

*The Beast of
Revelation—
Myth, Metaphor
or Reality?*

Global Church of God

The Beast of Revelation

Myth, Metaphor or Reality?

by John H. Ogwyn

Where are global events leading?
Is a world dictator about to appear?
Just who—or *what*—is the BEAST?
Will you receive its infamous MARK?
The incredible ANSWERS are inside!

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Introduction

Today's news reflects a state of affairs that would have been absolutely unthinkable to an observer at the end of World War II in 1945. Then, the Rome-Berlin Axis lay smashed and American and British forces stood at the pinnacle of victory.

Look at today's world, however. In December 1991, the 12 nations of the European Community (EC)—including Britain, France, Italy *and* Germany—held a summit in Maastricht, Netherlands. There delegates hammered out the Treaty of European Union to speed economic and political integration. Upon its ratification on November 1, 1993, EC members became part of the newly created European Union (EU).

A feature article in the June 9, 1996, edition of *Night and Day* (a major British Sunday newspaper) by journalist David Thomas revealed a startling development to an astonished Britain. It turns out that the Third Protocol of the Maastricht Treaty requires all participants **to ship their gold and foreign currency reserves to Frankfurt, Germany.** The article quotes from a recent book by authors Atkinson and McWhirter, *Treason at Maastricht: The Destruction of the British Constitution*, which maintains that “there is scarcely a single pillar of the present ‘European’ Union which does not have its origins in the blueprint for Europe outlined by Hitler’s Nazi regime—with which the French and Italian war time governments were pleased to co-operate.” The article further quotes that the single European currency the treaty calls for “will in effect be a German currency controlled by a central bank based in Frankfurt—ironically in the former headquarters building of I.G. Farben, the manufacturers of the Nazis’ death gas Zyklon B” (p. 118).

Who would have imagined this? Since the end of World War II, America and Britain have invested many *billions* of dollars in intelligence operations. Despite this, the most astounding geopolitical events of the postwar era, which resulted in a powerful reunified Germany, caught the governments of our nations completely by surprise.

The rapid succession of events in Eastern and Central Europe in 1989 didn't catch everyone by surprise, however. There was a source that anticipated and reported on this startling turn of events *a half-century ahead of time!* Notice what an editorial writer stated in the Hendersonville, Tennessee, *Free Press* on December 7, 1989:

Like a great many Americans I have been watching the current political situation in East Germany with interest. While many have expressed surprise at the recent events and at East German cries for reunification of East and West Germany, I have to admit I haven't been too surprised by these events. The reason I haven't been particularly surprised is that for years I have occasionally read the publications of... the late Herbert W. Armstrong.... Armstrong predicted that the Berlin Wall would some day come down and the two German states would once again reunite into a powerful nation.

As far back as April 1952, Herbert W. Armstrong, our predecessor in this current Work of God, had written in the *Plain Truth* magazine that East Germany would be reunited with West Germany and that Russia would "be forced to relinquish her control over Hungary, Czechoslovakia and parts of Austria" (p. 16). In 1956, following the Soviet invasion of Hungary, when it seemed that the "Iron Curtain" had inexorably rung down on the nations of Eastern Europe, Mr. Armstrong stated, "The way is being prepared for a colossal third force in world politics—a European Federation of Nations more powerful than either Russia or the United States!... We have shown years in advance what would happen to Russia's ill-fated Empire in Eastern Europe" (*The Plain Truth*, Dec. 1956, p. 3).

How could he possibly have known? You'll find out in the pages of this booklet!

The prophetic messages of your Bible have far more to do with current world conditions and where they are headed than most people could ever imagine. Destined to soon play a defining role in world events is the mysterious "Beast" of the book of Revelation. For a clear understanding of the identity of this mysterious Beast and its astounding relevance to your life in the years immediately ahead, read on!

Chapter 1

Fragmentation in an Age of Globalism

Not since the days of the Tower of Babel have the affairs of humanity been more intertwined. The world has been transformed into a “global village” by jet planes and instantaneous telecommunications. Satellite TV transmissions bring us live images from any place on earth where news is happening. The Internet allows computers around the world to be linked by phone. And from finance to manufacturing, multinational corporations and conglomerates now dominate virtually every field—further integrating the world economy.

Yet paradoxically, as the world becomes more and more interconnected, nations are increasingly subdividing and fragmenting along old ethnic and religious lines. The resurgence of such ancient rivalries is cited by government and financial leaders to illustrate the need for a viable alternative to the present, unsteady system of independent nation-states. After all, the more multinational a corporation’s interests, the more likely that corporation will desire global institutions and some sort of “new world order”—perhaps a “one-world government”—to supersede conflicting national laws.

Beginning in 1914, English-speaking nations have spent more than half of this century locked in wars of either the “hot” or “cold” variety. Finally, in 1989, it all seemed to be over. The Iron Curtain was no more. People danced in the streets throughout Eastern Europe. There was a sense of euphoria in the air. Two years later, in December 1991, the Soviet Union itself ceased to exist. In its place was a non-communist Russia and more than a dozen other independent republics. The Cold War was over and the West had won! After four decades of living under the shadow of mutually assured nuclear destruction, peace had finally been achieved. Or had it?

The bipolar world dominated by two superpowers is no more. What remains is a far more fragile and complex arrangement. Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev wrote in the

New York Times, “It is very depressing. What hopes we had five years ago with the end of the Cold War. Why did the New World Order that we envisioned dissolve so quickly and abjectly in the New World Disorder?” (Sept. 6, 1995).

Three Geopolitical Contenders

A number of years ago the Roman Catholic primate of Poland, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński of Warsaw, analyzed the world scene by identifying three different geopolitical contenders for world power, which he called *Internationales* (see Malachi Martin, *The Keys of This Blood*, p. 21). Wyszyński categorized them as Golden, Red and Black. The Golden Internationale was his term for the financial powers—the transnationalist capitalist leaders of the West. The Red, of course, referred to the forces of international Communism. And Black was the cardinal’s designation for the Roman Catholic Church, with its black-robed priests and nuns.

The first two of these three contenders have offered their adherents a completely materialistic view of the world. In raw form, both capitalism and Marxist-Leninism are materialistic and concerned only with the here and now.

People the world over are increasingly aware of the failure of exclusively materialistic philosophies. As currently constituted, neither capitalism nor communism is able to offer any transcendent goal or purpose. As a result, age-old national and religious rivalries threaten to fragment an interdependent world.

It is apparent that unless human aspirations and emotions are channeled differently, they will fracture the whole global economic house. An international identity that overshadows national allegiance is being sought. The goal in Europe is to have people think of themselves as Europeans first and French, German, Dutch or Spanish second—a reversal of traditional sentiments.

However, the internationalists have been unable to come up with a solution that would claim the loyalty and stir the emotions of the average man on the street. People don’t develop intense emotional loyalty to faceless bureaucrats or to goals of

maximizing corporate profits. How then is the looming crisis of fragmentation in an age of globalism to be resolved?

After a period of relative dormancy, the third geopolitical force mentioned by Cardinal Wyszynski, Roman Catholicism, is increasingly flexing its muscle. The Vatican offers a different worldview than either capitalism or communism. In centuries past it has played a dominant geopolitical role—and now it aspires to do so again.

In 1981 a private meeting took place in the Vatican between the pope and American CIA Director William Casey, a deeply devout Catholic who attended Mass almost every day. Director Casey and President Ronald Reagan had come to believe that “there was a potential third superpower in the world—the 109-acre Vatican city-state—and that its monarch, Pope John Paul II, had at his command a remarkable arsenal that might tip the balance of the Cold War. In a meeting that wouldn’t be revealed to the world for another decade, Casey... helped seal an alliance between the [pope] and the Reagan Administration” (*Reader’s Digest*, Oct. 1996, p. 213, excerpted from Bernstein and Politi, *His Holiness*).

The influence of the Vatican was crucial in bringing about the emergence of a non-communist Eastern Europe in 1989 and, along with that, the collapse of the postwar, bipolar world order. Today, Vatican influence is being felt in the Middle East as well—and is destined to grow markedly.

History Recorded in Advance

Where will the influence of this third force lead? The answer has been recorded in advance, believe it or not! It is found in what to most people would seem an unlikely source—the Holy Bible. In Isaiah 46:10, God tells us that He declares “the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.’” Bible prophecy, which constitutes more than one-quarter of all Scripture, is simply history recorded in advance! What does it reveal about the turbulent times in which we live and the days ahead of us?

In the book of Revelation, God reveals that in the end time a

system He calls “Babylon” will arise in Europe and dominate the whole earth. Revelation 18:9–18 and Ezekiel 27 describe a great worldwide *trading bloc* that will completely dominate the global economy. Babylon involves far more than mere economics, however. It is also a *political system* called the “Beast” (Rev. 17:9–13), possessing great military power and strength (Rev. 13:4). But, as we will see, *religion* is the “tie that binds” this whole system.

The original Babylon, or Babel, was founded by Nimrod in the land of Shinar—in what is now Iraq (Gen. 10:8–11). Here the people—all of one language—came together to build the famous Tower of Babel to keep from being fragmented and scattered. The tower was to reach into heaven—a prideful venture that directly challenged God (Gen. 11:1–4). The Almighty intervened at that point and divided the various nationalities by giving them different languages (vv. 5–9). This halted construction of the tower.

This parallels our modern time remarkably. In fact, the economic and political integration of European nations with their different languages has frequently been compared with the ancient Babel project. As an example, the European Commission sponsored a widely distributed poster of the Tower of Babel and the words, “Europe—Many Tongues, One Voice.”

Nimrod also promulgated an idolatrous system of worship known as the Babylonian Mysteries. It may surprise you to learn that this essentially pagan religion, though changed in form, has persisted to our day. Referred to by God as “Mystery, Babylon the Great” (Rev. 17:5), it will play a major role in end-time events, as this booklet will show.

Jesus Christ warned His disciples in Matthew 24 that there would be false prophets who, while claiming to represent Him, would lead people astray with a false message (vv. 5, 24). Through His apostles, He warned of a time when a great charismatic religious leader—“THE false prophet”—would work apparent miracles and “lying wonders,” which would deceive the vast majority of people on earth, even in this modern, secular age (2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13; 19:20).

This false religious leader will head up the great Babylonian Mystery system just mentioned. He will ally himself and that

system with a yet-future politico-military leader to arise in Europe. For religion will ultimately be used as the “glue” to bind a fragmenting world together. This is how unity and common identity on a global scale will be achieved.

The bad news about an unholy alliance of false religion with economic, military and political interests is not the end of the story, however. But before we look at the good news that lies beyond the bad, it is important to understand what the Bible reveals about the identity of this prophesied system. Why is it labeled “Babylon”? Will you be part of it and receive the mysterious “mark of the beast”? Scripture shows that multiple millions will be deceived regarding the true nature of this system. Could you be among them?

The ancient abandonment of the Tower of Babel was not the end of Babylon. The city has reappeared throughout history—sometimes literally, sometimes figuratively. In fact, Babylon is God’s name for man’s civilization in general—not just its succession of world-dominating Gentile empires, but particularly its whole system of false values and ideologies. Still, the *ultimate* manifestation of Babylon will appear in the near future.

Read on to understand the clear Bible teaching on this vital subject.

Chapter 2

Keys to an Ancient Mystery

All eyes turned as an elderly man walked into the brightly lit and lavishly decorated banquet room. A mere hour ago the room had been filled with wine-induced laughter and banter, when suddenly, a spine-chilling event halted the revelry. Shocked gasps were followed by an eerie silence and then subdued and frightened whispering.

The occasion was a great banquet thrown by Babylonian King Belshazzar to celebrate the invincibility of Babylon, now capital of the New (or Neo-) Babylonian Empire—also known in history as the Chaldean Empire. Though Babylon was under attack by the troops of Cyrus the Great of Persia—modern Iran—the besieged inhabitants believed their city walls to be impregnable.

So, on the first evening of the seventh month in 539 B.C., the powerful elite of Babylon celebrated and drank toasts. Belshazzar had even insisted on using as drinking goblets the sacred vessels his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar II had taken from the temple in Jerusalem decades earlier (Dan. 5:1–4). At the height of this celebration, a hand appeared out of thin air and wrote a message in large letters upon the wall (vv. 5–6). The party was over.

The inscribed message read, “MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN” (v. 25). The words were well-known Chaldean terms for units of weight, but the significance was utterly incomprehensible to those watching.

The elderly man summoned by the king was named Daniel (v. 13). He had been brought captive to Babylon as a Jewish teen and had risen to high office under King Nebuchadnezzar. He explained to Belshazzar the mysterious and frightening message. The God of heaven had numbered the kingdom and it was at an end. The king had been “weighed in the balance” and found wanting. That very night his kingdom was to be delivered into the hands of the besieging Medes and Persians (vv. 26–28).

Within hours, Cyrus' army totally overran the city. The Euphrates River, which flowed into Babylon underneath mammoth gates, had been diverted by a canal several hours earlier. And so, in the dark, predawn hours, Persian troops waded into the city through the mostly drained riverbed. Isaiah had prophesied Cyrus' amazing victory almost two centuries earlier (Is. 45:1–4)! Before sunrise, Babylon lay conquered and King Belshazzar had been executed.

Setting the Stage

That evening and the next day, Daniel's mind must inevitably have wandered back to events from some 65 years earlier. In 604 B.C., the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar had swept into Judah and captured the city of Jerusalem, reducing Judah to a tributary state. Many children of prominent Jewish families, including Daniel himself, were taken captive to Babylon. During the decades that followed, Daniel rose to high positions in the Babylonian government (Dan. 2:48; 5:29). The God of Israel, whom he continued to serve faithfully, gave him many visions and interpretations of visions, which he recorded in the book of the Bible bearing his name.

Let's look carefully at the prophetic outline of world events that God inspired him to record. As will become obvious, the Bible interprets itself, and Daniel is pivotal to understanding the book of Revelation and other end-time prophecy.

In Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar had a troubling dream that he wanted his court magicians and astrologers to explain to him. But before he would hear their interpretation of it, he required them to first tell him what he had dreamed. Of course, they could not. Finally Daniel came to the king and explained that there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets and would reveal not only the dream itself, but the interpretation as well (v. 28).

Daniel then explained that the dream was of a great image rising above the plains of Shinar. This mammoth human form had a head of gold, arms and chest of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron and feet of iron mixed with ceramic clay (vv. 31–33). Finally, in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, a great stone of supernatural



origin (“cut out without hands”) came down from heaven and smashed into its ten toes, at which point the whole image turned to powder and blew away. The stone then became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth (vv. 34–35).

What did all of this mean? We don’t have to guess. As already mentioned, the Bible interprets itself! Daniel was inspired to tell Nebuchadnezzar in verses 37–38, “You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom... and wherever the children of men dwell... He has given them into your hand, and has

made you ruler over them all—**you are this head of gold.**” Nebuchadnezzar reigned over other kings as an emperor—the head of a great conquering kingdom or empire. Since the terms “king” and “kingdom” are often interchangeable in Bible prophecy (cf. v. 44; 7:17, 23), the head of gold was both Nebuchadnezzar himself as well as the Chaldean Empire that he ruled.

Daniel also told the king that *three more kingdoms* would arise in turn after his (2:39–40). Thus, history was to be dominated by four world-ruling empires. And as each succeeding metal of the image was stronger, so would each succeeding empire be greater in military might. Finally, the king was told that the God of heaven would set up His everlasting Kingdom in the time of the final contemporaneous ten kings who are represented by the toes on the feet of the “iron legs” of the fourth kingdom (v. 44).



Neo-Babylonian Empire

It is emphasized in Daniel 2:28 that the Living God whom we serve “reveals secrets.” The king’s dream reached in time sequence from the days of ancient Babylon and King Nebuchadnezzar to the

“latter days.” Clearly the dream culminates with the return of the “stone” from heaven, Jesus Christ (cf. Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:4–8), and the establishment of the *fifth* and *final* world-ruling kingdom—the “mountain” or Kingdom of God—on this earth (Dan. 2:44). Have the events Daniel foretold come to pass just as he said they would? Absolutely. Let’s see how.



Persian Empire

Then, beginning in 333 B.C., the Greek forces of Alexander the Great crossed over from Europe to Asia. Two years later, at the Battle of Arbela, the Persian Empire collapsed and the third great world-ruling kingdom took over. This **Greco-Macedonian** or Hellenistic Empire of Alexander and its four divisions among his successors dominated the Middle East for about 300 years until the divisions were finally swallowed up, one



**Roman Empire with
West and East Divisions**

In Daniel 5, as recounted earlier, Babylon fell to the armies of Cyrus the Great. Clearly, his empire of the **Medes and Persians** was the next kingdom to arise after Babylon—the *second* kingdom. History tells us that the vast Medo-Persian Empire established by Cyrus continued for a little more than 200 years.



**Alexander's Empire and
Subsequent Four Kingdoms**

(1) Cassander's; (2) Lysimachus';
(3) Seleucus'; (4) Ptolemy's

by one, by the fourth great world-ruling empire, the kingdom of iron.

This fourth kingdom, clearly identified in history as the **Roman Empire**, was prophesied to continue as two “legs” all the way down to the time of the end. At that time, the ten toes (i.e. kings, v. 44) would constitute the final embodiment of

this system that had its origins in ancient Babylon. If we let the Bible interpret itself, this progression of mankind's four world-ruling kingdoms followed by *God's Kingdom* is clear.

The Beasts of Daniel 7

In Daniel 7, decades after Nebuchadnezzar's vision, Daniel himself had quite an unusual dream. He stared transfixed at dark, swirling clouds and a raging sea. From this stormy sea he saw four great creatures or "beasts" emerge, one at a time, and come ashore. The first was like a lion, the second a bear and the third a four-headed leopard. The fourth beast was described as a terrible creature with great iron teeth (vv. 4–7). From its head, ten horns protruded. This dream, just as Nebuchadnezzar's, culminated in a vision of the time when "the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever" (v. 18).

Do we let our imaginations run wild in trying to discern the identity of these creatures? No—for understanding Bible prophecy is not intended by the God who inspired it to be a mere exercise in creative imagination. Neither is prophecy to be understood by reading contemporary events *into* the Bible account. Rather, contrary to popular conception, "no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20). When the Bible uses symbolic language, we must look elsewhere in the text for the meaning of the symbols (Is. 28:9–10).

Do we see "beasts" emerging from a sea elsewhere in Scripture? Yes! In Revelation 13 and 17. (We will examine *these* beasts in detail later in this booklet.) In Revelation, the waters of the sea represent "peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues" (17:15). Evidently each of these beasts arises from a conglomerate of different nations and peoples.

In Daniel 7:17, the four creatures that arose successively (vv. 3–7) symbolize four kings or kingdoms. Verse 23 specifically refers to the fourth beast as representing the "fourth kingdom on earth." We've already seen from Daniel 2 a succession of four kingdoms. The visions recorded in Daniel 2 and 7 both foretell

four successive world-ruling empires. In each case the scenario ends with the establishment of a fifth and final world-ruling kingdom—the Kingdom of God. Clearly these two visions are recording different details of *the same set of events*.

By comparing the two visions, we find that the first kingdom in Daniel 2, the head of gold, is equated with the lion, the king of beasts, in chapter 7. This represents the Babylonian Empire. The second kingdom, the kingdom of silver in chapter 2, is the bear in chapter 7—an apt symbol of Persia’s ponderous size and might. Likewise, the third kingdom in chapter 2, that of bronze, corresponds to the seventh chapter’s four-headed leopard. The catlike stealth and quickness of Alexander’s Greek armies is pictured well by a leopard. But why four heads?

At the height of his achievements, Alexander suddenly died in Babylon at the age of 33. An initial attempt to hold his empire together by a joint regency in the name of his nephew and his unborn son failed. One of his generals, Antigonus, made a bid for power. But within a few years, the empire ended up split among four of Alexander’s *other* generals—Seleucus, Ptolemy, Cassander and Lysimachus.

All four of these kingdoms, Greek in language and culture, were a divided continuation of the empire Alexander had built and maintained for less than a decade. This fourfold division was specifically prophesied in Daniel 8.

Here Daniel foretold more details of the interaction of the second world-ruling kingdom, Persia, and the third kingdom, Greece. Daniel 8:3–4 describes a two-horned ram going out to subdue everything in all directions. According to verse 20 this ram represented “the kings of Media and Persia.” A powerful male goat with one great horn coming up from between its eyes then defeats the ram completely (vv. 5–7). According to verse 21, “the male goat is the kingdom of Greece: and the large horn that is between its eyes is the first king.” This certainly refers to Alexander the Great. He died—“the large horn was broken” (v. 8)—and then what? “Four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power” (v. 22). Amazing! These four kingdoms

are none other than those of Alexander's generals, as we have seen. That is why the third kingdom of Daniel 7 is described as a four-headed creature. This was all prophesied more than two centuries in advance with astonishing accuracy!

All of the preceding events set the stage for the fourth beast of Daniel 7. It is a creature too terrible to be characterized by any known animal. This is the "iron kingdom." In chapter 2 it is represented as two legs of iron—and in chapter 7 as a creature possessing great iron teeth. Daniel 2:40 explains, "And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters all things; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others." Notice what chapter 7 says about this fourth kingdom. "Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet.... The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces" (vv. 19, 23). It is this fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire, that is pictured as continuing in some form or another until the time of Christ's return.

Just as Media-Persia had absorbed Babylon, and Alexander the Great had absorbed the empire of the Medes and Persians in turn, so the Romans absorbed all four of the "leopard heads" that arose from Alexander's empire. Here's how it happened.

In 307 B.C., less than 20 years after Alexander's death, Antigonus and his son, Demetrius, "took the title king, whereupon Ptolemy and Seleucus, Cassander, and Lysimachus did the same. The unity of Alexander's empire was thus openly ended" (William L. Langer, *Encyclopedia of World History*, 1968, p. 90).

Cassander seized **Greece and Macedonia**—the first leopard head—and, with the aid of Lysimachus and Seleucus, triumphed over Antigonus who was slain at the Battle of Ipsus in 301 B.C. However, Cassander's dynasty was overthrown in 276 by Antigonus' grandson of the same name. Antigonus II established

a dynasty that ruled Greece and Macedonia until the Roman conquest of 168 B.C. absorbed this area into the Roman Empire.

Lysimachus, who seized **Asia Minor** and proclaimed himself king in 305 B.C., was eventually defeated and slain at the Battle of Corpedium in 281 by his former ally, Seleucus. Eumenes I, the Seleucid governor of Pergamum in Asia Minor, succeeded in becoming virtually independent of the Seleucids by about 260 B.C. By 230, his successor had taken the title king. When Attalus II died in 133 B.C., he left his kingdom of Pergamum, which now encompassed nearly all of Asia Minor, to the Romans in his will. Thus Rome had now absorbed the second head of Daniel's leopard.

Seleucus established his kingdom stretching from **Syria** in the west to India in the east. The Seleucid dynasty that sprang from him continued until 64 B.C., when Roman General Pompey made Syria a province in the ever-expanding Roman Empire. Three heads down—one to go.

The Macedonian general Ptolemy took the title king at the same time as Cassander, Lysimachus and Seleucus. His kingdom was centered in **Egypt** and continued, under the rule of his descendants, until 31 B.C. That year, the forces of Ptolemaic Queen Cleopatra and her Roman consort, Mark Antony, were defeated at the Battle of Actium by Julius Caesar's nephew, Octavian (later known as Augustus Caesar). Egypt was then absorbed into the Roman Empire. "This brought to an end the last of the Hellenistic monarchies" (Langer, p. 97). Now all four heads of the Greco-Macedonian leopard were an integral part of the Roman Empire, the fourth beast of Daniel 7.

Our story is not over. In the next chapter, we will look at a similar prophecy in the book of Revelation. There are more beasts, horns and other strange symbols to come.

Chapter 3

The Beast of Revelation Revealed

Napoleon, Hitler and Saddam Hussein have something in common. So also do Mikhail Gorbachev, Benito Mussolini, Franklin Roosevelt and various popes. All of them, along with numerous other public figures, have been labeled by some of their contemporaries as the mysterious “Beast” of the book of Revelation. The League of Nations, the United Nations, international Communism and even the United States government have also been labeled the Beast by some in this 20th century.

Others argue, however, that the book of Revelation is an allegory of the battle between good and evil—in which the Beast is the personification of evil, not a historical figure or power structure.

It seems that most would-be interpreters start with what they see on the world scene and then attempt to read that into the Bible. For example, many Bible prophecy commentators in the 1950s and 60s identified the “scarlet beast” of Revelation as the Communist Soviet empire. A few years ago it was Saddam Hussein. Today, many Fundamentalist commentators identify the Beast as the “New World Order” or the United Nations. There seem to be just about as many interpretations as there are interpreters!

But remember, the Bible interprets its own symbols. Just what does Scripture reveal about the Beast? Does secular history agree?

The Beast from the Sea

Near the end of the first century A.D., the now-elderly Apostle John gazed out over the Mediterranean Sea across the sandy shore of the Isle of Patmos. As dark clouds lowered and the sea seemed to churn, a very strange creature appeared to rise up out of the water. It had the body of a leopard, the mouth of a lion and the feet of a bear. It thus embodied the strongest characteristics of the first three

creatures Daniel had seen in his vision recorded in Daniel 7. However, the Beast that John saw had seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 13:1–2). We are told that the “dragon” gave this Beast its power and authority. Finally, we are told that one of the creature’s heads was wounded to death. But this fatal wound was healed and the Beast continued for 42 months (vv. 2–5).

This is strikingly similar to the scene described in Daniel 7. In Daniel’s vision, remember, four creatures—a lion, a bear, a four-headed leopard and another terrible creature with ten horns—emerge from a dark, stormy sea (vv. 1–7). These four beasts have a sum total of *seven heads*. The creatures that Daniel saw clearly represented the succession of empires from Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon to Media-Persia, then to Alexander’s Hellenistic Empire (which split four ways after his death) and finally to the Roman Empire. It is from the fourth creature, symbolizing Rome—the seventh *head*—that the “ten horns” arise.

Notice the similarity of the two accounts. In each case there are seven heads. In Revelation 13, John saw one creature, not four distinct ones as Daniel did. But both prophets saw seven heads and ten horns and both saw likenesses of a lion, a bear, a leopard and a terrible creature. So with all these similarities, why are there also *differences* in the visions?

When Daniel received his vision, virtually all of what he saw was yet future. Babylon, symbolized by a lion, *was* on the scene, but the others were yet to come. When John wrote, more than 600 years later, Babylon, Persia and Greece had all been swallowed up by Rome. Where Daniel focused upon four empires, John saw one continuous system that had begun with Babylon. He saw the



various empires as merely different heads of *the same creature*—the seven heads of prophetic “Babylon.” From Daniel’s vision, we know the system continues until the return of Christ, when the saints will take over and possess the kingdom (Dan. 7:18).

So just what is all this symbolism? Once again, the Bible interprets its own symbols. As we’ve seen, Daniel 7:23 makes plain that the seven heads among the four creatures represent kingdoms. Similarly, the seven heads of the scarlet Beast of Revelation 17 are identified as “seven mountains” or “seven kings” (vv. 9–10). And according to Daniel 7:24 and Revelation 17:12, horns too are symbolic of kings or kingdoms. In prophecy, horns are used to represent power or ruling authority. So it is clear that the heads and the horns of Revelation 13 represent kings or kingdoms. Supporting this conclusion, John saw each of these horns bearing a crown (v. 1).

The dragon, who empowers this system, is plainly identified in Revelation 12:9: “the great dragon... [is] that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan.” Satan himself is symbolically pictured as a “great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems [royal crowns] on his heads” (v. 3). Here the heads and horns of prophetic Babylon are seen as springing from the Devil himself, the real “ruler of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30). It is perhaps significant that, around the time of its greatest extent, the Roman Empire adopted the red or purple dragon as one of its main military emblems—and it eventually became the ceremonial standard of the later East Roman emperors!

What of the head John saw that was “wounded to death” and then healed? *Which* head was it? Remember, of the Beast’s seven heads described in Revelation 13, only the final one, the Roman Empire, was still thriving in John’s day. The previous six heads—Babylon, Persia and the four Hellenistic kingdoms—had already passed into history at the time of his writing. None of them had come back to life. Nor could they *after* the Roman Empire of John’s day. Otherwise, there would be *yet another* humanly conceived, world-ruling empire—contrary to the succession outlined in the book of Daniel. So the *Roman Empire* was the head that would be fatally wounded and later come back to life for 42

prophetic “months.” As we will see, this did in fact happen.

For centuries, the date used as the line of demarcation between ancient and medieval history has been A.D. 476. This date, the traditional “fall” of the Roman Empire, marks the conquest of Rome by “barbarians” from the north and the murder of the last emperor of the West, Romulus Augustulus. In the next chapter, we will examine this empire’s subsequent revival—the “healing” of the deadly wound.

But first, let’s notice another matter about the Beast’s seven heads, described in both Daniel 7 and Revelation 13. Daniel explains that the ten horns (i.e. kings or kingdoms, 7:24) spring from the last head—Rome. So ten kings or kingdoms were to come from the Roman Empire. But would they be contemporaneous or sequential?

Daniel tells us that “there was another horn, a little one, coming up among [the ten horns], before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots” (v. 8)—i.e. the first three kingdoms “fell” before the little horn, “whose appearance was greater than his fellows” (v. 20). Verse 24 says he would be “different” from the other kings and would “subdue three kings.” What does this mean? Apparently the ten horns are successive kingdoms that come from the Roman system, the first three of which are removed at the behest of a comparatively smaller, yet in some ways greater, power structure emerging from Rome. Let’s look at Roman history to see the fulfillment of this prophecy!

The Story of the First Three Horns

In A.D. 286, Emperor Diocletian divided the Roman Empire into West and East for administrative purposes. The Western Empire retained Rome as capital while the Eastern Empire would come to be headquartered at the city of Byzantium. Emperor Constantine the Great dedicated it in 326 as New Rome, but those after him called it Constantinople. It is today the city of Istanbul, Turkey. The two divisions, usually having separate emperors, were symbolized by the two “legs” described in Daniel 2. At times, a single emperor would reign over both until 395, when the separation became permanent. After this, serious trouble lay

ahead for the Western leg. By the 400s, the Empire in the West was in its death throes. There had been barbarian incursions on the frontiers for years, until finally Rome itself was sacked and looted for the first time in eight centuries! This was accomplished by the Visigoths under Alaric in 409.

As the Roman Empire in the West collapsed, the leaders of three groups of barbarian invaders—the **Vandals**, the **Heruli** and the **Ostrogoths**—sought to succeed the Western emperors. As we shall see, each barbarian group sought and received official recognition of its kingdom from the emperor in the East as a continuation of legitimate Roman government in the West. There was another emerging ruler in the West, however, who eventually effected their overthrow and ouster.

This leading figure was the bishop of Rome—known now as the pope. (This title of *papa*, meaning “father,” had been held by many bishops, though, and would not exclusively apply to the bishop of Rome until the 800s.) While the Western emperors grew weaker, he conversely emerged with increased power and stature. This involved not only greater religious power over the professing Christian community, but increased civil and political power as well. But how did a “Christian” leader come to dominate a *pagan* empire?

Since the days of the first Caesars, the state pagan religion was no longer focused on the worship of Jupiter and the old Roman gods. It centered, instead, on worship of the emperor as a god on earth. The title of the high priest of Jupiter, *Pontifex Maximus* (“supreme bridge builder” between men and the gods), was conferred on Julius Caesar and later Augustus—from which point it was borne by the Roman emperors. Conquered societies were allowed to practice their own religions as long as they also worshiped the emperor. This naturally posed a problem for adherents of Judaism and Christianity, who recognized only the one Creator God.

Consequently, the Jewish state was destroyed by the Romans (A.D. 66–70). And for 250 years, all who were called Christians faced severe persecution. Yet despite that, their religion continued to grow.

Finally Constantine the Great became the first emperor to

profess Christianity in 312. The next year, he issued the Edict of Milan, granting freedom of religion to Christians. Paganism was still tolerated, but Constantine encouraged everyone to become Christian. The emperor gave Rome's pope the lavish Lateran Palace and had him clad in imperial raiment and crowned as an earthly ruler. Government offices were filled with Christians, and the church grew in power—allied with the Empire!

Constantine saw the growing religion of Christianity as a way to unify the various peoples of the Empire. But this first required unity within the various sects of nominal Christianity itself. In 321, he upheld the Roman Church's idea of keeping "the venerable day of the sun" (Sunday) instead of the seventh-day Sabbath that Christ and the original apostles had kept (more on this later). In 324, Constantine declared Christianity the official religion of the Empire. The next year, he convened the famous Council of Nicea to settle some raging doctrinal controversies.

One dispute concerned when to keep the Christian Passover—either the specific Jewish date that Christ and the apostles had observed or the day the Roman Church kept, later called Easter Sunday. The Council ruled in favor of Easter—those who persisted in the original practice were subsequently executed (as seventh-day Sabbath keepers would also be later). Thus the formerly persecuted had now become the persecutors!

Another dispute, the **Arian controversy**, was about the nature of God. Arius, a priest in Egypt, had been teaching that Christ was a *created* being, subordinate to the Father. Roman Catholicism favored the Trinity—the idea of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as three coeternal and coequal Persons in one God. (For the amazing truth on this subject, write for our free booklet, *The God You Can Know!*) The Trinity was adopted as official "orthodox" doctrine by the Council. Yet Arianism, though now outlawed, persisted in many regions. In fact, when invading barbarians would convert to Christianity, it was often to Arianism.

In 337, Constantine himself finally received a deathbed baptism. Despite a short-lived attempt to return to paganism by his nephew Julian, Christianity grew in power until, during the reign

of Theodosius the Great, paganism was outlawed and conversion to Christianity became mandatory. Moreover, Theodosius made Roman Catholicism the official religion of the entire Empire. In fact, prior to his ruling a united Empire—when he was emperor of only the East—he and Gratian, his co-emperor in the West, both rejected their pagan priestly title of *Pontifex Maximus*. They did so in deference to the Catholic Church, whose bishop of Rome now went by that same title! This is why the pope, even today, is called the pontiff.

Of course, the fall of Rome in the West was a severe blow to the power of the papacy. The invading Vandals, Heruli and Ostrogoths professed Christianity, but it was the Arian form. Their “unorthodox” was viewed by Roman Catholics as a threat to the religious unity of the West under the bishop of Rome.



Kingdom of the Vandals

The **Vandals** invaded North Africa in 429, and several years of fighting with Rome ensued. But through a treaty in 435, these barbarians were “recognized” by the Romans as the legitimate continuation of the Empire in North Africa (cf. Langer, p. 135). Still not satisfied, the Vandals sought to expand

their power as Roman successors. In 455 they even pillaged the city of Rome itself—so thoroughly that, to this day, the term “vandal” describes anyone who maliciously defaces the property of others. The Vandals left Rome with the Western emperor still on the throne—but they continued to exercise power throughout Roman North Africa. Ultimately, however, they were uprooted. “In Africa the Vandals were hated as Arians [by the Catholics]... but their power was not broken until the 533–548 Vandalic Wars of [East Roman Emperor] Justinian” (p. 159). In 533, Justinian would dispatch his brilliant general, Belisarius, with 500 transport ships and 92 warships to rid Africa of the Vandals. But first, two more kingdoms would be established in Italy.

In 476, about 20 years after the Vandals sacked Rome, the

Heruli under Odoacer (or Odovacar) deposed the last West Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus. This official end of the Western imperial monarchy—the end of the West Roman Empire—was Rome’s “deadly wound.” Odoacer was “recognized” by Eastern Emperor Zeno in Constantinople as the legitimate continuation of Roman government in Italy (cf. p. 135). But he too was an Arian—a fact greatly



Herulian Kingdom of Italy Under Odoacer

resented by the Roman pope, who appealed to Zeno. So Zeno sent Theodoric, the leader of the barbarian Ostrogoths, as his “agent” to drive out the Heruli in 488 (p. 135). “The orthodox bishops of Italy, disliking Odoacer’s Arianism, supported the Arian invader [Theodoric] as representing an almost orthodox emperor. With their help Theodoric broke Odoacer’s sturdy resistance in five years of war, and persuaded him to a compromise peace [in 493]. He invited Odoacer and his son to dine with him in Ravenna, fed them generously, and slew them with his own hand” (Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization*, vol. 4, pp. 97–98). Thus, the Heruli were uprooted.



Kingdom of the Ostrogoths

Ostrogothic rule of Italy was accepted for a while as a necessary evil in getting rid of the Heruli. For Theodoric “maintained a formal subordination to Byzantium.... He accepted the laws and institutions of the Late Western Empire.... [And] though an Arian, [he] protected the orthodox Church in her property

and worship” (p. 98). But over time, the Arian Ostrogoths became increasingly unpopular with Rome’s pope and the Catholic population. “The catholics were attached to [East Emperor Justinian], who... trod the narrow path of inflexible and intolerant orthodoxy” (Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 2, p. 477). And in 535, during Justinian’s Vandalic Wars (already mentioned), the Byzantine forces led by Belisarius

arrived in Italy to drive out the Ostrogoths. The Roman population “hailed Belisarius as a liberator, the clergy welcomed him as a Trinitarian” (Durant, p. 109). This began the Gothic Wars, which ended 18 years later when Justinian’s troops finally expelled the remaining Ostrogoths from Italy.

Thus ended the “transition age,” as it’s called by historian Philip Van Ness Myers (*Ancient History*, 1904, p. 571). The first three “horns” had been plucked up by Roman Catholic sanction. So the bishop of Rome and the universal church he heads stand clearly identified as the little horn with “eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words” (Dan. 7:8). But consider what this means. Daniel saw the little horn “making war against the saints [true Christians], and prevailing against them” (v. 21). And the prophet was told in his dream, concerning this horn, “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” (v. 25).

But how can this be? Isn’t the Roman Catholic Church the “mother church” of Christianity? Why is the papacy portrayed as acting *against* God, His people and His “times and law”? These questions will be answered in due course. Suffice it to say for now, the Roman Church *has* done these things—as we will see.

Now with the three Arian kingdoms uprooted, the stage was set for the first *true* revival of the Roman Empire in the West in 554. Unlike the first three of the ten horns, the last seven horns or Roman revivals would all involve the blessing of the Roman pope—just as in the Late Roman Empire itself. He would be an intimate player in the various continuations of the empire of ancient Rome in the West.

Chapter 4

All Roads Lead to Rome

The tourist posters display a magnificent Rome—the famed “City of Seven Hills,” all covered with architectural glories of the past. Rome is a city of contrasts. Ancient ruins and old buildings jostle side by side with a thriving, modern city. More than 27 centuries have come and gone since its legendary founding at the hands of Romulus and Remus. During this long expanse of time, the remarkable city has played an unparalleled role in the history of Western civilization. Rome—the “Eternal City” of power and intrigue!

Nestled within the city of Rome itself is the world’s smallest sovereign territory, Vatican City. Maintaining its own diplomatic relations with all of the world’s major powers, this minuscule city-state ruled by the Roman pontiff is a full participant in international affairs. The Vatican aspires to much more, however. It seeks to return to the center stage of world politics that it occupied for so many centuries.

Let’s return now to our story. As we’ve seen, when Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 are compared, it is apparent that the “ten horns” (kingdoms) that are mentioned must have originated in the Roman Empire, which is the seventh head of the “Beast.” Though Rome’s ancient empire received a fatal wound with the death of the last emperor in A.D. 476, that was not the end of the story! The first three horns or kingdoms springing from the old Roman Empire—the Vandals, Heruli and Ostrogoths—were uprooted by Emperor Justinian at the behest of Rome’s pope. Justinian “reconciled the proud and angry spirit of the Roman pontiff, and spread among the Latins a favourable report of his pious respect for the apostolic see,” i.e. the papal office (Gibbon, p. 477).

That left seven horns. Justinian would “heal” the “deadly wound” in 554 and launch the first of *six* historical attempts with papal sanction to revive and carry on the empire of ancient Rome. But since there were *seven* horns left—not just six—a seventh

and final revival must be yet to come. Your life is to be profoundly affected by events *yet to take place* in the “Eternal City”!

The Lady of Kingdoms

Let’s look at the pope-sanctioned revivals thus far. With the conclusion of the Gothic Wars in A.D. 553, Italy was left in poverty and disorder. Rome had been besieged, starved, captured and looted. Finally the Byzantine armies succeeded in reconquering Italy and remnants of the Western Empire. **Justinian**, already the emperor in the East, was now the restored emperor in the West. But how was he to govern this recovered territory? The answer lay in an alliance of church and state that has shaped the history of Western Europe ever since. Though secular authority in the West had collapsed, “the survival of ecclesiastical organization [under



**Byzantine Empire
Under Justinian**

the bishop of Rome] appeared even to the emperors as the salvation of the state. In 554 Justinian promulgated a decree requiring that ‘fit and proper persons, able to administer the local government, be chosen as governors of the provinces **by the bishops** and chief persons of each province’” (Durant, pp. 519–520).

This healing of Rome’s “deadly wound” is known in history as the “Imperial Restoration.” The emperors in Byzantium would continue as nominal rulers of a revived *Imperium Romanum* (“Roman Empire”) in the West from 554 until 800. By the terms of Justinian’s decree, however, the Roman popes took the real reins of government in the West—metaphorically sitting astride and riding the imperial Beast.

This remarkably parallels the prophecy in Revelation 17. The story of seven revivals is told here too—symbolized by *another* “Beast” with seven heads and ten horns. However, it is important to note a significant difference between this Beast and the ones described in Revelation 13 and Daniel 7. Unlike those, the Beast

in Revelation 17 is **ridden by a woman**.

Notice what John saw: “And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 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. And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” (vv. 3–6). Just who *is* this woman?

First of all, let’s see how the Bible uses the symbol of a woman elsewhere. Revelation 12 pictures a woman with a crown of 12 stars, who gives birth to the Christ child (vv. 1–5)—a clear reference to Israel with its 12 tribes, each symbolized by a star (cf. Gen. 37:9–10). Ancient Israel, God’s Old Testament nation or “church” (Acts 7:38 KJV), was pictured as a woman married to God (cf. Jer. 3:14). However, Israel and Judah often “played the harlot” with other gods and national rulers (cf. Ezek. 23). Their capital, Jerusalem, is represented as the same woman (cf. Ezek. 16).

Now, the New Testament Church is the “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16), and spiritual Jerusalem above is called “the mother of us all” (4:26). The true Church is the woman throughout the remainder of Revelation 12. John calls her “the elect lady” (2 John 1). She is to marry Christ at His return (Eph. 5:22–32; Matt. 25:1–12; Rev. 19:6–9). As “King of kings and Lord of lords” (v. 16), Church and State will be united through Him at that time. Meanwhile, the true Church is not to “play the harlot” by being politically entangled with the governments of this

world. She is not to commit spiritual “fornication” in some premarital church-state arrangement. She is prophesied to remain a “little flock” (cf. Luke 12:32)—persecuted by the world (Matt. 5:10–12; Luke 6:26).

So the fallen woman in Revelation 17 is clearly a *false* church “with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication” (v. 2). Like an ancient temple prostitute, she grants favors to various rulers in exchange for their support of her false religion—only the favors are now political. Rather than a persecuted little flock, she is a huge church, “great” in influence, which is *doing* the persecuting! Just how great? Decked in royal garb, she rules over “peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” (v. 15)—most directly the Roman Beast.

According to Scripture, the seven heads of *this* Beast are “seven mountains on which the woman sits” (v. 9). Aside from meaning seven successive kingdoms, as the next verse shows, this also clearly points to the City of Seven Hills—Rome! Verse 18 says the woman “is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.” The next chapter reveals that city to be “Babylon,” but its current manifestation from the time John wrote until now has been Rome. As a continuation of Babylon, Isaiah 47 calls her the “daughter of Babylon” and the “Lady of Kingdoms” (vv. 1, 5). This is clearly the same woman (cf. v. 8; Rev. 18:7).

Who else—or *what* else—could be meant but the Church of Rome? Is not this an exact parallel to the little horn of Daniel 7 that persecutes God’s *true* Church? What other church has conducted an “Inquisition” through which multitudes—including God’s faithful people—were slaughtered? Only the Roman Church has presided over such butchery.

The system is labeled “Mystery, Babylon the Great”—a perpetuation of the pagan Babylonian Mysteries, now grown great and powerful. In the next chapter we will see how it has mixed pagan elements with corrupted biblical themes to form mainstream “Christian” doctrines. Is there *another* “Holy Mother Church” that so perfectly fits the description of the “Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth”?

Only the Roman Church has ridden the Beast. She first rode it during the Late Roman Empire, in the days of Constantine and

Theodosius. Then she is pictured riding its “seven heads”—the Roman revivals beginning with Justinian. These seven heads or kingdoms (cf. Rev. 17:10) correspond to the last seven of the ten horns of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13, following the three uprooted by Catholic sanction. Let’s now examine the other “heads” that followed Justinian—the heads of the “Holy” Roman Empire.

The Holy Roman Empire

In the years following Justinian’s Imperial Restoration, the Eastern emperors generally focused their attention and resources closer to home. The security provided for the West by Constantinople became negligible. Meanwhile, the Carolingian dynasty, which ruled over the Franks (in modern France), was emerging as the protector of Western Christendom. To secure this role, private negotiations were held between Carolingian King Charlemagne and Pope Leo III—the results of which were made manifest in A.D. 800.

“On Christmas Day, as Charlemagne, in the [mantle] and sandals of a *patricius Romanus* [Roman noble], knelt before St. Peter’s altar in prayer, Leo suddenly produced a jeweled crown, and set it upon the King’s head. The congregation, perhaps instructed beforehand to act according to ancient ritual as the *senatus populusque Romanus* [senate and people of Rome] confirming a coronation, thrice cried out: ‘Hail to Charles the Augustus, crowned by God the great and peace-

bringing Emperor of the Romans!’

The royal head was anointed with holy oil, **the Pope saluted Charlemagne as Emperor and Augustus**” (Durant, pp. 468–469).

After several years of dispute, the Byzantine emperor recognized the Frankish king as co-emperor. Thus the *Imperium* in the West passed to the second “horn” of the Beast of



Charlemagne’s
Carolingian Empire

Revelation 13 following the three uprootings—also the second “head” of the scarlet Beast of chapter 17. Both “heads” mentioned so

Prophetic “Babylon”: The Successive Reigns of Gentile Kingdoms

Image (Daniel 2)	4 Beasts (Daniel 7); <i>Ram and Goat (Daniel 8)</i>	Beasts from Sea and Earth (Revelation 13)	Harlot Riding Scarlet Beast (Revelation 17)	Symbolic Meaning	Historical Fulfillment	
Head of Gold (vv. 32, 38)	Lion (7:4)	7-Headed Beast from Sea with Lion Mouth,		1st Head of Babylon	Neo-Babylonian (or Chaldean) Empire, 625–539 B.C.	
Chest and Arms of Silver (vv. 32, 39)	Bear (7:5); <i>2-Horned Ram (8:3–4, 20)</i>	Bear Feet		2nd Head of Babylon	Medo-Persian Empire 558–330 B.C.	
Belly and Thighs of Bronze (vv. 32, 39)	4-Headed Leopard (7:6); <i>Male Goat with Large Horn and 4 Notable Horns (8:5–8, 21–22)</i>	and Leopard Body (v. 2)		3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Heads of Babylon	Hellenistic Empire of Alexander the Great and Its 4 Divisions 333–31 B.C.	
2 Legs of Iron (vv. 33, 40–43)	Beast with Iron Teeth and 10 Horns (7:7, 23–24)	7th Head of This Beast Has 10 Horns (v. 1)	7-Headed Scarlet Beast (v. 3) (ridden at some point by Harlot described below)	7th Head of Babylon	Roman Empire 31 B.C.–A.D. 476 (Constantine declares “Christianity” official religion in 324)	
		Deadly Wound (v. 3)		Apparent End of Beast	Fall of Rome (A.D. 476)	
	1st Horn (uprooted)	1st Horn		3 Successive Horns (barbarian followers of Arianism destroyed on papal authority—this period called the “transition age” in Philip Myers’ <i>Ancient History</i> , p. 571)	Kingdom of the Vandals A.D. 429–533	
	2nd Horn (uprooted)	2nd Horn		Heruli (under Odoacer) A.D. 476–493		
	3rd Horn (uprooted)	3rd Horn		Kingdom of the Ostrogoths A.D. 493–554		
	Little Horn among the 10 (7:8, 20–22, 24–27)	2-Horned Lamb-Like Beast from Earth and Image (vv. 11–18)	Royally Clad Harlot Named Mystery, Babylon the Great (vv. 1–6)	False Christian Religion Ruling the Beast	Roman Catholic Church under the Pope (in the “image” of the Roman civil government)	
	4th Horn	1st of Last 7 Horns; Deadly Wound Healed	Beast Continues 1,260 Years after Healing (v. 5) A.D. 554–1814	1st Head of Scarlet Beast Ridden by Harlot	Revivals of the Beast: The 7 last horns of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 are the same as the 7 heads of the Scarlet Beast of Revelation 17 (5 of which are “fallen” when Napoleon is defeated in 1814—v. 10)	Imperial Restoration of the West under Justinian (554)
	5th Horn	2nd of Last 7 Horns		2nd Head Ridden by Harlot		Carolingian Empire (Charlemagne crowned in 800)
	6th Horn	3rd of Last 7 Horns		3rd Head Ridden by Harlot		Holy Roman Empire (Otto the Great crowned in 962)
	7th Horn	4th of Last 7 Horns		4th Head Ridden by Harlot		Hapsburg Dynasty (Charles V crowned in 1530)
	8th Horn	5th of Last 7 Horns		5th Head Ridden by Harlot		Napoleon’s Empire 1804-1814
	In 1814, 1,260 years after the Deadly Wound was healed in A.D. 554, the “Holy Roman Empire” ended with Napoleon’s crushing defeat. According to Willis West’s <i>Modern History</i> , “so closed a government that dated from Augustus Caesar” (p. 377).					
	9th Horn	6th of Last 7 Horns	6th Head Ridden by Harlot	“One IS” (Rev. 17:10)—now understood by God’s Church in end time (Dan. 12:9–10)	Italy and Germany ending in the Hitler-Mussolini Axis 1870–1945	
10 Toes on 2 Feet of Iron Mixed with Ceramic Clay (vv. 33, 42)	10th and Final Horn	7th of Last 7 Horns	7th Head Ridden by Harlot (with 10 Horns); 8th System if Beast Itself Is 1st (v. 11)	Other Revival That Has “NOT YET COME” (Rev. 17:10)	Last Revival of the Roman Empire (10 national rulers under a single leader)	

far—Justinian and Charlemagne—were allied with the bishop of Rome, having arisen at papal behest and with papal blessing.

Historian Will Durant explains, “Out of this intimate co-operation of Church and state came one of the most brilliant ideas in the history of statesmanship: the transformation of Charlemagne’s realm into a Holy Roman Empire that should have behind it all the prestige, sanctity, and stability of both Imperial and papal Rome” (p. 468).

During the century and a half that followed Charlemagne’s coronation, his empire slowly disintegrated under weak successors. By 936 the German Saxons had become the most powerful group in central Europe. In 955 Otto, Duke of the Saxons and now King of the Germans, defeated the Magyars, who were attempting to invade Western Europe from the east. Several years later he entered Italy at the request of Pope John XII to restore him to power and, in the aftermath, received the crown of the Roman Empire of the German Nation—the first German *Reich*—in 962.



**Otto's Roman Empire
of the German Nation**

“Thus once again the ghost of the Roman empire was summoned to sanction the successful state building of a semi-barbarian king” (William McNiel, *Handbook of Western Civilization*, p. 317). The coronation of **Otto the Great** as emperor marked the inauguration of the third head in the continuity of the restored Western Empire.

What was the significance of Otto’s revival of the Empire to his contemporaries and their successors? Note what historian Robert Hertzstein wrote in his introduction to *The Holy Roman Empire in the Middle Ages*: “The Empire was understood not as a mere term, but as a universal Christian regent for God on Earth, to exist until the coming of the Anti-Christ. Like Charlemagne, Otto received his throne through the Papal claim that the Roman Church had been the only Imperial elector since the early fourth century.... The Holy Roman Empire was thus to a large extent German in its ethnic and political base, Christian in its moral justification, and

Roman in its claim to legitimacy and universality” (p. viii).

In an essay titled “The Empire as a Regency for God on Earth,” noted Austrian historian Friedrich Heer writes, “The task of the Empire was to be God’s protagonist on earth, to fulfill His aims here, to protect Christianity and the Church, and to preserve the righteousness of God and the divine order of the universe on earth. The earthly Empire was the transitory reflection of the eternal City of God.... In the imperial symbols this claim was displayed to the whole world: with the imperial apple, filled with earth from the four corners of the world, the Emperor holds the whole world in his hand.... [The emperor] called the imperial crown *corona urbis et orbis* [the crown of the city, i.e. Rome, and of the globe]; he viewed himself as the *caput mundi* [head of the world] and as the *dominator orbis et urbis* [ruler of the globe and of the city]” (Hertzstein, pp. 64–65).

Otto’s revived Holy Roman Empire continued for almost 300 years. Finally, with the death of Conrad IV in 1254, the Empire became so rent by rival factions that 19 years went by without an emperor. Afterward, Rudolph I was elected Emperor in 1273. He was the first of the Hapsburg family to be elevated to the imperial throne.

The apex of this fourth revival of the Roman *Imperium* was the crowning of Rudolph’s descendant, Charles I of Spain, as Holy Roman Emperor **Charles V** by Pope Clement VII in 1530. Charles ruled over a vast empire. From his mother Joan, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, he had inherited Spain and all its possessions in the New World. From his father he inherited vast



**Holy Roman Empire
and Other European Lands
Under Charles V Hapsburg**

Hapsburg domains in Germany, Italy and Central Europe. After Charles V, Hapsburg power waned. And by the 18th century, “Holy Roman Emperor” was an increasingly empty title.

In the final decade of the 18th century, all of Europe was shaken by the French Revolution. In its wake, a man both highly gifted and supremely ambitious came to power in France. His name

was Napoleon. Aspiring to far more than the French presidency or even to being a new king of France, his ambition could only be satisfied by the re-establishment of the Roman Empire with himself as emperor. As Will Durant notes, “he dreamt of rivaling Charlemagne and uniting Western Europe” (vol. 11, p. 243).

Napoleon considered himself successor to Caesar and Charlemagne. Staging a popular election that he won almost unanimously, Napoleon had the French Senate proclaim him emperor on May 18, 1804. Immediately he began negotiations with Pope Pius VII to come to Paris and consecrate him as emperor. The negotiations were successful and the coronation occurred December 2.

Meanwhile, the Hapsburgs of Austria, who maintained their claim on the title of Holy Roman Emperor, were hit hard by the successive military and diplomatic advances of Napoleon—including his assumption of the imperial title. This was particularly so when, two years after he did so, 16 princes and their states withdrew from the Hapsburg’s Holy Roman Empire, formed the Confederation of the Rhine and asked Napoleon to



**Napoleon's French
Empire in Europe**

take them under his protection as a part of *his* empire. The following month, on August 6, 1806, Francis II of Austria renounced his now-empty title of Holy Roman Emperor. Napoleon’s European empire now stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Elbe River. France, Spain, Italy, Holland, Belgium, Germany and all French

and Spanish New World territories—the greater part of the Americas—formed his vast empire. **Napoleon** thus became the fifth head of the revived Western *Imperium*.

Napoleon’s empire was not destined to be long-lived, however. A British-led coalition brought about his defeat and abdication in 1814. This ended a period of 1,260 years since the Imperial Restoration under Justinian in 554. Thus the prophecy in Revelation 13:3–5 of the Beast’s mortal wound, subsequent healing and

continuation for “forty-two months” was fulfilled (42 thirty-day “months” is equal to 1,260 prophetic “days” or actual *years*—see box: “Forty-Two Months”). Napoleon’s abdication marked the end of an era. According to historian Willis Mason West, “so closed a government that dated from Augustus Caesar” (*Modern History: Europe from Charlemagne to the Present Time*, 1944, p. 377).

But according to the prophecies of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 and 17, there were yet to be two more attempts to revive the grandeur of ancient Rome.

One More Down, One to Go

After Napoleon’s collapse in 1814, Germany and Italy remained divided and powerless for the next half-century. Each was rent with internal squabbles among a number of

Forty-Two Months

Revelation 13:5 says the Beast would continue for “forty-two months” after its “healing.” Are these 42 literal months?

Let’s look at another 42-month period. Revelation 11 is wholly set in the end time (vv. 14–15). The beginning of the chapter mentions Jerusalem being trodden down by Gentiles for **42 months**. We also read of God’s two end-time witnesses prophesying then for **1,260 days** (v. 3). These two periods are synonymous. And a little arithmetic shows that each month must be 30 days (for $42 \times 30 = 1,260$). This period is also **3 1/2 years** (42 months divided by 12 months in a year). Since the context makes clear that the two witnesses are actual individuals who are killed and then resurrected in the very end time (vv. 7–14), we conclude that the 42 months here equals 1,260 literal days.

The Beast chapter (Rev. 13), however, does not occur in such a short period. It spans centuries, from the time the Beast (the Roman Empire) receives a deadly wound (the fall of Rome in A.D. 476) and is subsequently healed (Justinian’s Imperial Restoration in 554) all the way to the end time. If the 42 months of verse 5 were 1,260 literal days, the revived Roman Beast would have continued for 3 1/2 years from 554 to 558. Yet Justinian himself did not even die until 565! So there must be another explanation.

Scripture shows that a *day* can sometimes symbolize a *year* in Bible prophecy (cf. Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6). So if 42 months equals 1,260 days, then a day for a year here gives us 1,260 years. Was there such a period of **exactly 1,260 years** of imperial continuity since Justinian’s restoration? Yes—from then (554) to Napoleon’s abdication and exile in 1814! This interpretation certainly makes the most sense.

small states and principalities. By 1871, Bismarck had succeeded in uniting all of non-Hapsburg Germany under the Prussian King, William—forming the second German *Reich*—while Garibaldi succeeded in uniting all of Italy under the northern Italian King of Sardinia-Piedmont, Victor Emmanuel.

Fifty years after Garibaldi's unification, a strongman rose to power in Italy with visions of restoring the grandeur and glory of ancient Rome once again. His name was Benito Mussolini. And in 1922, he led his Fascist party to power. The Fascists derived their name from the imperial Roman *fasces*—an ax wrapped in a bundle of rods, signifying unity and authority. It was carried in ancient times by a Roman consul as a symbol of his office.

In 1870, King Victor Emmanuel's Italian army, led by General Garibaldi, defeated the armies of the pope and captured Rome. From that time on, there was a tense standoff between the popes and the new rulers of Italy. Finally, in 1929, **Mussolini** signed the Lateran Treaty with the papacy. This treaty established the papal sovereignty of Vatican City, affirmed Roman Catholicism as the only religion of Italy and made Mussolini's the first Italian government in modern history to be officially recognized by the pope.

Eager to restore "glory," Mussolini looked for places to conquer. Ethiopia, whose army had routed the Italians from East Africa in 1896, seemed a likely prospect. Mussolini's forces successfully invaded Ethiopia and Somaliland. In 1936, he pompously proclaimed that what Italians were seeing was, "after fifteen centuries, the reappearance of the Empire on the fated hills of Rome." Mussolini then entered into an alliance with Adolf Hitler, ruler of Germany—now in its "Third Reich"—resulting in the Rome-Berlin Axis of World War II. This sixth attempt at uniting Europe by reviving imperial Rome went down in flames in 1945.



**Hitler-Mussolini Axis
During World War II**

Revelation 17:10 makes an interesting statement about the

seven heads of the Beast ridden by the woman: “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.” Notice the time frame here. “Five have fallen,” i.e. Justinian, Charlemagne, Otto, Charles V and Napoleon—spanning the 1,260 years the Beast was to continue, from 554 to 1814. Then the verse says, “one IS.” But Hitler and Mussolini were not around when John wrote this prophecy. The time frame must then be reckoned from *when this prophecy was to be revealed*.

This parallels a statement in Daniel, a book that must be read in conjunction with Revelation to properly understand end-time events. The prophecies in these books *were not meant* to be understood until this modern age. Daniel recorded, “Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, ‘My lord, what shall be the end of these things?’ And he said, ‘Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed **till the time of the end**. Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, **but the wise shall understand**’” (12:8–10).

And indeed the meaning of these prophecies came to be generally understood by God’s Church at the very time indicated—the time of the “sixth head,” the Hitler-Mussolini Axis. How truly remarkable this is! Furthermore, it gives added proof that since that revival, humanity has been living in the end time. Notice also that “the other [revival] has not yet come” (Rev. 17:10). This is how Mr. Herbert Armstrong *knew* that another world dictator would yet emerge from a united Europe *after* World War II. Are you, too—like the “wise”—beginning to understand?

Many said in the aftermath of the war that Europe’s day was gone. Cities, countryside and national economies were devastated throughout the continent, especially in Germany. It seemed to many that Russian Communism was the wave of the future in Europe. After all, following the war, Stalin quickly stamped the Russian boot on as much of Europe as he could. The idea of a German-led Europe playing a dominant role in world affairs was something most observers said could never again happen.

Yet in 1957, within 12 years of the war’s end, a fledgling

Common Market (the European Economic Community or EEC) was instituted by the Treaty of Rome. It began the next year with France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. In 1967 it became the European Community (EC). Ireland, Britain and Denmark joined in 1973, followed by Greece in 1981 and Spain and Portugal in 1986—12 nations in all. The EC was the direct predecessor of today's powerful European Union.

The process of European unification has been greatly endorsed by the Vatican. On November 9, 1982, Pope John Paul II gave a speech in Spain in which he said to Europeans, “Revive your roots”—and expressed his fervent wish for them to establish a united Europe “from the Atlantic to the Urals.”

And now, what of the future? Is the European Union paving the way for the seventh and final attempt at *reviving Europe's roots*—resurrecting the grandeur and might of imperial Rome?

Prophecies for Our Day and Beyond

As we have learned, the seven heads of the scarlet Beast of Revelation 17 are seven successive kingdoms (v. 10)—the seven resurrections of the Holy Roman Empire. We have already examined the first six. The coming seventh head is also described as “the eighth, and is of the seven” (v. 11). It is the “eighth” Holy Roman system if you count the scarlet Beast itself—that is, the *original* Roman Empire in the days of Constantine—as the first one.

The seven heads here correspond to the last seven of the “ten horns” of the Beasts in Daniel 7 and Revelation 13. So what do the “ten horns” here in Revelation 17 represent? Verse 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.” Just as “king” and “kingdom” are interchangeable in prophecy, so the Beast is the name of the coming revival of the Holy Roman Empire *and* of its Hitlerian leader—the individual referred to here. “These [ten rulers] are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast” (v. 13). When? “These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them” (v. 14).

So the time setting is yet ahead of us because these ten will fight against Christ at His return. Thus the ten *horns* mentioned here in Revelation 17 correspond perfectly to the ten *toes* of the great image of Daniel 2. Remember, these ten toes—five on the foot of each leg—are smashed by Christ at His return to set up the final world-ruling kingdom, the Kingdom of God (vv. 34–35, 42–44). The ten toes of Daniel 2 and the ten horns of Revelation 17 are clearly synonymous. They symbolize ten rulers who will collectively support and give their allegiance to the seventh and final resurrection of the Roman Empire.

As we know, the legs of the image in Daniel 2 represent the Roman Empire, divided into West and East. Bible prophecy focuses on the continuation of the Western Empire, the Beast ridden by the harlot. But from Daniel 2, it is apparent that the eastern leg has a part to play in the final revival. The East Roman Empire continued to be ruled from Constantinople until 1453, when the Ottoman Turks overran the city and killed the last emperor, Constantine XI.

However, that was not the end of the eastern leg. Nineteen years after the fall of Constantinople, in 1472, the pope performed a marriage ceremony between Ivan the Great, Duke of Muscovy (modern western Russia), and Zoe, niece and heir to the last Eastern emperor. “The marriage was of importance in establishing the claim of Russian rulers to be the successors of the Greek emperors and the protectors of Orthodox Christianity.... Ivan took the title *Tsar* [or *Czar*], i.e., Caesar” (Langer, p. 342). Thus, down through history, the Roman Empire has continued as two legs. There were two individuals claiming to be the successors of Caesar. In the West the form of the title was *Kaiser*; and in the East it was *Tsar*.

The tsars and the kaisers are no more. Yet remaining of their empires are numerous European nations that have their roots in the old Roman Empire. Nations whose heritage is Greek, Slavic and Orthodox derive from the eastern leg of the Empire, while those with Latin, Germanic and Catholic heritage derive from the Western Roman Empire. From among these nations will ultimately arise ten leaders who will change the face of both Europe and the world!

God’s Word reveals that eventually these ten kings (or rulers) will unite. Daniel 2 shows us that they represent the end-time

successors of both the western and eastern legs of the Empire—since there are five “toes” on the foot of each leg. It is surprising how closely the east-west division of Europe today—as defined by the now-obsolete Iron Curtain—matches up with the ancient imperial division. The coming ten rulers, and their leader, will form the last resurrection of the Roman Empire—the final successor and embodiment of Babylon. However, of the former Soviet bloc nations that will probably be part of the Beast, some will apparently break with the system before the end and join Far Eastern powers to actually fight *against* the Beast—as we’ll see near the end of this booklet.

What will be the nature of the final Roman union? “And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay” (vv. 42–43). It seems that despite all the work of the globalists toward superseding national identities, the various ethnic and local rivalries will assure that this final empire remains loosely knit and short-lived. Yet while it lasts, it will be very powerful.

So before the good news of Christ’s return, there is bad news ahead. The final ten rulers will give their support to a coming union of church and state in Europe that will aspire to world dominance. Johannes Haller, a popular German historian who died in 1947, stated, “In the memory of the German people the old [Holy Roman] Empire lives on as a time of greatness and splendor that must one day come to life again.”

After a short interlude of apparent peace and prosperity, this system will plunge the whole world into a hellish nightmare. Without God’s intervention, utter destruction would result and all mankind would perish (Matt. 24:21–22). But God *will* intervene—by sending Jesus Christ back to this earth (vv. 29–30).

The Bible reveals that dark days are before us. It tells us that those who remain will be compelled to receive the “mark of the beast.” But it also says that those who do will face horrible torment at Christ’s return. Just what is this mark? Will you have to receive it? What can you do about it now? These questions will be answered in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

The Mark of the Beast

There is perhaps no prophetic subject that has elicited more conjecture and speculation than the “mark of the beast.” In addition to a “mark,” Revelation 13 also mentions an “image of the beast” and the mysterious “number of his name”—666. It even mentions “*another* beast.” What is the significance of these mysterious symbols?

In years past, all sorts of suggestions have been advanced to identify the mark. Back in the 1930s, some in America connected it with the Social Security cards required by the Roosevelt administration. Others have seen sinister implications in the universal product codes read by electronic scanners in supermarkets. Still others have been suspicious of various identification cards and even bank ATM and credit cards. A number of Protestant Evangelicals expect some sort of tattoo or implanted computer chip to be foisted upon an unsuspecting populace.

But all of these wild guesses are just “shots in the dark.” We can’t really understand any particular biblical symbol unless we examine *everything* the Scriptures have to say about it.

The Image of the Beast

Let’s consider the symbols in the order in which they appear in Revelation 13. The first is the *other beast*, “coming up out of the earth” (v. 11). We know, then, that it has an earthly origin, not a heavenly one, even though it outwardly appears “like a lamb”—thus seeking to be identified with Christ, the Lamb of God (cf. John 1:29). Worse still, while masquerading as Christian, it “spoke like a dragon”—receiving its power, therefore, from the devil, that old dragon (Rev. 12:9). And this creature is pictured with two horns, representing rule or authority. Moreover, Revelation 13:12 reveals that this Beast “exercises all the

authority of the first beast [the Roman Empire] in his presence.” And it insists that all give their allegiance and loyalty to the Holy Roman Empire, the Beast whose deadly wound was healed.

Clearly there can be no mistaking this false church that exercised “all the authority” of the Roman Empire. What else but the Church of Rome could be indicated? No other religious institution insisted on loyalty to the Holy Roman Empire throughout the medieval period. And what of the two horns? This church has been, and still is, both an ecclesiastical and a civil government. Its head is both a religious leader and a civil head of state. But what about the “great signs” this church performs in the Beast’s presence (vv. 13–14)? Throughout the centuries, “miraculous” events have been reported within the false church—although none have been of the caliber portrayed here. The answer is that, as Bible prophecy shows, the church-state union of the Middle Ages was a forerunner of end-time events, which will be similar but on a much grander scale. At the end time, a final leader of this religious system will arise called the “false prophet.” It is he who will perform the “great signs” (19:20).

According to Revelation 13:14, the Beast from the earth—the great false church—instructs its adherents to make an “image” of the Beast from the sea, the Roman Empire. What *is* an image? It’s a copy, model, representation or counterpart. The “image of the beast” is therefore a counterpart of the old Roman Empire, something modeled after the pagan Roman kingdom or government. Notice the plain statement by British historian and statesman James Bryce that the “papal [system] itself had been modeled after the elder Empire” (*The Holy Roman Empire in the Middle Ages*, p. 53).

Note also the analysis of historian Will Durant: “It became a triumphant Church by inheriting the organizing patterns and genius of Rome.... As Judea had given Christianity ethics, and Greece had given it theology, so now Rome gave it organization.... **The Roman gift was above all a vast framework of government, which, as secular authority failed, became the structure of ecclesiastical rule.** Soon the bishops, rather than the Roman prefects, would be the source of order and the seat of power in the

cities; the metropolitans, or archbishops, would support, if not supplant, the provincial governors; and the synod of bishops would succeed the provincial assembly. The Roman Church followed in the footsteps of the Roman state” (vol. 3, pp. 575, 618–619).

Using the institutions and practices of the Roman Empire as a model, a humanly devised church governmental structure was adopted. Political maneuvering became a substitute for seeking God’s will. Popular and appeasing teachings were substituted for the plain Word of God, which offers correction and rebuke.

The Roman Empire of the first century was authoritarian. But many don’t realize that election to various offices was also a time-honored practice. Even the emperor was elected, ostensibly by the Senate, but more commonly by the Praetorian Guard or simply by the army. And in the Roman municipalities, public meetings were held to elect officers. Notice what historian Arthur Boak says: “These municipalities were patterned closely after Rome, although certain titles, like those of consul and Senate, were reserved for the capital city.... All officials were popularly elected” (*A History of Rome to 565 A.D.*, 1965, p. 370).

Dr. Boak goes on to say that the organization of Roman professional and religious associations—called colleges—“was modeled on that of the municipalities” (p. 371). Even some early true Christian congregations were apparently deceived into following their example of electing officials after the municipal pattern. In time, these congregations would be Christian in name only. Regarding the structure within the communities of the developing Catholic Church, Dr. Boak adds, “In their organization these communities were all of the same general type, resembling the Roman religious *collegia*” (p. 401). In fact, the “college” of pagan priests, based on Roman civil government, was the forerunner of the “College of Cardinals,” which today elects the pope. Yet in the Roman Church, as in Roman civil government, once officials were elected, they ruled with rigid authoritarianism in a well-defined hierarchy.

Historian Edward Gibbon records the state of affairs in nominal Christianity following Constantine’s reign, as influenced by the election model:

But the episcopal chair was solicited, especially in the great and opulent cities of the empire, as a temporal rather than as a spiritual dignity. The interested views, the selfish and angry passions, the arts of perfidy and dissimulation, the secret corruption, the open and even bloody violence, which had formerly disgraced the freedom of election in the commonwealths of Greece and Rome, too often influenced the choice of the [supposed] successors of the apostles [*Triumph of Christendom in the Roman Empire*, p. 336].

The problem with the Catholic Church was not that it had an organized hierarchy—for that’s a God-ordained pattern (cf. 1 Cor. 14:33; Ex. 18:21–26). Rather, the problem here was that the Roman Church substituted a human political structure—a model of the old Roman Empire—in place of the government of God. In God’s government, elders are to be *appointed*—based upon their “fruits”—by those Christ has already set as leaders in His Church (cf. Titus 1:5–9). God’s government, based upon His law, is validated by positive fruit being borne (Matt. 7:15–23; cf. Num. 17:7–10)—such as the carrying out of God’s will as revealed by His Word. In this way, God makes it plain whom He is working through, and we submit to those human leaders as long as they continue to follow Christ (1 Cor. 11:1).

But, as portrayed in Revelation 13, the large, visible church demanded *total* allegiance to its governmental structure—the “image of the beast.” This allegiance basically amounted to idolatrous “worship” because adherents were required to unquestioningly obey the church government, even if it went against the Holy Bible and sought to “change times and law”—which it would (Dan. 7:25). Those who refused, it would “cause” to be killed (Rev. 13:15). Remember the death penalty for keepers of the original Passover date and the seventh-day Sabbath during the Late Roman Empire? Neither then, nor during the Middle Ages, did the Roman Church normally carry out the punishment directly. Rather, those who refused to follow the system were declared heretics and anathema (cut off) from Christ by the church. Those so branded were considered enemies of the state and were, more often than not, punished by the *civil* government.

The Venerable Day of the Sun

A wrong form of government was not the only worldly element incorporated by the great false church. To attract more converts, this “daughter of Babylon” had a regular practice of adopting pagan themes and celebrations and pasting the name of Christ over them. Commenting on the transparency of this deception, historian Will Durant says, “**Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it**” (vol. 3, p. 595).

While it is true that, through pagan religion, Satan counterfeited many elements of the true religion—such as the death and resurrection of a savior—it is also true that he added many false ideas. This tactic has been so pervasive and apparently “successful” that most of the world religion called Christianity today is not really of Christ at all. Faced with traditional Christian teaching, Durant stated, “Christianity was the last great creation of the ancient pagan world” (p. 595). He added, “**Christianity became the last and greatest of the mystery religions**” (p. 599). Thus its name—Mystery, Babylon the Great!

One of the greatest hallmarks of the ancient mystery religions was the veneration or worship of the sun. In ancient Babylon, the first of the four world empires, kings served as high priests of Bel-Marduk, the sun god. To “take the hand of Bel-Marduk” was part of the king’s inauguration ceremony in Assyria and Babylon (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Babylonian and Assyrian Religion,” 11th ed.). The winter solstice was celebrated as the birthday of the sun. Festivities included gift-giving and displaying the sacred evergreen tree.

Not only did much of pagan worship in Babylon focus on the sun, but so did the religions of Babylon’s successors—Persia, Greece and Rome. In fact, sun worship rose to prominence as the imperial religion in each of these empires.

In Persia, Babylon’s first successor, many worshiped Mithras, the god of light. As a result of Babylonian influence, however, Mithras came to be identified with the Babylonian sun god. The Greeks of Asia Minor identified Mithras with *their*

ancient sun god, Helios, and the cult of the sun spread westward. Alexander the Great traveled to the Egyptian Temple of Amon-Ra to be proclaimed by the priests as the literal son of the sun god.

And what of Rome? Prior to the days of the Empire, there was a cult devoted to Sol, the sun. But what about *during* the Empire? Wasn't the deified emperor the focus of Roman worship? Yes, but sun worship was also promoted by the emperors and even linked with emperor worship—so much so that “Mithras, identified with Sol Invictus [Unconquered Sun] at Rome... became the giver of authority and victory to the imperial house” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Mithras,” 11th ed.).

Lempriere's *Classical Dictionary* states that Sol, the sun god of Rome, was worshiped as the Baal or Bel of the Babylonians (p. 590). In modern Syria is a tiny Arab village called Baalbek, the site of the ruins of two majestic temples, once the pride of Heliopolis, the Greco-Roman “City of the Sun.” According to Durant, “Augustus planted a small colony there, and the town grew as the sacred seat of Baal the Sun-God.... Under [Emperor] Antoninus Pius and his successors Roman, Greek, and Syrian architects and engineers raised, on the site of an old Phoenician temple to Baal, an imposing shrine to *Iuppiter Heliopolitanus*” (vol. 3, p. 511). Thus the Roman god Jupiter was identified with Baal, the ancient sun god.

At another important temple of pagan sun worship in Heliopolis, Egypt, stood a great obelisk considered sacred to the sun god. Around A.D. 40, Roman Emperor Caligula had this obelisk transported from Egypt to Rome and set on Vatican Hill. In 1586, by order of Pope Sixtus V, this huge ancient obelisk was moved a short distance, with great effort, to its present location—exactly centered before the entrance of St. Peter's Basilica, the main cathedral of the Vatican.

Thus, sun worship and its symbols were adopted by the Roman Empire from her predecessors and passed on to the entire Western world! *World Religions from Ancient History to the Present* explains the growth of sun worship in concert with Roman emperor worship:

It was natural that as the centre of gravity of the Roman empire moved eastwards, sun-worship should grow in power. It was already strong in imperial propaganda; Nero's Golden House was an appropriate home for the incarnate sun, and Antoninus accorded the sun peculiar honour. Under the Severan dynasty sun-worship became dominant; the sun-god was portrayed with Severus's characteristic beard, and the emperor took the title INVICTVS (unconquered), which was the peculiar epithet of the sun.... The sun was a superb unifying symbol and rallying-point for the whole empire.... In AD 274 Aurelian established the sun-god as the supreme god of the Roman empire [editor Geoffrey Parrinder, p. 175].

Aurelian, emperor from 270–282, ascribed much of Rome's third-century moral and political chaos to religious disunity. He sought to unite the whole empire in the “worship of the sun-god, and of the Emperor as the vicar [substitute] of that deity on earth.... He built at Rome a resplendent Temple of the Sun, in which, he hoped, the Baal of Emesa and the god of Mithraism would merge.... Aurelian advanced that [“easternization”] of the monarchy which... would complete itself in Diocletian and Constantine” (Durant, p. 639).

Constantine—considered Rome's first Christian emperor, as we've seen—was himself a devotee of the sun god. “In fact the emperor Constantine's Christianity was ambiguous. His family owed traditional allegiance to the sun-god; the famous vision of the cross as he marched on Rome came to him from the sun; the sun continues to appear on his coins through the decade, and on his arch at Rome; his own statue at Constantinople bore the rayed crown of the sun-god” (Parrinder, p. 175).

The sun even had its own special day of the week, which we now call “Sunday.” The seven-day week itself had originated at creation (Gen. 2:1–3; cf. Ex. 20:11), and the knowledge of the correct weekly cycle was preserved by the Jews, who called each weekday by when it fell after the Sabbath—i.e. first, second, third, etc. But by the first century, the seven-day “planetary week” was being popularized in Rome. Originating in ancient Babylonian religion, it associated each day of the week with the god attached to a particular “planet.” In Roman times, the “seven

planets” were—in week-day order—Sol (the sun), Luna (the moon), Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn. The *first* day belonged to the sun.

As so many other pagan themes had been taken up by the false Roman Church, so too would elements of sun worship, including the honoring of the first day of the week, as briefly noted earlier. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* records, “The earliest recognition of the observance of Sunday as a legal duty is a constitution of Constantine in 321 A.D., enacting that all courts of justice, inhabitants of towns, and workshops were to be at rest on Sunday (*venerabili die solis*)” (“Sunday,” 11th ed.). By this Latin term, more properly translated “venerable day of the Sun,” Constantine was identifying the first day of the week with that day which was honored by custom from ancient times as the day dedicated to Sol, the sun. Thus, this professing Christian, though still an apparent sun worshiper, branded the so-called “Lord’s Day” on Christianity.

However, the church of Rome had long honored this day. Durant states, **“The serious temper of the Jewish Sabbath was transferred to the Christian Sunday that replaced it in the second century”** (p. 599). The original true apostles continued to observe the same Sabbath the Jews did—Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. Indeed, the Catholic Church itself proudly admits, “You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday” (James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, 1917). “The Church,” a Catholic study course tells us, “transferred the obligation from Saturday to Sunday” (*Father Smith Instructs Jackson*).

So this is one way in which the little horn of Daniel 7 would “change times and law.” And he would “persecute the saints of the Most High” (v. 25) who would not go along with his blasphemous changes. In 365, the Catholic Council of Laodicea ruled, “Christians must not Judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honoring the Lord’s Day, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found Judaizing, let them be anathema from Christ” (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*,

vol. 14, p. 148). As we know, this was a virtual death sentence—until the Protestant Reformation of the 15th and 16th centuries!

To learn more about God’s holy Sabbath day, please write for our booklet, *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?* And to find out what happened to Christ’s “little flock,” which continued to keep God’s Sabbath and other commandments despite persecution, also request *God’s Church Through the Ages*. Both are available free of charge.

The Mysterious Mark

The Protestant churches that came out of Roman Catholicism repudiated many Catholic teachings. Unfortunately, Sunday worship was not one of them. For though they often don’t realize it, by continuing in Sunday observance, the Protestant churches acknowledge the supremacy of the Catholic Church over the Bible. This is why the Church of Rome is happy to announce that it changed the day! Catholic Monsignor Segur wrote, “The observance of Sunday by Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church” (*Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, p. 213).

Does that surprise you? Well here’s an even more telling quote from the Roman Church: **“Sunday is our MARK of authority. The church is above the Bible, and this transference of sabbath observance is proof of that fact”** (*The Catholic Record*, Sept. 1, 1923). Their “MARK of authority”? Could this have anything to do with the “mark” mentioned in Revelation 13? It states that the false church “causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (vv. 16–17).

Just what is this “mark”? According to the *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon*, the Greek word here, *charagma*, means “a stamp, an imprinted mark... [used] of the mark stamped on the forehead or the right hand as the BADGE of the followers of the [Beast]... [and] the mark branded upon horses” (entry 5480). So it is probably some kind of badge or brand of identification.

What could be considered the mark or brand of the Beast, the Roman Empire? Could it be Sunday observance or other elements of sun worship, as we've just examined? For whatever this mark is, it has been around for centuries, because all of the righteous martyrs throughout the ages have rejected it (Rev. 20:4). Revelation 13, in describing the interaction of the Catholic Church and the medieval Holy Roman Empire, makes plain that, like the image, both the mark and the number of the Beast's name were around during the Middle Ages as forerunners of end-time events.

Because "no one may buy or sell" without the mark, many look to the "cashless society" we seem to be moving toward, with its account numbers and bar codes. They take the terms "right hand" and "foreheads" in the prophecy to be literal. However, Revelation 14:10 reveals that those who receive the mark of the Beast will have the wrath of God poured upon them—and Colossians 3:6 tells us that the wrath of God comes "upon the **children of disobedience**" (KJV). The mark of the Beast is therefore a figurative brand of disobedience to God, marking those who refuse to keep God's commandments in spite of the preaching of two end-time witnesses and even a final warning delivered by an angel of God (cf. Rev. 14:9-11).

Nowhere in the Bible does God forbid the receipt of an account number, having your name in some computer file or any such thing. Instead, the **mark of the Beast is clearly a brand of disobedience** to God and His laws. Does the Bible show any other kind of mark or sign being received in our foreheads or hands? Yes! Notice in Deuteronomy 6 that God wants us to "keep all His statutes and His commandments.... You shall bind them **as a sign on your hand**, and they shall be as frontlets **between your eyes**" (vv. 2, 8). The hand is symbolic of actions while the forehead is the seat of intellect. This fits perfectly. God's sign in our right hand (actions) and forehead (will) is our keeping His commandments. The Beast's mark involves acting contrary to these commands.

Is there a particular commandment of God that might cause His people problems in "buying" and "selling"—i.e. business operations? Certainly! It is the same one that has always caused such problems for true Christians—the fourth commandment. It

states, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work” (Ex. 20:8–10). In fact, the Sabbath is a mark of obedience that identifies God’s true people. In Exodus 31:13–17, **God declared that His Sabbaths were a “sign” between Him and His people forever.** For as well as identifying the true God of Creation, the Sabbath is the *test* commandment, which helps to identify those who are obedient to His commands and laws (cf. Ex. 16:4).

This should all make sense now. The mark of the Beast is a brand of disobedience to God that many will receive to avoid problems in conducting their personal and business affairs. That means it probably involves the rejection of God’s sign of obedience, the Sabbath. But it also indicates the acceptance of a counterfeit sign or mark, since it involves action and will. And because it is the mark of the *Beast*, it is a brand of identity tracing its roots to Babylon and Rome. Is there such a symbol that has come all the way down to modern times? We already know that there is! It is pagan sun worship, especially in the form of modern Sunday observance. No wonder *The Catholic Record* stated, “Sunday is our MARK of authority”! If it is indeed the mark of the Beast—as it appears to be—then, under the end-time system to come, it will be enforced. What is at issue is the acceptance or rejection of God’s law. Those who have been warned will have to choose between the martyrdom that may possibly follow obedience to God or the wrath of God that will most certainly follow disobedience.

The Number of His Name

What of the mysterious number of the Beast’s name—666? All sorts of ingenious solutions have been devised to label certain individuals with this number. Some think it too esoteric or incomprehensible to even try to decipher. Yet the Word of God says otherwise. Remember from Daniel 12 that the “wise” would understand in the end time (v. 10). Just what kinds of things would they be wise about and have understanding of? Well, all that we’ve been studying of course. But notice this from Revelation 13:

“Here is *wisdom*. Let him who has *understanding* calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: his number is 666” (v. 18). So this is clearly something God wants us to do.

How do we go about calculating this number? The original King James Version says it more clearly: “count the number.” But what are we to count? Verse 17 says it is the “number of his [the Beast’s] name,” while verse 18 says it is the “number of the beast” and the “number of a man.” Which is it? Actually, it is all of the above. For what is the Beast? It’s the Roman Empire *as well as* its leader! But how do we “count” this? Before Arabic numerals became accepted in the Western world in the 13th century, letters of the alphabet doubled as numerals. Most of us are familiar with Roman numerals, where the letters of the Latin alphabet have numeric value. In this system I=1, V=5, X=10 and so on. Hebrew and Greek, the languages in which the Bible was primarily written, both used similar systems. In such languages, any name could have numeric value by converting each of its letters to the number it represented and then adding them all together.

That brings us to the earliest proposed solution to the meaning of 666. It is a tradition attributed to Polycarp—disciple of the same Apostle John who wrote Revelation—preserved in the second-century writings of Irenaeus. The number 666 is “contained in the Greek letters of *Lateinos*” (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*).

This fits well. Revelation was written in Greek to Greek-speaking Churches in Asia Minor—and *Lateinos* is a Greek term meaning “Latin man” or “Roman.” This is certainly the name of the Beast for “Roman” is the name of the empire itself as well as every citizen of it. It should also be noted that Greek writers usually referred to the Roman Empire as “the Latin kingdom” (*h Latine Basileia*), which

ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ (<i>Lateinos</i>)		
Greek for “Roman”		
Λ	(L)	= 30
Α	(A)	= 1
Τ	(T)	= 300
Ε	(E)	= 5
Ι	(I)	= 10
Ν	(N)	= 50
Ο	(O)	= 70
Σ	(S)	= 200
Total		= 666

also has a numeric value of 666. We know of no other kingdom whose Greek name adds up to this same numerical value.

Another interesting explanation hinges on the name of the emperor Nero, who died about 25 years before John wrote Revelation. Though Nero was dead, he had nevertheless been a type of the end-time ruler of the Roman system. After coming to power with promises of constitutional reform and a return to the “Golden Age” of Augustus, Nero Caesar became increasingly cruel and despotic. In an atmosphere of intrigue and conspiracy, he abused his power and was responsible for the first official persecution of Christians by the Roman state. It was during his reign that most of the apostles, including both Peter and Paul, were martyred. When the Greek form of his name, *Neron Kaesar*, is spelled out in Hebrew characters, their numeric value also adds up to 666.

And there are other possibilities. The founder of ancient Rome was Romulus, from whose name “Rome” and “Roman” are derived. This is also the name of the last Roman emperor before the original fall of Rome. The Latin name Romulus is written in Hebrew as *Romiith*. In the Hebrew language this too adds up to 666. Thus, in both Greek and Hebrew, the two main languages of the Bible, the number 666 is stamped all over the Roman Empire. Remember that, when the seventh resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire finally occurs, the great false church will declare that no one may conduct business without receiving not only the Beast’s mark (which we’ve already examined), but also the Beast’s name and number—i.e. “Roman” and what that adds up to. Thus, it seems that all will be compelled to become part of the Roman system.

Perhaps, during the final revival, there will be some numeric significance to either the name, or even a special title, of its leader. But it is important to realize that the Roman system is already stamped with the number 666—and it is that *system* and its end-time resurrection that we have already identified as the Beast. In and of themselves, the various calculations given here are merely indicative of the Beast’s identity. They do not constitute proof. However, when we combine them with what is clear from prophecy, they help to substantiate what this booklet has already concluded.

Chapter 6

An End-Time Tale of Two Cities

The tale of two totally contrasting cities is a thread that runs from the beginning to the end of the Bible. Genesis 10 introduces us to Babylon, or Babel, the city that Nimrod built. In the next chapter, we meet Abraham, a man born in Ur of the Chaldeans, an adjacent town and part of Babylon's ancient kingdom. We are then told in chapter 12 of Abraham's departure, at God's command, from the vicinity of Babylon. In Genesis 14, Abraham comes to Jerusalem (called in ancient times by the shorter form, Salem) to meet with Melchizedek, "priest of God Most High" (v. 18)—later revealed to be the preincarnate Jesus Christ (cf. Heb. 7).

In Revelation, the last book of the Bible, we read of Babylon once again. Chapters 17 and 18 speak of "Babylon the Great" and of its final and total destruction. Just as Abraham was told, God's end-time people are similarly instructed, "Come out of her, my people" (18:4). And also here at the end of the Bible, we again see Jerusalem—in fact, the *New Jerusalem*, the city Abraham waited for, "whose builder and maker is God" (Rev. 21:2; Heb. 11:10).

Jerusalem and Babylon represent two totally opposing systems of government and ways of life. One comes from God. It became the capital of His physical nation of Israel under King David—who established God's tabernacle there. Soon afterward, this was replaced when David's son, Solomon, built a great temple there for God. Also called Mount Zion, Jerusalem would later figuratively refer to God's Church—His spiritual nation whose members are to become rulers in His Kingdom. When that final world-ruling Kingdom is established on earth, Christ will administer it from Jerusalem for more than 1,000 years. And after this, the New Jerusalem will finally come to earth with God the Father.

The other city was built by Nimrod, the first post-Flood tyrant who, rebelling against God and His laws, sought to fashion a one-world government after Satan's design. Babylon is Satan's

historic counterfeit of God's government and Kingdom. After God's intervention at the Tower of Babel, Babylon's prominence rose and fell over the centuries that followed. Finally, in the seventh century B.C., Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, fell to invaders and Babylon came to prominence once again as the chief city of Mesopotamia. The Chaldean Nebuchadnezzar became king of Babylon and launched an expansion drive that gave his kingdom dominance over the entire Middle Eastern world. Some of his conquests included Judah and its capital city of Jerusalem. Around 586 B.C. Jerusalem and the temple of God there were destroyed by the invading Babylonians.

Later, as we saw, the prophet Daniel stood in a hushed banquet hall and interpreted the "handwriting on the wall." The city of Babylon fell that night. After a period of centuries it became a desolate, uninhabited location. Yet as we've learned, the *system* that originated there *didn't* end. It continued through many successors, just as Daniel recorded in advance so many centuries ago.

Though the ancient city Nimrod built was long ago reduced to dust and ruin, the political, economic and religious system that began there became universal. And as we know, in the near future, Babylon is destined to arise once more—in its final end-time embodiment.

What Lies Ahead?

Right now we are living in a turbulent world. There is fear and apprehension about the future. For while science and technology may promise a dazzling "glitter-world" of prosperity, mounting global crises endanger the very continuation of Western civilization and threaten to plunge our world into a new Dark Age. Throughout the world, raging wars burn out of control, transforming local conflicts into international affairs. Populations are dislocated in the face of resultant mass deprivation. This rips at the social fabric of those nations that receive the refugees—as those in Western Europe are now doing. In addition, with the dismantling of the Soviet Union and the subsequent availability of sophisticated

weaponry on the black market, the danger of terrorism is greater than ever. Frankly, many world leaders are frightened!

Responding to these growing socioeconomic and political crises, a great charismatic leader will ultimately arise in Europe. As the Bible has shown us, he will secure a church-state alliance that will offer peace, security and prosperity to a desperate world. Ten European leaders, representing the end-time successors to both the eastern and western “legs” of the Roman Empire, will temporarily unite and lend their power to this future leader. For when people become genuinely frightened about their future, they are apt to trade freedom for security—just as many Germans did in the 1930s.

The end-time manifestation of Babylon will promise the same things Nimrod did to the human family at the Tower of Babel: unity, security and prosperity. This is what Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus the Great, Alexander and Augustus Caesar each offered in turn.

Intensifying political fragmentation around the globe will be countered by the same unifying factor Constantine employed—religion. How will this be facilitated? A worldwide ecumenical movement will seek to bring everyone under the same religious umbrella.

And by the time the European superstate emerges with its powerful, charismatic head, multiple millions all over the globe will have been caught up in a religious frenzy fed by displays of supernatural power by the *other* charismatic leader we have previously mentioned, the False Prophet. The Apostle Paul referred to him as “the man of sin... the son of perdition” and “the lawless one” (2 Thess. 2:3, 8). This False Prophet will head Mystery, Babylon the Great—called by Paul “the mystery of lawlessness,” which had already begun in his day (v. 7). We have seen just a little how the great Roman Church has sought to subvert God’s commandments.

Confirming all we’ve concluded thus far, Paul wrote, “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (vv. 9–10). Let’s face it—most people today want a religion that will bolster them emotionally. The

activities and pronouncements of this coming religious leader will magnify the expectations of a new *golden age* for all mankind.

The powerful war-making apparatus of the coming European superpower will be billed as the cornerstone of world peace and security. As in times past, the world will ask, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” (Rev. 13:4). A police state will probably be created to enforce government decrees, such as that concerning the mark of the Beast. And modern technology may well enable it to be a totalitarian regime—the likes of which Hitler and Stalin could only have dreamed. Perhaps people will accept such measures as the price for getting rid of violent crime and terrorism once and for all.

Dark times are coming. And the English-speaking nations will not be spared. In fact, as explained in one of our other publications, the coming European superstate, will wreak utter devastation on the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia and New Zealand. Those who survive will be carried away captive by the Beast and herded into slave labor camps. Jesus Christ referred to this terrible time as the “great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt. 24:21). (To learn more about this subject, please write for our free brochure, *America and Britain in Prophecy*.)

Initially, other nations around the globe will experience an economic upsurge. The newly formed worldwide trading bloc, prophesied in Revelation 18, will be hailed as the key to universal prosperity. In Ezekiel 27, the city of Tyre, an ancient center of commerce, is also used as a type of this end-time, Europe-centered global economy. Taking advantage of confiscated wealth from conquered America and Britain as well as slave labor, those at the helm of this system will, for a short time, enjoy unparalleled wealth.

But fatal flaws, inherent in the system from the beginning, will in time produce ever-widening cracks. The end-time European ruler will become involved in Middle Eastern affairs. We find this in Daniel 11. Because this chapter contains the longest and most detailed prophecy in the Bible, there is space in this publication for only a brief synopsis. The prophecy spans the

time from the Persian Empire all the way to the last days. Verse 4 shows Alexander's empire dividing into the four parts we've seen. The rest of the chapter focuses on the ongoing struggle between the "king of the North" and the "king of the South"—from the geographic perspective of the Holy Land, called the "Glorious Land" in the prophecy.

At first, the king of the North was Alexander's general Seleucus and his successors, who ruled Syria (*north* of Judea), whereas the king of the South referred to Ptolemy and his successors in Egypt (*south* of Judea). But later, when the Romans took over Syria in 65 B.C., the Roman state became the kingdom of the "North." (Note that when *Egypt* was swallowed up by Rome in 31 B.C., the Roman leader did not then become the king of the *South*—because he was already the king of the *North*.) The king of the South at the end will probably be a powerful Arab leader who will bring about a temporary confederation of much of the Islamic world (cf. Ps. 83:5–8). He will somehow provoke the end-time king of the North into launching a *blitzkrieg* against him, which will result in European occupation of much of the Arab world—as well as the land of Israel (Dan. 11:40–43).

On the religious scene, the Roman Church's headquarters will apparently be moved to, or already be in, Jerusalem at that time. Notice that the False Prophet "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" (2 Thess. 2:4). In more than one sense, this has long been the case. For instance, the pope is called "Holy Father"—the name of God the Father (John 17:11; cf. Matt. 23:9)—as well as the "Vicar of [substitute for] Christ." According to one Catholic publication, "the Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he IS Jesus Christ, hidden under a veil of flesh" (*The Catholic National*, July 1895). But Paul, as just noted, mentions something about sitting in the temple of God. Other scriptures also support the reconstruction of a literal Jewish temple in Israel—something many orthodox Jews continually campaign for. So it seems that the end-time religious leader will actually enthrone himself in

that temple dedicated to God!

How will major nations of the East—like Russia, India, China and Japan—view all this? In Ezekiel 27, we see some of them initially participating in the commerce system: Meshech, Tubal and Togarmah (vv. 13–14) are widely accepted references to the people of Moscow, Tobolsk (in central Russia) and Siberia respectively. But these nations—at most, very superficial converts to this Western system and inherently suspicious of the German-led Europeans—will have deepened suspicions as a result of European actions in the Middle East. Rumors of this discontent from the Far Eastern capitals “and the north” (Moscow is almost due north of Israel) will ultimately cause the Europeans to launch a preemptive strike to cow the East into submission (Dan. 11:44). For a while the war machinery of the Beast, who came out of the abyss or “bottomless pit” (Rev. 9:1–12; cf. 17:8)—figuratively the realm of Satan (cf. 9:11)—will prevail. But then the tables will be turned, resulting in the utter destruction of much of Europe, including Rome itself, by the Eastern alliance with its vast military force of 200 million troops (vv. 13–18; 18:10, 17).

Again, Russia must certainly be part of this eastern alliance since we see “Rosh [i.e. Russia], Meshech, and Tubal” in Ezekiel 38—following Christ’s return—still allied with eastern nations like Persia (Iran) and the black and brown descendants of Cush and Phut in India (mistakenly translated “Ethiopia” and “Libya”—the western branches of these families). Therefore, Russia is clearly not destroyed along with modern Babylon. Also Isaiah 13:17–18 indicates that the modern Medes (probably Ukrainians, based on statements by the ancient historians Herodotus and Pliny) will help overthrow modern Babylon—just as their ancestors did in ancient times!

The European dictator will move his capital to the Holy Land (Dan. 11:45). Then armies from the East will march toward Israel, intent on finishing the job of wiping out the new Babylon. The Euphrates River will be dried up “so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared” (Rev. 16:12). This is significant. Remember that the Euphrates was “dried up” in ancient times so the Medo-Persian forces of Cyrus could invade the *original* Babylon.

As all this transpires, events will spin out of control. The ten European rulers who empowered this system will bitterly turn on the church and religious system that failed them (Rev. 17:16–17). And in one day, the daughter of Babylon shall be destroyed (18:7–8; Is. 47:8–15). Meanwhile, horrifying mass destruction—perhaps through nuclear, biological and chemical weapons (cf. Rev. 9:5–6, 18)—will have been unleashed. And just as the Beast power and the Eastern alliance gather their forces at Armageddon (“the hill of Megiddo”) in northern Israel to fight a final, climactic battle (Rev. 16:16)—just when it appears that humanity will literally destroy itself—then the Living God will at last intervene (cf. Matt. 24:22).

The glorified Christ will return in majesty from heaven. But the nations will be “angry” (Rev. 11:18). Apparently the Beast and Eastern kings will all see the returning Lord as a common enemy, for “all nations” then march down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (the modern Kidron Valley outside Jerusalem) to fight Him (cf. Joel 3:1-2, 9-14; Zech. 14:1-15). The outcome of the resultant “battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Rev. 16:14) is not hard to imagine. The enemies of God will be utterly vanquished. Thus, it is not until the most hellish period in the history of mankind’s violent and bloody existence that the real solution to humanity’s problems will finally be inaugurated.

Transported in vision into that future Day of the Lord, John records a marvelous event yet ahead of us: **“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen”** (Rev. 18:2). Following that event, Jesus Christ will stand on the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem with all the resurrected saints. Remember Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the divine “stone” that smashed the representation of the four world-ruling kingdoms and grew to fill the whole earth (Dan. 2:34-35)? Rest assured: Christ IS coming back from heaven to take over this world’s governments and set up the *fifth* and *final* world-ruling kingdom on earth—the Kingdom of God—which shall never be removed (v. 44). As Daniel said, “the dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure” (v. 45). In Christ’s Kingdom, the law will go forth from Jerusalem and all nations will be brought under the government of God (Is. 2:2–4). **The return of Jesus Christ to**

this earth is not a pipe dream. It is the only hope for mankind.

What About You?

As we've discovered, the Bible tells a tale of two cities—Babylon and Jerusalem. One will be *destroyed* forever and the other will be *established* forever as the New Jerusalem—which will become the dwelling place of God the Father, of His Son, Jesus Christ, and of all God's children for eternity (Rev. 21).

The end-time events described in this booklet are *real* and are coming in the lifetime of many of you reading these words. No question about it, there will be horrifying events between now and Christ's return. As one modern commentator stated, "a generation that fails to read the signs of the times may be *forced* to read the handwriting on the wall" (Os Guinness, *The American Hour*, 1993).

Yet, Jesus offers *special protection* to those who are truly, zealously walking with Him and doing His Work. He told His disciples to be vigilant, to be watching and praying, so that they might actually *escape* the terrible things that will come to pass (Luke 21:36). In the book of Revelation, John records the resurrected Christ's promise to faithful Christians in the end time: "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth" (3:10).

What about you? Does your "citizenship," your loyalty and allegiance, reside in Babylon below or in Jerusalem above (cf. Phil. 3:20)? **Your future depends upon the answer to that question!** If you and your family are yet part of what the Scriptures label "Babylon," then God sternly warns you, "**Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues**" (Rev. 18:14). And through the prophet Isaiah, God explains how to escape this system: "Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near" (Is. 55:6). If you truly seek Him with all your heart, you *will* find Him (Deut. 4:29–31)!

Though the Bible points to catastrophic suffering ahead of us,

there is *good news* beyond the bad. It includes a wonderful offer of God's *miraculous protection* and help in the terrible times soon coming before the return of Jesus Christ. But even more importantly, He offers us *entrance into His glorious coming Kingdom* and an inheritance that will last forever! The God of heaven really is going to establish His own world-ruling Kingdom that will subdue the kingdoms of this earth—and then continue without end!

Don't become discouraged or despondent as you see worsening conditions in the world around us. Jesus Christ instructs His disciples, "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, *because your redemption draws near*" (Luke 21:28).

God's Word says, "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:37). And we should know by now that when God says something will happen, it **WILL** happen.

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