

**Revelation 18 posts:**

[5: Second Angel's Proclamation \(18:1-3\)](#)

[6A: Warning Voice from Heaven \(18:4-8\)](#)

[6B: Voice from Heaven Continues! And the Crash? \(18:9-11\)](#)

[6C: No More Trade, No More Luxury \(18:12-20\)](#)

[7: A Mighty Angel's Millstone \(18:21-24\)](#)

[Appendix 4: Rise of the Merchant Class \(Colonial Era\)](#)

[Appendix 5: Rise of the Merchant Class \(20th Century and Beyond\)](#)

**[See also Revelation 17 posts:](#)**

**Appendix 4: Rise of the Merchant Class (Colonial Era)**

This Appendix starts off where [Appendix 2 \(Harlot/Beast History\)](#) left off... more or less. That Appendix focused on the merchant class in ancient times. There will be some overlapping here of certain points, but the main subject now will focus on the rise of the “*merchant*” class in the Modern Age (A.D. 1500 to the 19<sup>th</sup> century).

So when did the “*merchants*” of modern times, “*the great men of the earth*”, start their rise into world supremacy? We might figure that the groundwork for it was laid all the way back in the Middle Ages. In the feudalistic society of that era, a new class of people began to emerge, whose power and influence paralleled that of the upcoming political-military strongholds that were rising to power in Europe at the same time. These were the merchants who had been struggling to free themselves from the restrictions of feudalism.

Later on, the same forces of republicanism that would strengthen the role of the army also set the commercial interests free to ascend to greater power. (For more information about the rise of republicanism, see the Appendix-post “[How does 'Iron' Continue in Today's World?](#)”) Merchants no longer had to contend against a powerful monarch, always the traditional rival in their quest to acquire riches and resources. And it wasn't long before the commercial forces grew strong enough to begin coercing the political-military strongholds of Europe to follow their wishes to a large extent.

Here are a couple of examples of what the commercial interests were able to do in Europe during the onset of the Modern Age:

◇ **“In 1536, King John III of Portugal introduced the Inquisition to his country. The Portuguese Inquisition especially persecuted the Jews in Portugal, many of whom were involved in Portuguese commerce. As the Jews fled the kingdom, the nation’s banking and commercial power departed with them.”** (*World History and Cultures*, Pg. 261 - by A Beka) [Portugal soon declined as a major empire, and the nations to which these Jewish merchants fled, Holland and Britain, grew prosperous instead.]

◇ **[The Rothschild family built a huge banking empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, which enabled them to greatly influence the policies of those European nations who were indebted to them:] “By a system of co-operation and joint counsels, aided by the skillful employment of subordinate agents, they (Rothschild brothers) obtained unexampled opportunities of acquiring an accurate knowledge of the condition of the financial market, and practically embraced the whole of Europe, within their financial network... [Nathan Rothschild] became the financial agent of nearly every civilized government... his operations extended to every quarter of the globe.”** (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 23, pg. 758, 1910-1911)

After about A.D. 1500 European nations began to expand into vast colonial empires, and this provided the merchant class with a golden opportunity to gather great storehouses of wealth. And as their wealth increased, so did their influence over the ruling houses of Europe.

The rise of this parallel but largely invisible “empire” seems to have emerged during the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, with the main center in England. Downtown London became known as the “Crown” or “The City” or “Fleet Street” - a sort of nerve center wherein were located a number of banking houses, Lloyd’s of London, the London Stock Exchange, and offices of the leading international trading concerns. The same kind of business districts were established in other European cities as well. The following quote provides some helpful insight:

◇ **From the time of William the Conqueror [1066] until the middle of**

**the 17<sup>th</sup> Century the British monarchs ruled supreme - their word was law. They truly were sovereign in every sense of the word.**

**As British strength and influence grew around the world, toward the end of the 1600's the wealth, strength, and influence of the elite merchants in the City also grew - only at a faster rate...**

**It was at this juncture (1815) that the House of Rothschild seized control of the British economy, the Bank of England, and the City - and, through their other branches, control of the other European nations. [1815 - Battle of Waterloo]**

**To avoid misunderstanding, it is important that the reader recognize the fact that two separate empires were operating under the guise of the British Empire. One was the Crown Empire and the other was the British Empire.**

**... 'The City' is not part of England. It is not subject to the Sovereign. It is not under the rule of the British Parliament. Like the Vatican in Rome, it is a separate, independent state. It is the Vatican of the commercial world.**

**(from *Descent into Slavery* by Des Griffin, pgs. 43-45, 42)**

**This division of power in the world that began around the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries has continued into our modern day and resembles the symbolism of the "image" in Daniel 2 with its division between "iron and clay" in the final empire of the "feet" and in the symbolism of the two "beasts" in Revelation 13. But in the *Harlot* empire (of America), the merchant class reigns supreme and the military-political rulers of that nation are kept under their control.**

**A major turning point that led towards this division of power came with the French Revolution in 1789. Having enlarged their fortunes in the Colonial era through overseas trading and devious financial schemes, the moneylenders of Europe grew powerful enough to effect a great change in the world - engineering the collapse of Europe's Christian monarchies and establishing republican governments in their place.**

**The French Revolution was the great catalyst that the growing merchant class needed to increase their influence against the established aristocracy. Of course, there was need for a change; the historical situation was ripe for and demanding a more fair distribution of wealth and power. Unfortunately though, the new power brokers in France were**

unscrupulous in their methods of bringing this about; they preferred to distance themselves from the Almighty, and this seemed to go hand in hand with their use of unrestricted violence rather than less drastic means of achieving their ends.

Influencing the course of events from behind the scenes at this time was Europe's most powerful banker, Meyer Rothschild, who got together with Adam Weishaupt, a member of the Masonic order and founder of the Illuminati secret society. Through their manipulation of the masses and of the springs of power available to them, they were able to fan the flames of the French Revolution and depose their main rival for power, the French king and his heirs and the aristocracy. Later on Napoleon came along and encouraged the same republican system in other European nations.

Although the brains behind this whole operation was Adam Weishaupt, he was more or less "hired" by his patron Meyer Rothschild. And so it has continued into the Modern Age and is what rulers have always done - surround themselves with various "*wise men, astrologers, magicians, soothsayers, sorcerers*" (as they were known in the past). (Daniel 2:27, Acts 12:6-8).

Although some of the wise men and think-tank societies whom governments rely on can provide helpful insight and guidance, these organizations tend to prefer the interests of the ultra-rich; for they are the ones who usually establish and fund most of those organizations. Besides overthrowing governments, as happened in the French Revolution, these organizations can also monitor and steer governments into the direction favored by those who hold the financial strings of power.

Similar to what goes on nowadays in the halls of government, the *False Prophet Beast*, when he comes along, will have access to and influence over the great military-political ruler of the End Time, the Antichrist, through his (secular) spiritual influence and wisdom and economic strength.

Nowadays, different names might be used - "think tank" researchers or "secret society" members or the same term of "astrologers". The difference now, though, is that these groups of regal advisers are more

**closely linked to the ultra-rich dynasties of the mega-merchants; as a result modern commercial forces have almost total control over the government of the *Harlot* empire.**

**There are a multitude of conspiracy theories surrounding the secretive activities of this powerful group of ultra-rich elite. Although many such theories tend to over-speculate, there is enough documented evidence to show convincingly that much dirty-dealing goes on behind the scenes.**

**It should be remembered, of course, that amongst the ultra-rich many are sincerely working to bring positive change into the world. But unfortunately, they are outnumbered by those who want to de-stabilize and corrupt human society with the goal of bringing the world under their subjection.**

**Of these the Revelation Book has this to say: *“For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.”* (18:23) This statement comes at the end of a lengthy passage about the *“great harlot... with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication... having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.”* (17:2,4)**

**All this symbolic language provides a vivid portrayal of modern America and her worldwide financial dominion and trading network. The *Harlot* symbolism points to how this modern “empire” has degenerated, corrupting herself and the rest of the world through her Materialism... and her *“merchants”* who, as the passage says, are deceiving the nations through their *“sorcery”* (their devilish wisdom and powers of Darkness).**

**Getting back to our history: the collapse of the European monarchies seems to have had a twofold result. Without a strong central authority (a king), this opened the door for the military to come to the fore in some countries (like France under Napoleon, and later on, Weimar Germany under Hitler, or the Communist nations). Secondly, this revival of ancient Roman republicanism also cleared the way for the power of money (capitalism) to ascend. ◇**

**◇ This twofold division of power that has appeared in the modern world ties in with that interesting passage in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of the**

**Revelation Book about the “red horse” and “black horse”, symbolic of the spiritual forces of Militarism and Materialism. (Revelation 6:3-6) These two Horses seem to operate in the earthly plane. (Whereas the other two White and Pale Horses seem to operate in the spiritual plane.) In our earthly realm there does appear to be this twofold division of power in government that manifests as the political-military leaders in one corner and the merchants of materialism in the other.**

**As dreadfully corrupt as some of the old monarchies became sometimes, they did, if nothing else, hold back the power of the Dark Forces of money and militarism. It was difficult for these forces to make their way around the obstacle of a powerful monarch whose authority among his subjects remained unquestioned. The king, who has cornered the market on his people’s loyalty, was able to rule securely on that foundation.**

**In the European monarchies, it was understood that God was the supreme authority, and the king was God’s representative. This effectively closed the door against worship of the king and kept the door slightly ajar for the entrance of some bit of godly restraint against the secular forces of Militarism and Materialism.**

**But in many republics there is no, or very little, acknowledgement of God’s authority (atheist communist dictatorships the ultimate example of this). God is dispensed with, and thus His place in the minds of the people can be usurped easily by a demagogue. Or in the absence of that, the people become distracted into the blind pursuit of material satisfaction - the modern form of Mammon worship.**

**And so, because of these various restraining factors, the Christian monarchies of old, however bad they may have been sometimes, seldom sank to the depths of depravity that modern republicanism has led humankind into - the genocidal persecutions of Communism, the ravages of Hitler Germany, the decadence and greed of the conglomerates and their mismanagement of earth’s resources and devastation of non-compliant nations.**

**Indeed, the modern history of Europe has shown that those**

**countries fortunate enough to enjoy a king or queen as head of state tend to be more stable and better governed than most of the Continent's republican states. By the same token, demagogic dictators have proved unremittingly hostile to monarchy because the institution represents a dangerously venerated alternative to their ambitions.**

**Reflecting in 1945 on what had led to the rise of Nazi Germany, Winston Churchill wrote: "This war would never have come unless, under American and modernizing pressure, we had driven the Hapsburgs out of Austria and Hungary and the Hohenzollerns out of Germany."**

**"By making these vacuums," he went on, "we gave the opening for the Hitlerite monster to crawl out of its sewer on to the vacant thrones."**

**To be fair to the "American and modernizing" influence, a similar consideration led President Harry S. Truman and Gen. Douglas MacArthur to preserve the Japanese monarchy at the end of World War II. This wise policy enabled Japan's remarkable and rapid evolution into the prosperous, peaceful democratic society it has been ever since.**

**[from "[Consider a Monarchy, America](#)" by Nikolai Tolstoy, *NY Times*, 5 November 2016]**

**At the dawn of the Modern Age, the agitators for republican movements like the French Revolution or the Communist Revolution worked to stir up discontent among the people. It was not that they cared so much about the "people". Unlike their many youthful and idealistic followers, these new powerbrokers, more often than not, were just using the "people" to overthrow their kings and tyrants and so gain control and become the new tyrants.**

**Probably God would like to give more freedom to humankind in the form of republican society and government. But freedom must be accompanied by responsibility, and true responsibility can only be nourished by faith in and reverence toward the Almighty. The French writer, Alexis de Tocqueville, expounded on this when visiting America in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century:**

**◇ "Depotism may govern without faith, but liberty cannot. Religion is**

**much more necessary in the republic which they set forth in glowing colors than in the monarchy which they attack; it is more needed in democratic republics than in any others. How is it possible that society should escape destruction if the moral tie is not strengthened in proportion as the political tie is relaxed? And what can be done with a people who are their own masters if they are not submissive to the Deity?"**

**Our democratic society, with its insistence on freedom and individual rights ("the political tie relaxed"), has become the ideal that the world is striving for. And it is good in principle, but it seems humankind cannot be trusted with it for very long. In time, as godly values slip into the background, the once noble aspirations of freedom transform into ignoble license to pursue selfish instincts.**

**Eventually, such freedom without godly restraint can lead to havoc. This happened on a rapid scale during the French and Communist revolutions; God's role in those new societies was sidelined, and this had much to do with the unconscionable bloodbaths during those times of political change.**

**A nation can slip into the same state at a slow pace as well. Sad to say, the American nation, which was once the bastion of freedom and epitome of a Christian, republican society, has devolved into what Alexis de Tocqueville warned against long ago: *"what can be done with a people who are their own masters if they are not submissive to the Deity?"***

**As a democratic society, the American nation has clamored loudly to other nations about freedom from the oppression of tyranny but ignores the fact that her own people have gotten swept up into the vortex of Materialism. Her prosperity has come at the expense and devastation of poorer nations in the world. The nation that once aspired to freedom from the tyranny of colonial Europe has transformed into a tyrant, even worse than the one from which she once sought to escape.**

**America enjoyed a great deal of respect in the era following World War 2, and later, the collapse of the Soviet Union. But she has squandered the opportunities for peace with Russia in those days by trying to capture her economy and bordering nations. In recent times, America's unwise and**



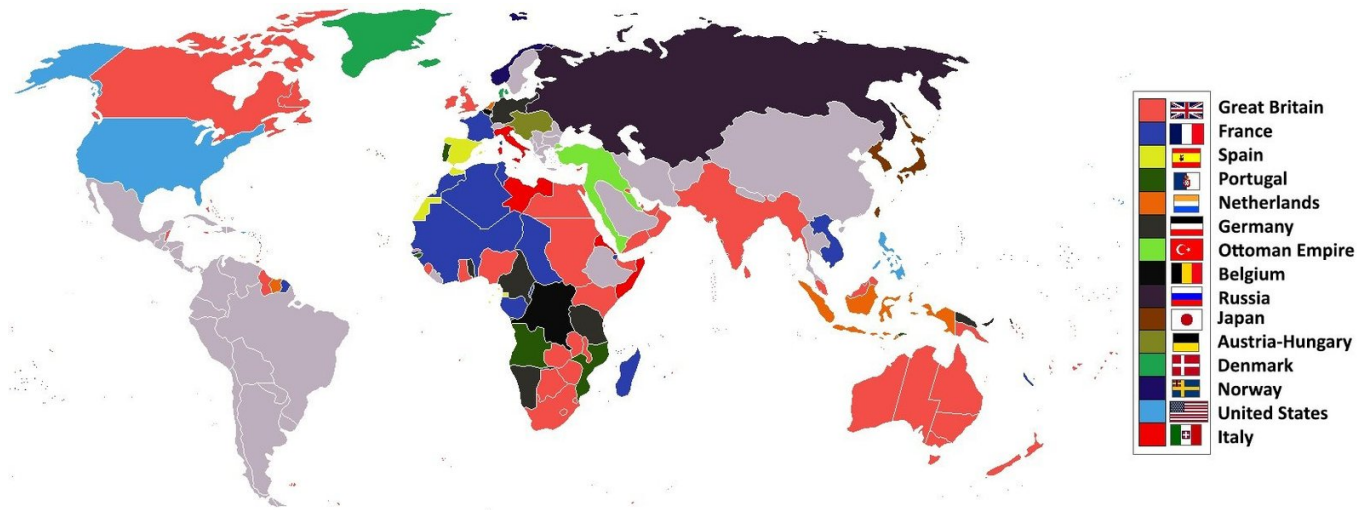
**predatory economic policies have caused worldwide financial turmoil in the 2007-09 Recession. Add to this a blundering foreign policy and wartime disasters in VietNam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya.**

**Not surprisingly, America's prestige on the world stage has diminished somewhat. In the meantime some nations (like China and other Third World countries) have acquired considerable wealth and power. Russia too is undergoing a resurgence since her collapse after the break-up of the Soviet Union in the 1990s.**

**How America reacts to this changing world situation may have a great bearing on the course of her future history: will she live up to her great Christian heritage and humbly accept a diminished role for herself on the world stage? Or will she, out of pride and greed, insist on military action to maintain her dominance? If she chooses the latter, if she continues to lash out militarily against her perceived enemies, then it will be a disastrous course of action, both for her and the rest of the world. (For more information see news article in [Footnote.](#))**

**America may think that God is on her side, but as the Sacred Book warns, *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man [or nation] sows, that shall he also reap."* (Galatians 6:7)**

**Getting back to our history, the European nations, once they had emerged from the Dark Ages, began expanding and built vast commercial empires, exploiting and plundering the wealth of distant, newly discovered territories. This exploration, followed later by great advances in scientific knowledge, unlocked the Earth's natural resources to a degree unheard of in times past. And the dividends from all this new-found wealth have, over the years, found their way into the coffers of the ultra-rich.**



### Colonial Empires: 1914

For example, in the New World the Astor family managed to dominate the North American fur trade industry. They garnered huge profits at a time when fur clothing had become the fashionable trend in Europe. Meanwhile, in the East, the Rothschild family gained enormous wealth as they ruled and systematically plundered India and surrounding territories through the East India Trading Company. The Revelation Book identifies these, and many other unscrupulous characters since then, as the leaders of the “*great harlot*”, the great commercial system of the Modern Age: “*your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.*” (18:23)

Colonial Europe’s reign over Africa, India, China, Asia, Australia, North and South America resembles to some extent the *Harlot’s* control, as pictured in Revelation 17-18. The entire world was at Europe’s feet and exploited by her to support her wealthy lifestyle. Like the *Harlot* they were great oppressors. Then in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the European *Harlot* suffered at the hands of a *beast*-like empire - Nazi Germany, a nation that had been excluded from many of the benefits of the Colonial Era.

And nowadays, Russia is in a similar position. She has not benefited from the capitalist world’s exploitation of the (neo-colonial) Third World. She has been sidelined as Germany was after World War 1 but is ready now to rise up against the modern day *Harlot* empire.

In ancient times colonial expansion was more of a government enterprise. For example, Rome's armies were the ones who explored and exploited the territories of the empire. And the wealth gained thereby went straight into the coffers of the government. But the Colonial Era was different in that much of the wealth got diverted into the hands of the mega-businessmen of that era.

For example, in 18<sup>th</sup> century England it was decided that the colonies of dark-skinned peoples would come under the control of the merchant groups while the colonies of white-skinned peoples (Canada, America, Australia) would come under the control of the British government. Accordingly, a nation like India was administered for almost 100 years by the East India Trading Company, not the British government. Probably the merchants got the better of that deal and fished a lot more booty from their share of the world, since they were able to dominate much longer in those nations that were not heavily colonized by Europeans.

The situation in the colonial empires resembles the symbolic portrayal in Revelation 17 of the *Harlot*, that great commercial power, riding on the *Beast*. The money magnates of Europe rode on their European "*beasts*" to get into their far-flung territories, using their nations' armies to subjugate local rulers and then protect their trade interests. Now, Europe has lost its colonial possessions, and America has become the final fulfilment of the *Harlot*.

She has been riding the Russian "*beast*" for decades: threatening Russia through NATO, fostering division with China, overthrowing governments in surrounding nations, infiltrating the economy, applying trade and financial sanctions. And her "*merchants*" hold most of the former Colonial world in the grip of their financial control (reinforced by military control through 700+ military bases around the world).

Anyway, back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Besides their overseas ventures, these powerful "*merchants*" were also adept in the art of wheeling and dealing for influence in the courts of Europe - mainly through their money-lending tactics. Through their scheming, they were able to overthrow or paralyze the monarchies of Europe. And thus, the dominion of the "*merchants*" began its rise to supremacy, especially after the French Revolution.

And so it was that the seeds of an iron-mixed-with-clay type of society were sown as far back as the Middle Ages. And since the dawn of the Modern Age around A.D. 1500, the seeds have sprouted and grown until now almost every nation in the world has some variation of this “*iron and clay*” system of rule within its borders.

In America, it is a little different, however; the pendulum has swung way over to the side of the “*merchants*” (the “*clay*”) who keep the military under their subjection. As a result this *Harlot* empire is opposing vigorously the now-rising dual empire of *Earth* and *Sea Beasts* (of Revelation 13) because of the economic threat that China and Russia pose to her financial dominance.

In conclusion, we can see how the groundwork has been laid for this modern historical era (the “*feet*” empire of Daniel 2), with its peculiar combination of “*iron and clay*” (military and economic) elements. Presumably, that era hasn’t started yet. Or if it has, it won’t reach its peak until the nation of Israel gets conquered by the new, upcoming superpower of the End Time.

#### **Footnote: Where is America taking the world?**

**[Rehearsing for World War III](#)** by Justin Raimondo, *Antiwar.com*, 7 June 2016

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**Has World War III started? Well, not quite yet, although it’s not for want of trying.**

....

**It is the Western powers who, ever since the fall of the USSR, have pushed eastward relentlessly, expanding the “defensive” NATO alliance... Their policy has been to eliminate the buffer between NATO and Russia, absorbing previously neutral Ukraine into the Western orbit by means of a coup d’etat, and launching a propaganda war that targets Russian President Vladimir Putin as the second coming of Stalin.**

**The Russian reaction has been to reverse Nikita Khrushchev’s 1954 decision to hand Crimea to Ukraine, pull out of a treaty limiting the number of troops in Europe, launch a military build up on their borders, and upgrade their nuclear arsenal to parallel a similar effort by the US.**

**With the collapse of international communism, the need for NATO was obviated, and yet-like any and all government programs-it not only persisted, it expanded... Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the Baltic states-all eventually joined NATO's ranks as Moscow looked on in alarm. As the "war on terrorism" commenced, NATO became the instrument of Western military operations in the Middle East, sending its tentacles into the former Soviet republics of Central Asia and insinuating itself into the Caucasus region.**

**From a cold war policy of containment, US/NATO has since moved into regime change mode: the idea is to encircle Russia militarily, while using "soft power" to undermine pro-Russian regimes in Russia's periphery and eventually achieve regime change in Russia itself...**

....

**If and when the West succeeds in collapsing the Russian economy and taking down Putin, it won't be a Yeltsin-like figure who will inherit the ruins. What comes after Putin, in this context, is something much worse. And in that case, the prospect of war will loom large on the horizon.**

....

**...If we want to push Russia back into the darkness, then the policy we are presently pursuing is the way to go: if, however, we want peace, then it's high time to disband NATO-which is outdated and expensive-give up our dreams of regime change in Russia, and start cooperating with Moscow in solving our mutual problems.**

**[\[RETURN\]](#)**