1 – Introduction
2 – Symbolism: Whoremonger and Warmonger
3 – Startling Vision Confronts the Apostle (17:1-6)
4A – Angel Explains the Mystery (17:7-11)
4B – Angel Explains the Mystery (17:12-18)
Appendix 1 – Ancient *Babylon*, Forerunner to Modern *Babylon*
Appendix 2 – *Harlot/Beast* History
Appendix 3 – Shattering Delusions: News Excerpts

See also Revelation 18 posts…

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In Revelation 17, John the apostle wrote, *"I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."* (17:3)

The *Beast* and its *"seven heads"* or "*mountains*" are commonly understood to symbolize the seven empires that have ruled, or will rule, in the Middle East and who also ruled over Israel when the Israeli people were together as a nation; these are the empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the final one at the End of the Age. The apostle had already seen the same *Beast* in chapter 13. There his attention was focused on one of the *Beast's "heads"* – the final one.

According to these passages, the different *"heads"* represent different historical eras and empires, but they all belong to the same Beast who has existed throughout history. This is further clarified in chapter 17 where we read about *"the beast that was, and is not, and yet is"* – which again points to the fact that the different *Heads,* appearing at different times in history, are all part of the same *Beast*. (17:8)

Then we read that *"the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits."* (17:9). So, if the *Woman* is sitting on all the *Heads/Mountains*, then she too must have existed throughout history. As the *Beast* has manifested itself in different ways (with its *"seven heads"*),

she also has manifested herself in different ways.

The *Great Harlot* and the *Beast* are ruling systems that have been around a long time. Throughout history, the *Harlot* has squatted on one empire after another. This symbolic picture portrays the commercial realm, with its *"merchants"*, as a sort of parasite, oppressing and sapping the strength of the governments of the world.

The role of *"merchants"* – those who manage the *Harlot* – is described in the Bible in none too complimentary fashion: *"The merchant uses dishonest scales; he loves to defraud."* (Hosea 12:7, NIV) *"For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived."* (Revelation 18:23) To get what she wants, the *Harlot* seduces the nations and their peoples through her crafty use of the art of deception.

(This term *"merchants"* by the way, does not refer to those businessmen who make an honest living, working hard to provide needed goods and services to their communities. There is a world of difference between them and the ultra-rich *"merchants"* spoken of in the Revelation Book, those who are deceiving and corrupting the world for the sake of their own greed and lust for power.)

So, if the *Beast* and the *Harlot* have been around all through history, then we should be able to trace that history. And for this, we can start all the way back in the Book of Genesis. There we learn about Cain's exile after killing his brother. And what was the first thing Cain did when he *"went out from the presence of the LORD?… He built a city."* (Genesis 4:16-17) Since the beginning, if one wanted to hide from God, the city was the place to do it.

Cities seem to have a way of drawing people away from their roots of faith in God. Building the city, taking care of it, ruling it, enjoying it, worshiping it, all these are distractions that God did not intend for man to pursue. Man's original job in the earthly realm was to spread out and populate the earth, not to bunch up in cities; he was to take care of God's Creation, not build his own. (Genesis 1:28, 2:15)

It's not that people shouldn't live in communities, but when the

community becomes too big in the eyes of its builders and inhabitants, then it has crossed the line into self-worship; the creations of human society are getting too much emphasis. The Lord made this an important lesson in the early days after the Flood by calling a halt to the construction of the tower of Babel. Here was an early manifestation of *"Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and… Abominations".* (Revelation 17:5)

And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.

And the LORD said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.

Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.

(Genesis 11:4-8)





Ancient City of Babel and Modern Manhatten

However, this was not the end of the matter. The original city of Babel was a rather small-scale version of the kind of city system that rules our world nowadays, described long ago in Revelation 17-18. This *Woman*, the *Great Harlot* of modern times, is an elaborate extension of what human society, when detached from God's presence, has done since the Beginning. She provides the "refuge" into which a person can hide from the presence of God and do his own thing. This is not freedom; it's captivity by the forces of spiritual Darkness. But a person who comes under God's control, he or she is free indeed!

So, despite the fall of the Tower of Babel, people kept on building cities. One city in particular, Tyre, became a great commercial hub for many centuries. Known as the Phoenecian civilization, this city and its far-flung empire, consisting of a number of independent city-states, dominated trade throughout the Mediterranean world.

In the 1400's B.C., after Phoenecia had established her trading empire, she was obliged to become a province of the rising superpower (*Beast*) of the day, Egypt. This probably meant that Egypt herself was transforming into the *Harlot* of the ancient world. Indeed, the Pharaohs had by this time become oppressive rulers over the children of Israel (as we know from the *Book of Exodus*).

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Can *Beast* Empires Turn into *Harlot* Empires?

It seems to be a pattern common to the *Beast* empires that, as they became established and more corrupt and interested in the riches that their power was making available to them, they would transform from *Beast* into *Harlot*. And this usually meant their downfall was imminent.

And this pattern has continued throughout history: The rising superpower starts off in zealous, almost idealistic fashion, transforming and conquering the world of their day. Then, as the new empire gets established, it becomes wealthy and settled down; the merchant class becomes more prominent.

As the years pass, the rulers and people become indolent and corrupted by their power and riches. At this stage, the superpower *Beast* transforms and takes on the role of a *Harlot*. Or, maybe it should be said that the *Merchants*, having seen the arrival of a new power base (in the new up-and-coming *"beast"*), have moved in and started using it as their base as well. The *Harlot* sits on the *Beast* whoever or wherever that *Beast* is.

Now, in ancient times the *Merchants* in any particular kingdom had to have strong ties with the Phoenecian empire if they wanted to carry out their commercial and trading activities. But whatever empire managed to rule over Tyre (or Phoenecia), that conquest was sure to transform that empire into a whorish power eventually.

Like ancient Israel, the transition of the *Beast* superpowers into spiritual harlotry manifested itself as a downward slide into greed, decadence, and tyranny. In one aspect though, these *Beasts* were different from the nation of Israel in that they couldn't descend into idol worship; they were already worshiping idols.

However, much depended on how they treated the people of God – in those days the Israeli people. If they were good to them, then God allowed their kingdoms to stand – and even sometimes when they were bad to them (because God needed to use them as a rod of chastisement on His own people).

The pattern was always the same: as empires became more whorish in their ways, they would go too far in their oppression of the Jewish people; and once that happened, the empire's downfall was imminent.

This pattern appears all through ancient history: whether it was the Egyptian Pharaoh slave-driving the children of Israel, the Assyrian advance on Judah, the Babylonian king's mockery of the Temple vessels, the Syrian Greek king's attempt to replace Judaism with the Greek religion, and after Christ's coming, the Roman Caesars'

persecution against Christians, it was always the same. God would always find some way to set that empire back on its heels.

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In about 1100 B.C., as Egypt was declining, the Phoenecian cities achieved once more their independence, reaching a peak around 1000 B.C. (during the reigns of kings David and Solomon); for about 250 years the trading empire stood at the height of prosperity until the rise of Assyria. Phoenecia's decline began then in 842 B.C. when the up and coming *"beast"* of Assyria captured some of her cities and controlled the Mideast for the next 200 years. Nevertheless, the Mediterranean Sea remained a "Phoenecian lake".

Although Assyria started out as a *Beast* superpower in the ancient Mideast, as time went on, as she became corrupted in her ways, she too began to resemble more and more the Phoenecian power, the *harlot* that she had subdued. Assyria's declining years were marked by the prominence of the merchant class, and she began to resemble the *Great Harlot* of Revelation 17-18, as seen in the following Old Testament passages:

> ***Woe to the bloody city!* [Nineveh, capital of Assyria] *It is all full of lies and robbery… Because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, the mistress of sorceries, who sells nations through her harlotries, and families through her sorceries… It shall come to pass that all who look upon you will flee from you, and say, "Nineveh is laid waste! Who will bemoan her?"… You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars of heaven…* (Nahum 3:1,4,7,16)**
>
> **And *He will stretch out His hand against the north, destroy Assyria, and make Nineveh a desolation, as dry as the wilderness… This is the rejoicing city that dwelt securely, that said in her heart, "I am it, and there is none besides me." How has she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down! Everyone who passes by her shall hiss and shake his fist.* (Zephaniah 2:13,15)**

But no sooner had the Assyrian empire begun to fade than Tyre's role as the Harlot of the ancient world bounced back into the forefront:

> ***"And it shall be…*** **[Tyre]** ***will return to her hire*** **[as a harlot],** ***and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth."*** **(Isaiah 23:17)**

After Assyria, Babylon conquered the Mideast and the city of Tyre. And, of course, the cycle again went into motion as the new Beast soon transformed into a *harlot*. Again, the description resembles that of the *Great Harlot* in Revelation 17-18:

> ***Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans*** **[ancient Babylon]*; for you shall no longer be called The Lady of Kingdoms… you said, "I shall be a lady forever," so that you did not take these things to heart… Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, who dwell securely, who say in your heart, "I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, nor shall I know the loss of children"…***
>
> ***For you have trusted in your wickedness; you have said, "No one sees me"; your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you; and you have said in your heart, "I am, and there is no one else besides me." Therefore evil shall come upon you; you shall not know from where it arises. And trouble shall fall upon you; you will not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, which you shall not know…***
>
> ***Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, and the monthly prognosticators stand up and save you… your merchants… No one shall save you.***
>
> **(Isaiah 47:5,7-8,10-11, 13,15)**

By the time Babylon came along, Israel herself had turned into a *Harlot.* The once loyal bride, beautiful in God's sight, a nation founded on the Laws of God, had corrupted herself to the point that the only cure left was to endure the chastening of the Assyrian and Babylonian *Beasts*. These ancient superpowers pillaged Israel's cities and temple and led her people captive into other lands.

There are many passages about the transformation of Israel from *Bride* to *Harlot* in the Old Testament. Not pleasant reading, but worth going over some of them, since they provide some background that will help us

understand more about the modern day *Great Harlot* of Revelation 17-18:

Ezekiel, chapter 16, contains the most vivid indictment of ancient Israel, coming just prior to the invasion/destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian conquerors.

> ***"When I… looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love* [the time of Israel's deliverance from slavery in Egypt]… *Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine," says the Lord GOD… You were exceedingly beautiful, and succeeded to royalty. Your fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through My splendor which I had bestowed on you," says the Lord GOD.***
>
> ***"But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it*. [It didn't matter if they were evil-doers, idol-worshippers, or who they were, as long as she could win their favor for gain of some kind.] (Ezekiel 16:8,13-15)**
>
> ***"Moreover you took your sons and your daughters, whom you bore to Me, and these you sacrificed to them* [false gods] *to be devoured. Were your acts of harlotry a small matter, that you have slain My children and offered them up to them by causing them to pass through the fire? And in all your abominations and acts of harlotry you did not remember the days of your youth…"* [In following the religious practices of their neighbors, God's people were stooping to the vile practice of sacrificing their own children to demon gods.] (16:20-22)**
>
> ***"You offered yourself to everyone who passed by, and multiplied your acts of harlotry… the daughters of the Philistines… were ashamed of your lewd behavior… You are an adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband."* (16:25,27,32)**
>
> ***"Because you did not remember the days of your youth, but agitated Me with all these things, surely I will also recompense your deeds on your own head," says the Lord GOD… Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: she and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as***

***I saw fit. Samaria did not commit half of your sins; but you have multiplied your abominations more than they, and have justified your sisters by all the abominations which you have done."* (16:43,49-51)**

Some other passages along the same line from Isaiah and Jeremiah:

***How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers.* (Isaiah 1:21)**

You *have had a harlot's forehead; you refuse to be ashamed…" The LORD said… "Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has … played the harlot. And I said, after she had done all these things, 'Return to Me.' But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also."* (Jeremiah 3:3,6-8)

Although other nations had come to resemble the *Harlot* (especially in their declining years), it was a different issue when the same happened to ancient Israel. Since she had been the *Bride* of God but, in seeking after other gods, had turned away from Him, she then became the epitome of the *Harlot* symbolism. And this version of the *Harlot* symbolism applies also to the *Great Harlot* coming at the End of the Age era.

Ancient Israel could not belong in the *Beast* category because, no matter how downgraded she had allowed herself to become, she was still the nation that contained the Word of God and His Name in the midst of a world of Darkness. Unlike the Beast empires, her kings never dared to set themselves up as gods. She was not a Beast in that sense, *"full of names of blasphemy"*. [See Footnote.] However, by compromising with the nations around her and following their gods, she did descend from beautiful *Bride* status in God's eyes into an ugly old *Harlot* – no better than the *Beast* nations that surrounded her.

Continuing then with our ancient history of the *Harlot*, there arose after Babylon the Medo-Persian empire. The new superpower began on the right foot, liberating the Jewish captives and giving protection to the revived Jewish state. As time went on, Persia too became indolent and self-satisfied, and she eventually collapsed under the zealous leadership

and disciplined armies of Alexander the Great. Tyre also fell before the Greeks' strategic advances.

But again, as time rolled on, the Syrian branch of the Greek empire, in its last stages under Antiochus Epiphanes, played the *Harlot* role. The Greek tyrant tried to impose Hellenic culture on Israel, hoping to lure devout Jews away from their faith through the glamor of Greek civilization and pantheon of gods. But Antiochus Epiphanes encountered stiff opposition from the Jewish Maccabee brothers who at that time stood up bravely for their faith and repelled the Syrian onslaughts.

Here the emphasis was on the *Harlot's* influence from the cultural and religious side. But while the Syrian-Greek empire was playing the role of cultural *Harlot*, elsewhere in the Mediterranean world, the Phoenecian port of Carthage was playing the role of commercial *Harlot*. This was the new destination for many Phoenecians during Alexander's conquest of Tyre.

Like all whorish nations, Carthage also fell before the imperial might of the up-and-coming *Beast* – in this case, Rome. Because Carthage under Hannibal had tried to oppress and even attack Rome, she suffered a huge defeat: Carthage was plowed under and sown with salt, never to rise again. Not long afterwards, the Greek empires in Egypt and Syria also fell before the rising superpower of Rome.

And the story continues. Rome, in her dying days, became self-satisfied. The growing power of the merchant system had softened the Roman populace into becoming idle, more interested in circuses and bread, and no more the industrious citizenry of former years. And because of Rome's descent into decadence and corruption, she became helpless before the invading barbarian armies of Goths, Vandals, Huns, and others.

By this time the Christian Church had become the accepted, official religion of the Roman empire. In the power gap left by the Roman Empire's collapse, the Roman Catholic church in western Europe rose to supremacy in the Middle Ages. As time went on, she took on the *Harlot* role. Like Israel of old, she had started as a godly empire but in time forgot her God, worshiping Him in name only, dedicated instead to material and political gain, and worst of all, guilty of persecuting and

martyring the true children of God. The only difference was, now her deeds were cloaked hypocritically under the garb of Christianity instead of Judaism.

Long ago the prophet Samuel warned that this kind of religious practice was no better than the pagan religions that believers were supposed to be against: *"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."* (1 Samuel 15:23)

Finally, the power of the Catholic Church declined in the 16th Century with the advent of the Reformation. And where did the spirit of the *Harlot* move to next? She quickly found a new host – or hosts, in this case. Great colonial empires in Europe were forming and gathering wealth hand over fist from all the new territories that were being discovered around the world during the age of exploration, the Colonial Age. Here is where all the wealth and power were to be found. And so, here is where the *Harlot* set up her new headquarters.

To understand this new version of the *Harlot*, we can look at one example, typical of what was going on around the world. In 1600 the *East India Company* – not the British government, just a business corporation out to make a fast buck – arrived in India. By about 1750, with the help of British troops, the Company had become the rulers of India and remained so until 1857. After a century of exploitation, India was left poverty-stricken, supplying Britain with raw materials while restricted from manufacturing her own goods, having to purchase them from Britain instead.

The merchants were so much in control that they did not even allow missionary activity until 1813 for fear that would hinder their plundering of the nation's wealth. Finally, the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 forced the British government to cut back on the Company's power and establish a new government system in India, one that wasn't quite so dominated by commercial interests. There was some improvement, but in many ways things carried on in the same old way.

The colonial empires persisted for quite some time until World Wars 1 and 2, wars that shattered the power of the European nations. Like all the other *Harlot*-like empires of the past, colonial Europe experienced

disastrous decline at the hands of the new and upcoming *Beast*-like power, Germany. So, in the years following World War 2, Europe's colonies started breaking away from their colonial masters. They gained political independence, but economic control did not come so easily. In fact, many former colonies are still poor, continuing to supply the *Great Harlot* (in her final incarnation) with plenty of cheap labor and raw materials.

So where, after Europe's collapse, did the *Harlot* set up her new headquarters? The ascending power of the day, America, became her next destination; and compared to the European *harlot* colonial masters, America's exploitation has descended into even worse tyranny.

> **The British, French, Spanish and Portuguese were colonial powers, but it has been noted in this respect that these European colonisers were never as brutal and ruthless as the US whose rule (if rule is the right word) was more akin to the policies of Atilla the Hun than European colonialism. The US has never entertained any sense of colonial stewardship unlike the British in India who built railways, imparted the English language put up statues to Queen Victoria and so on and so forth. The French also imposed their culture, language, and politics on their colonial possessions in the Caribbean, Africa, and Indo-China. This is not to underestimate the fact that the goal of European colonial rule was basically about sucking the wealth out of their overseas possessions and imposing a harsh regime of exploitation… But the traditional European imperial policies of the 19th century pale in comparison to American high-tech imperialism where drone-strikes, mass murder, economic rape, and a penchant for turning nation states – Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, Yemen – into territories, were, and still are, regarded as being acceptable and normal provided US military deaths were minimal. Yet all of this passes without so much as the slightest criticism. What the British did in, Ireland, Kenya, South Africa, Egypt, and India, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was kid's stuff when comparison is made with the great Atlantic mass terminator.**
>
> **(From "The American Brumaire" by Francis Lee for the *Saker Blog*, 17 January 2021)**

The latest manifestation of the *Harlot* will, in fact, be her final appearance. And indeed, the text in Revelation 17 makes a definite switch

away from the overall historical view. From verse 12 on, the description of the *Beast* and the *Harlot's* fate contains details, pointing to specific nations, and specific events that are taking place even now… at the End of the Age. Anyway, that is a big subject, covered in greater detail elsewhere (in Post 4A and 4B), so this discussion about the history of the *Great Harlot* and the *Beast* can end here.

But now, just to summarize: the *Harlot/Beast* personification is there in the Bible to clarify for us how the real state of the world looks in God's eyes – not a pretty picture. And we see the wide scope of influence, exercised by the powers of Darkness, over nations… on three levels: 1) that of religion – Materialism and Demagoguery 2) of the ruling power of the ultra-rich who try to control the *Beast* governments of the world 3) of the ruling power of the ultra-powerful who try to overthrow the *Harlot* that has been oppressing them.

And we learn that the *Harlot-Beast* presence has been around all through history; the *Harlot* sits on the *"seven heads/mountains"* of the *Beast* – meaning she has sat on Mideast empires ever since Egypt. And *"on his* [the Beast's] *heads a blasphemous name"* is found – meaning that each *"head"* represented a demagogue or dynasty with enough political power to become objects of worship to their people. (Revelation 17:9, 13:1)

The Harlot, however, is born in the economic system, not the political system. She encourages worship of wealth (Materialism) rather than worship of herself as a demagogue, so she doesn't require a *Head* as such. If she could be said to have a "head", it would have to be the *Dragon*, the evil spirit of Darkness, who also controls the *Beast. "The dragon gave* [the *Beast*] *his power, his throne, and great authority."* (Revelation 13:2) In the final *Harlot* empire, the Revelation 18 passage specifies who the real leaders are – the *"merchants… the great men of the earth."* (18:23) They control what goes on in that nation's halls of government.

Although the spirit of the *Harlot* has not changed – Materialism has been around since the Beginning – she has been quite adaptable, able to sit on whatever power base was prevalent at different times in history. In fact, she cannot even exist unless there are cities and civilization. The rise of cities encourages the rise of the *Harlot.* Cities, of course, need

governments and rulers – the *beasts* that make war and hold the allegiance of the people. Then the *Harlot* has it made; she just needs to ride on the back of those Beasts, plying her merchant trade wherever she can in the cities of the world.

And her influence has always corrupted the *beast* empires, whether they were godly empires in their beginning stages – like ancient Israel, the Roman Catholic church, America, or even some European nations in the Colonial Age – or whether they were the pagan *"beast"* superpowers that have ruled in the earth; they too were corrupted by their own Materialism to become *harlots*.

For every *Harlot* empire, there has always been an up and coming *Beast* to overthrow it: Egypt controlled Phoenecia; Assyria overthrew a corrupted Egyptian nation; Babylon destroyed Tyre (Phoenecia again); Medo-Persia overthrew corrupted Babylon; Greece overthrew Phoenecia (again); Rome overthrew Carthage. Hitler Germany overthrew the European colonial powers. Now America is left as the reigning *Harlot* – to be overthrown in due time by the final *Beast* (which looks to be the Russia-China combine).

[NOTE: Appendix 4 and Appendix 5 continue the history of the *"merchants"*, tracing their rise to supremacy in modern times.]

Jesus said about Materialism, *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."* (Matthew 6:24)

This desire towards material welfare and survival has such a strong pull, Christ was saying, that it is His main rival. And here we have in Revelation 17-18 an incredible vision of this very Materialism, personified as a *Harlot*, an ancient metaphor for that false religion found in any culture – powerful enough to pull people away from Christ and the Father, able also to exercise control over governments and human society.

> ***"The kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication… the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication."***

(Revelation 17:2, 19:2)

And this *Harlot* empire never seems to go away. As long as there are cities, she'll always be around – even after America's fall. So in order to make a full end of her, *"the cities of the nations fell"* in *"such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth."* (Revelation 16:18-19)

It is truly a cataclysmic end of the city system. And it is well deserved and needed. As these two chapters in the *Revelation Book* have pointed out, this *Harlot* of Materialism is the cause behind so much that is vile, selfish, corrupt, oppressive in our world: *"having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication… For her sins have reached to heaven."* (Revelation 17:4, 18:5)

But thankfully, God's Word does not leave us with this depressing view of the world situation. In the chapters that follow the description of the ugly old *Harlot*, we are given the astounding vision of Christ's Return and removal of the kingdom of Darkness from the earthly realm. Righteous government and peace on Earth are established in the glorious future Age of the Millennium. In the final chapters of the *Revelation Book*, these are God's promises and plan of history which, in our present Age, are seen through the eyes of faith.

***

Footnote: What is "Blasphemy"?

This term "blasphemy" could be defined as "sacrilegious or reproachful speaking against the majesty of God". And amongst the Jews the act of making oneself a god was the most common way, or the worst way, to utter blasphemy. This is the "crime" that Jesus was accused of, the penalty for which was death. (John 10:33, Mark 2:7, 14:61-64) Of course, the Jewish religious leaders erred greatly by failing to realize that Jesus was their Messiah, the Son of God, and one with God Himself.

Although many similarities and overlappings exist between the *Harlot* and *Beast* empires of history, certain distinctive features differentiate them. For the *Beast* empires, it was the practice of their leaders to allow

themselves to be exalted into the status of divine beings. And this, of course, sprang from the origin of those empires in the realm of Darkness. *"The beast… will ascend out of the bottomless pit."* (Revelation 17:8) The forces of Darkness will do everything they can to divert the world's attention away from acknowledging or worshiping the Light of God, which is revealed and declared in Jesus Christ.

As for nations like ancient Israel or modern America, whose origins were built on godly principles and foundations, the forces of Darkness have been hard at work on them as well. And they, like the *Beast* empires, have degenerated into harlot societies… but stopped short of having "names of blasphemy". The leaders of such nations will not dare try to deify themselves, or deny the name of God. But they and their nations have denied Him in practice. It reminds us of what Paul said about some of the hypocritical, disobedient Jews of his day: *"The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."* (Romans 2:24)

Thus it is that when these nations that were once founded on godly principles fall away, then God has no other choice but to allow one of the *Beast*-type empires to come along and bring that nation back in line. This chastisement certainly happened with ancient Israel when she was ravaged by Assyria and Babylon, and it will happen again to America (and modern Israel) when the *Beast* and his *Ten Horn*s are let loose against them in a future that may not be that far away.

[RETURN]