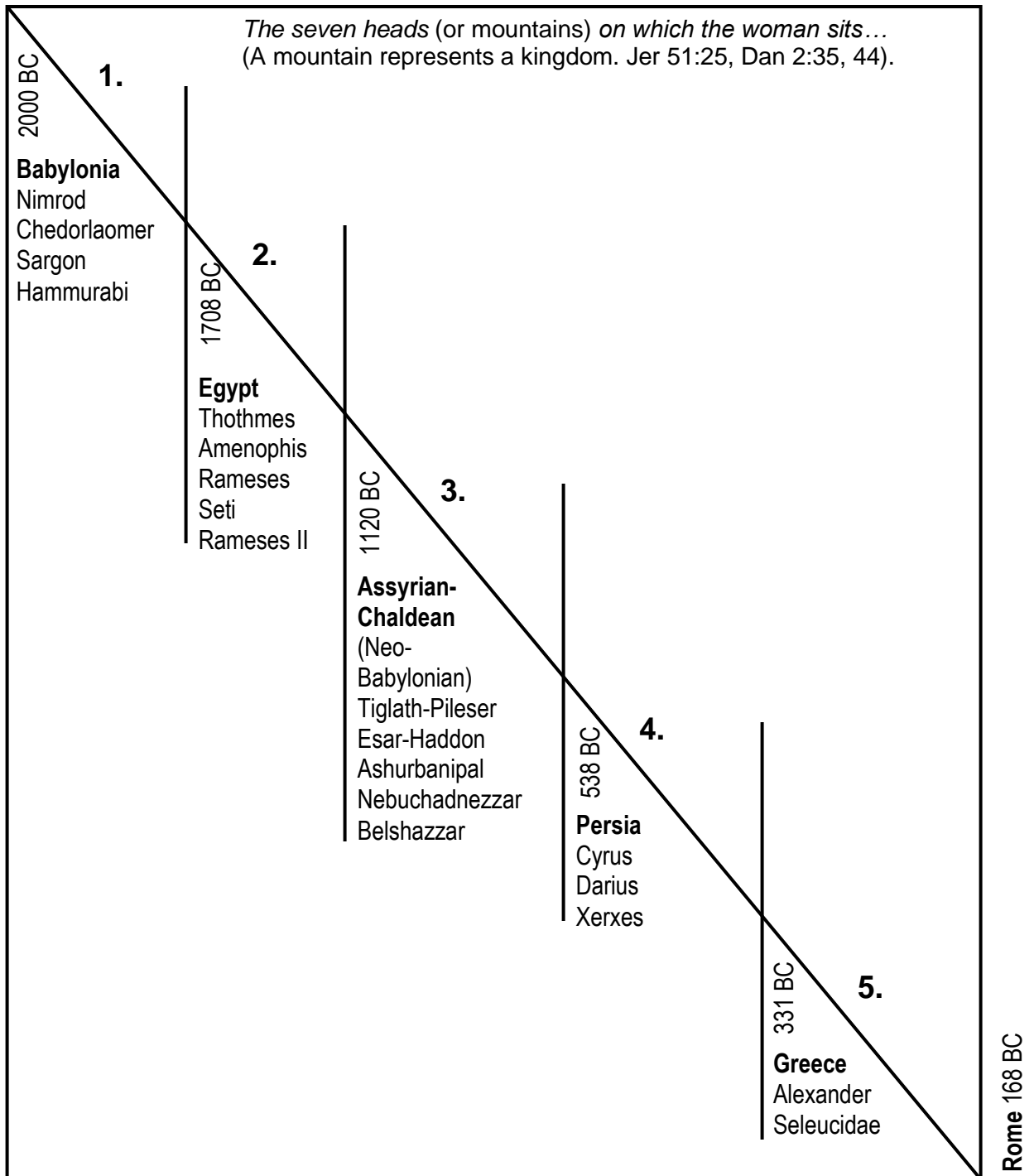
**Was not** - had no existence as a recognized nation; the Chaldeans were previously just an unsophisticated, predatory people (Job 1:17).

**Assyria founded it** - The Chaldeans lived a nomadic life in the mountains of Armenia, originally north and east of Assyria proper. *Arphaxad* in Genesis 10:22 refers to such a region of Assyria near Armenia. Some may have settled in Mesopotamia and Babylonia early and given origin to the astrologers who were called *Chaldeans* in later times. But most of the people had been transferred from their original seats in the north to Mesopotamia and soon afterwards to South Babylonia only a short time before this prophecy.

**Founded it** means *assigned it* (the land) to this people described as *wild beasts of the desert* as a permanent settlement (as in Psalm 104:8, Maurer). It was the Assyrian policy to infuse into their own population of the plain the fresh blood of hardy mountaineers to enhance the recruiting for their armies. Ultimately the Chaldeans, by their powerful priest-caste, gained the supremacy and established the later Chaldean empire.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Robert Jamieson et al., on Isaiah 23:13.

## Appendix D – Five are fallen



## Appendix E – Imperial Rome as the dragon power

*In the book of Revelation, under the symbols of a great red dragon, a leopard-like beast and a beast with lamb-like horns, are brought to view those **earthly governments** which are especially engaged in trampling upon God's law and persecuting his people. Their war is carried forward to the close of time. The people of God, symbolized by a holy woman and her children, are greatly in the minority. In the last days only a remnant exists. John speaks of them as those that "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." <sup>59</sup>*

*Thus while the dragon, primarily represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome.<sup>60</sup>*

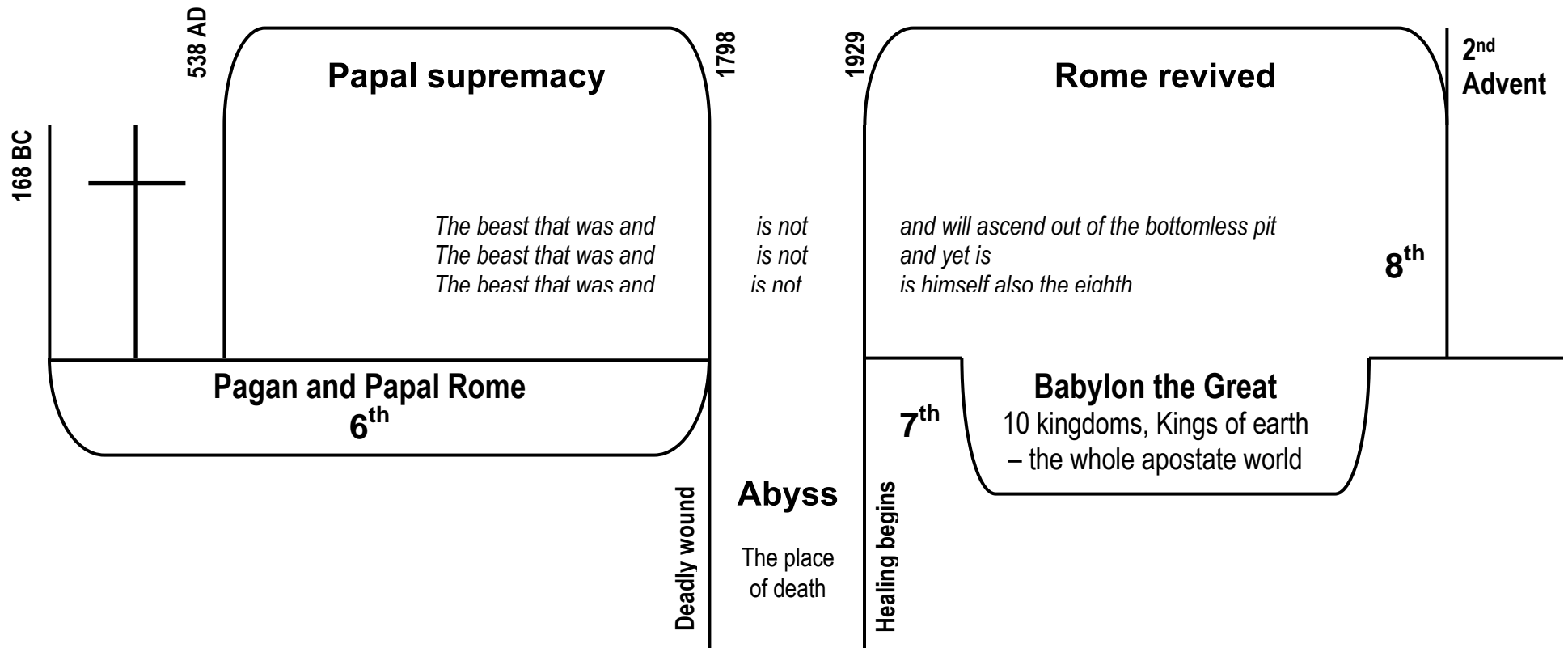
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<sup>59</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 1884 Edition, 276.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, *The Great Controversy*, 1911 Edition, 438.

## Appendix F – The sixth and seventh heads

...one is (sixth head) and the other (seventh) has not yet come... Revelation 17:10



## **Appendix G – Connection of the Illuminati and High-Freemasonry with the Papacy**

In 1985 when the author was in the USA he visited the publishing company owned and operated by Mr. Jack Chick. Mr. Chick is a Southern Baptist, whose aim is to win Roman Catholics to Christ. He is well known and recognized throughout the US and many other countries.

While in discussion with Mr. Chick on current religious affairs, he revealed that the previous day he had received a personal visit from the newly elected leader of Freemasonry in the USA. Mr. Chick stated that this leader had just resigned from his new position at the top level of Freemasonry. The reason for his resignation was that he had discovered that as the leader of High-Freemasonry he was now subject to the Pope.

This confirms that the Illuminati, and with it High-Freemasonry has its source and inspiration from the Papacy. In other words the ultimate power behind the New World Order is Rome.

## **Appendix H – The ten New World Order regions**

In the official document of the Club of Rome, issued in 1973, were outlined the ten economic-political regions of the globe. This reveals how the New World Order will seek to organize and control the whole political world.

On examining the ten regions it is evident that no one political power is to control mankind in the end time.

The ten kingdoms or regions embrace the following groups of nations:

1. North America
2. Western Europe, Turkey and Israel
3. Japan
4. Australasia and South Africa
5. Russia and Mongolia
6. South and Inter-America
7. The Islamic nations of the Middle East
8. Africa
9. India to Papua-New Guinea
10. China

## Appendix I – Identity of the Dragon

Revelation Chapter 17 appears to be a repetition and enlargement of Revelation 16:13 - 14. These verses reveal how the whole unsaved world will be brought into the final union.

*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. 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.  
Revelation 16:13-14*

The *three unclean spirits* represent the powers of the occult in its various forms. They are to speak and work through three agencies called *the dragon, the beast* and *the false prophet*. The beast is the Papacy and the false prophet is apostate Protestantism.

In Topic 26 of this exposition of the Book of Revelation - *The three powers who will lead the world to Armageddon* – it is demonstrated that the dragon is not Spiritism, as is taught by some today. The dragon represents civil or political powers. The dragon is a beast and a beast represents a political power.<sup>61</sup> In harmony with this definition, one author declares that

*kings, rulers and governors have placed upon themselves the brand of antichrist, and are represented as the dragon who goes to make war with the saints.*<sup>33</sup>

Revelation 17:12-13 shows that the kings, rulers and governors, under the brand of antichrist and comprising the dragon, are the global political powers represented by the ten horns. The dragon then, represents the united political powers as listed previously. Even now these entities are sympathetic towards the Papacy - the antichrist. When they unite to support Rome they will truly *place upon themselves the brand of antichrist*. Therefore according to Revelation 16:13-14, spirit powers (the three unclean spirits) will work and speak through the Papacy, Apostate Protestantism and the united political powers of the whole world, with the aim of uniting the kings of the earth and the whole world to Armageddon

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<sup>61</sup> Daniel 7:17, 23.

<sup>33</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 39.

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