

# **Rome and Jerusalem**



# **ROME and JERUSALEM**

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**The latter day rise of Babylon the Great,  
its demise at the coming of Christ,  
and the rise of the Holy City**

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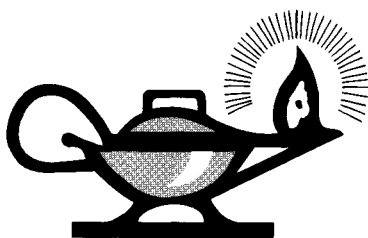
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## Preface

When the angel introduced the vision of the famous 17th chapter of Revelation, he said, “Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgement of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.” The essence of this remarkable prophecy is therefore the judgement of a system that is contemporary with the Lord’s return. It is the Lamb that overcomes the power of the seven-headed Beast and the Saints are with him at that time (v.14)

The vision exudes a sense of confidence on behalf of the Romish Harlot. The greater significance of this latter-day confidence is seen when one remembers the vials of judgement in chapter 16. In consecutive outpourings God brings great tribulation upon the adherents of the Papacy (v.2) until even the Roman capital itself is eclipsed (v.10). Yet chapter 17 sees the Great City back in power and prominence, the gaudy, adulterous “lady of kingdoms” (17:1-2, 8-14; 18:6-7; Isaiah 47:5).

The conclusion is, therefore, that we should have been expecting a major revival of Papal influence from say, the loss of the Vatican’s temporal power in 1870 through to our present years. Unfortunately there has been no book in the Brotherhood that has meaningfully plotted that amazing development and structured the story so that the principal features were clear to perceive.

However, in this present book Brother Graham Pearce has provided a great deal of interesting facts on the current organisation of the papacy and the main issues that have arisen from the Ecumenical Council Vatican II which began 1962 and continue with the reign of the present Pope.

Some very remarkable things have occurred that are, prophetically speaking, most exciting! The reader, therefore, will find this book most valuable to his understanding and increase his appreciation for the vision of the woman sitting upon the Scarlet-coloured Beast. This is a great sign of the latter days and blessed are the eyes that see and comprehend.

The reign of Pope John Paul II is now in its 19th year. It has been an astonishingly successful chapter in Papal history, vastly increasing the power, prestige and significance of the Roman Catholic Church in the modern world. Pope John Paul II has spoken to larger audiences of people and in more countries of the world than any other person in history.

For a hundred years the Vatican had been clamouring for greater influence internationally and it is this Polish Pope that has stood up on this well-prepared stage to play his part with remarkable competence. We are witnessing an historic phenomenon!

All nations are drunk with the wine of the wrath of Papal fornication: but the Lamb's wife is faithfully "making herself ready" for the Bridegroom (Rev. 18:3; 19:7).

On behalf of the Committee

B.N. Luke

Secretary

April 1998

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# **Introduction**

## **Chapter 1**

### **The Bible record concerning Babylon**

#### ***Babylon remembered***

For the bride of Christ there is a day of redemption and reward: *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away”* (Rev. 21:4). But before the reign of peace and righteousness, there has to be the sweeping away of the present world order, a time of Divine judgements, a time of great trouble. In Biblical language this is expressed as the pouring out of the seven last plagues, *“for in them is filled up the wrath of God”* (Rev. 15:1); a very unpopular idea with men and women, but a necessary happening.

In the last of these ‘last plagues’, that is under the 7<sup>th</sup> vial, we read, *“great Babylon came in remembrance before God”* (16:19). As the prophecy continues to unfold, it is apparent that this great city Babylon—also symbolized as a great harlot with “Mystery, Babylon the Great” written on her forehead—is the focal point of the final wrath of God. Chapters 17 and 18 of the Revelation are occupied in describing the wickedness, worldly power and splendour of this harlot-city; and also the Divine judgements that are to be poured out upon her. She disappears from the face of the earth: *“Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all”* (18:21). This is followed by the Alleluia rejoicing that the blood of God’s servants has been avenged (19:1, 2).

If Babylon the Great is the focal point of human opposition to Christ when he returns, we ought to be able to identify this system as already in existence at the time of the end. If we can arrive at a clear view in this matter, we shall be able to bring our own outlook more into harmony with God and appreciate the inherent evil and wickedness of Babylon the Great. It is the purpose of this book to follow the character of Babylon through history and the Biblical record and arrive at the meaning of the final Babylon—**“Babylon the Great”**—as we see it today and perceive its future.

## ***Outline of this book***

This book is divided into four sections. The **first section**, entitled “The spirit of Babylon through history” shows how the spirit of Babylon permeates the papal system and justifies the description of Revelation 17 of “Mystery, Babylon the Great” on the harlot’s forehead. The spirit of Babylon also runs through the history of Russia which has a bearing on the fulfilling of prophecy today and in the future.

In **section two**, “Preparation for the overthrow of Babylon the Great”, the significance of European and Middle East events over the past 200 years is examined, as set out in God’s programme revealed in the seven vials of Revelation 16.

**Section three**, “The Fall of Babylon”, is seen as the great event of the future and involves the study of Revelation 17 and 18. The details given provide ample evidence that the harlot of chapter 17 refers to the Papal apostasy. In its very last phase this system is likened to a vast trading city, extremely rich, influencing all nations: “*For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication*” (18:3). This final state we can see developing today; a further evidence of prophecy fulfilling in our time. We are culpably blind if we fail to see how these chapters throw light on the present day. They warn us to have no contact with **any** aspect of this evil system, whether in the affairs of the ‘mother’ or her Protestant ‘daughters’.

**Section four**, “The rise of the Holy City”, has a happy ending—the cleansed world under the peaceful reign of Christ and his saints, when all will be to the glory of God.

*Section One*

**The spirit of Babylon  
through history**

## ***Chapter 2***

# **Babylon always the enemy of God**

### ***The name Babylon not confined to one place***

The name 'Babylon' is not confined to the original city on the Euphrates. The original city was destroyed over the centuries but was never to be rebuilt once it lay crumbling in the dust. It was replaced, however, by an apostate Christianity centred in the city of Rome. The characteristics of the government and religion of the original Babylon reappear in the so-called Christian system. As we shall see later, it is possible to trace through history and demonstrate how this spirit of Babylon travelled westward to Rome.

Though the use of the word 'Babylon' for something centred on Rome may at first seem puzzling, this conclusion is inescapable. At the return of Christ there is, according to the Revelation, a vast system described as a harlot, and carrying the name of Babylon the Great, and a city called Babylon the Great. There is nothing remotely like this at the place where the original Babylon stood; that place is no more than an archaeological site. So we must be guided by Scripture to find where 'Babylon' exists today. We shall find its centre is Rome.

There are several other illustrations in Scripture of how names have 'migrated'. If we look at two of them it may help to establish the principle in our minds. In Isaiah 23 there is the burden of Tyre. Tyre was the great trading centre of Isaiah's day. The chapter explains how Tyre was to lose her glory and greatness and in the future pass her spirit of commerce to other places which would become centres of world trade. This is prophesied in the words: "*her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn*". So Ruskin writes in 'Stones of Venice' that Tyre was replaced by Venice and then by England, each becoming the centre of trade and shipping. It is recorded in Psalm 45 that, at the return of Christ, "*the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift (of tribute)*". So, just as we must look for a Babylon today, we must also look for a Tyre. Though there is a small town of Tyre<sup>1</sup> on the Mediterranean coast, its harbour is silted up and it is in no sense a centre of trade and shipping.

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<sup>1</sup> The town is actually on what was once an island. Mainland Tyre disappeared long ago by being scraped into the sea to form a causeway to the island. It has never been rebuilt thus fulfilling the prophecy of Ezekiel 26:14.

We have to look elsewhere for today's Tyre. Britain has been the latter-day Tyre, as Ruskin recognized.

The other illustration is the name 'Zion'. Zion stands for the things of God. We normally regard Zion as being at Jerusalem in the land of Israel. But Biblically Zion can be found elsewhere. Zion is applied to the Jews in captivity in Chaldean Babylon: "*Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwelleth with the daughter of Babylon*" (Zech. 2:7).

With this explanation of how the Bible makes various applications of some important words, we will now outline how there has always been a Babylon hostile to God and to Zion.

### ***The beginning of the Babylon conflict***

In the days of Noah all flesh had corrupted God's way and the world was swept away by the Flood. After the cleansing catastrophe of the Flood, apostasy again develops and two 'religious' centres emerge, representing the true and the false. They are Jerusalem and Babel (Babylon).

The true worship is briefly revealed in Genesis 14, when Melchizedec, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, brings forth bread and wine and blesses Abraham. Shem is at this time still alive and it is reasonable to conjecture that he is the head of true religion centred in Jerusalem. Here in the land of the Covenant and the land of the Promises is revealed in a preliminary sense the City of God, around which the hopes of Abraham were centred. "*For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*" (Heb. 11:10). Here God would unfold a city or polity of righteousness and peace, as the words "Melchizedec" and "Salem" declare.

But men generally were not content with God's way and God's city; and, as Genesis 11 tells us, quite soon after the Flood, they say in their power and wisdom; "...*Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth*" (Gen. 11:4).

So from this early time in Genesis there were two rival cities, two ways and two names. They continue through the Scriptures to the Revelation, ending with the final conflict in chapters 18 and 19.

The originator of the apostasy in Babel is identified in Genesis 10. Whereas the true way was in the line of Shem, the false way was initiated in the line of Ham. Ham begat Cush and Cush begat Nimrod. Nimrod was a man of power and an oppressor: "*He began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before [against] Yahweh...and*

*the beginning of his kingdom was Babel...in the land of Shinar...*" (10:8-11). The language suggests he opposed God's laws and persecuted the true believers—"he was a mighty hunter". Hyslop shows in his well documented *Two Babylons* that the religion of Babel was an apostasy from the true way: it contained the elements of the true religion, but they were perverted. The original promise in Eden was of a Divine Man—the seed of the woman by the power of the Spirit—who was to triumph over the seed of the serpent, but before doing so should suffer as a mediator, bruised in the heel and offered as a Lamb sacrifice. These elements of God's salvation clearly occur in the corrupt religion of early Babel or Babylon. This will be outlined in further detail in chapter 3.

### ***Israel and Babylon***

From the founding of Babylon soon after the Flood to the conflict between the nation of Israel and the Assyrio-Babylonian power is some 2,000 years—a long period. During this period God had created the nation of Israel and established them in the chosen land, a living witness to Himself and His purpose. With them were divine laws and a God-appointed temple with worship and sacrifice. By these means His city had become famous throughout the world. "*The perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth*", it is declared to be (Lam. 2:15). Israel, despite its failings, was the light shining in the darkness of the civilized world: a revelation of the one Creator, of His righteous precepts, and of the only way of redemption in the promised Saviour and Messiah, Son of David and Son of God (2 Sam. 7:10-14).

During this long period, just as the 'City of God' had taken political shape, so the apostasy and 'City of Men' had also matured, developing vast political power and holding sway over the minds and bodies of men. The state of things in the Assyrio-Babylonian supremacy is known in detail from early writers and the excavations of the archaeologists. Hyslop and others show that the philosophy and religion reflected the elements of the true religion; it was an *apostasy* from the original right way. Its constitution was parallel with that of Israel's. There was a king who claimed personal authority and power because it was by Divine appointment; it had a priesthood which mediated between the gods and man, and effectively held the people in its grip by administering the rituals and mysteries, and received the confessions of the people. Instead of humility and gratitude to a Creator for blessings received and for hope of redemption from present ills, leading along a path of sanctification, the way of Babylon, the City of Men, degraded men to sensuality and servile existence before human authority. It produced a way of life that was blasphemous of God and His mercy. The pure and elevating qualities of Israel's religion, centred round the two great com-

mandments—*“thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself”*—called for obedience, self-sacrifice, kindness. These things were anathema to the people and rulers of Babylon who loved the lustful ways of spiritual darkness. They scoffed at Israel’s Sabbaths (Lam. 1:7), they were angered at the scorn of Israel’s prophets concerning their helpless idols (Isa. 46 and 47), and they rejected responsibility to the God of Israel as the only true and living God.

The hostility between the true and the false is apparent in the Biblical history of the times. Isaiah 36 to 38 shows the spirit of Sennacherib against the God of Israel. The word of God through the prophet replies: *“Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.... But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me”* (Isa. 37:23, 28). We can read into these words the intense hatred of the apostasy against the true, and its pride and oppression. We call to mind the words of Daniel against the last of the line of Chaldean Babylon: *“And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee...”* (Dan. 5:22, 23). For their oppression of Israel, Chaldean Babylon was to be destroyed and Israel was to return and rebuild Jerusalem. Temporarily God’s city was to prosper under the hand of Cyrus and the Persians.

### ***The spirit of Babylon passes to Greece and Rome***

But in the wisdom of God the oppressing apostasy was to continue, that it might punish and discipline His people for their apostasy, until a final solution should reveal the triumph of righteousness over wickedness. Although the Assyrio-Babylonian power was to be removed, the Babylonish apostasy was not destroyed. Hatred of Israel, of Israel’s God and Jerusalem was revived in the Grecian supremacy and grew to a new maturity under the Roman power in the early centuries AD. The elements of Babylon’s apostasy from the true way were absorbed into the paganism of the Roman world in the second century AD after the Roman empire conquered the Middle East. Then in the fourth and fifth centuries, after the Roman world had changed its religion to ‘Christianity’, the same Babylonish elements passed into world Christianity to make an acceptable religion for the mass of Roman pagans. As the record of history unfolds, the Popes, ruling from Rome, gradually dominated the Christian world, more especially the west. As this Papal power increased, the spirit of Babylon became more manifest in its hostility to God and His people. In Scriptural language it is presented

as having a “*mouth of a lion*” which was given to the beast of the sea: “*And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies...And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them...*” (Rev. 13:2, 5–7). This was the situation for 1260 years until the time of the French Revolution.

There remains the final conflict of the future, revealed by the Old Testament prophets as a latter-day Babylonian domination of Israel (see next section) and in the Revelation as the judgement of the great whore whose sorceries have deceived all nations. Her destruction produces the Hallelujah rejoicings of the saints: “*True and righteous are his judgements: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication ...*” (Rev. 19:2). As the harlot system, Babylon the Great passes from the scene for ever, because the Holy City Jerusalem rises to rule the world in righteousness.

So we have briefly traced the continuing enmity between Babylon and Jerusalem or Zion. How grand are the themes of Scripture. The God of Israel holds all things in His hands, and nations are but a drop in a bucket. He chooses to allow the city of God and the city of men each to have their times and seasons, under His control, working out what is good and needful for His ultimate purpose in the earth. Of several ‘universal’ themes that run through Scripture, the theme of Babylon and Jerusalem is certainly a fascinating one.

Before we enlarge in chapters three and four on that vital phase of Babylon’s history when the spirit of Babylon entered pagan Rome and then corrupt Christianity, it is convenient here to show how the Old Testament prophets spoke of a latter-day Babylon. This will assure us that there must be a Babylon existing in our time, the time of the setting up of God’s kingdom.

### ***The prophets of Israel on a future Babylon***

Several of the prophets speak of the nation of Israel in a final triumph over Babylon. It follows that if Babylon is to be conquered by Israel, then there must be a Babylon in existence at that time, just as there is an Israel. So there must be a final representative of the Babylonish dynasty, a Lucifer or Day-Star (Isa. 14) who will oppose Israel’s bright and Morning Star, the Root and Offspring of David (Rev. 22:16). By way of illustration from the prophets we will make reference to Jeremiah, Daniel, Zechariah, and Isaiah.



## **Jeremiah**

Jeremiah has a long account of the fall of Babylon in chapters 50 and 51. Primarily it is a description of the overthrow of Chaldean Babylon by Cyrus. But several times the prophet includes ideas that take us to the time of the End. In chapter 51:19–24, Jeremiah contrasts the power and wisdom of the Creator with the idols of Babylon. There we read these remarkable words:

“The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things: and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts is his name. Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms. . . . I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers. And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD”.

Israel has never dealt with Babylon and the nations like this in the past and hence it must be a prophecy concerning the future. To fulfil this prophecy there must be a Babylon in existence when Christ comes, an anti-type of Chaldean Babylon that oppressed Israel in the past. With this in mind, from Jeremiah’s prophecy one can begin to see a more substantial political character to the Great Babylon of the Apocalypse. Babylon the Great will be as real a power as Babylon was in the time of Jeremiah and Nebuchadnezzar.

## **Daniel**

The great Image vision of Daniel 2 tells us of a Babylon of the latter days. We are told the great Image is to stand erect ‘in the latter days’ and it will be broken in pieces by the little Stone power—Christ and the saints. The complete Image has never yet existed; only the various parts. The head of gold was the Assyrio-Babylonian power, the brass the Grecian power, etc. But when the whole Image is formed as a confederation of nations, there must be a representative of the golden head. The Image in action must have a head to direct and control. Nothing of consequence with this ability exists today in the geographical place of the original Babylon, and we have to be guided by the later prophecy through John to identify the Babylon of the latter days. This is presented to us in detail in Revelation 17 and 18.

## **Isaiah**

In chapters 11 and 12 Isaiah describes Zion established in glory under the Root and Branch of David. This is followed by an account of the overthrow of Babylon in chapters 13 and 14. Chapter 13 is a picture of

the overthrow of the Chaldean Babylon by the Medes. But when we come to chapter 14, there is language that has not been fulfilled, a deliverance of Israel from the king of Babylon that belongs to the future.

“For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors. And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!” (v. 1–4).

This is that future time when the Gentiles bring Israel back to their land and Israel possesses them as servants and handmaids; they rule over their oppressors. This never happened under Cyrus’ restoration. Then they were still servants to their Persian masters. As Nehemiah pleads:

“Behold, we [are] servants this day, and [for] the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we [are] servants in it: And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure” (9:36–37).

So Isaiah’s prophecy against the king of Babylon is future. Isaiah describes a Babylon that not only oppresses Israel, but that “*smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger*” (14:6). Later, he describes the same man “*that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners*” (14:17). This is the latter-day Babylonish head that holds in its grip the nations so as to create the great Image that Nebuchadnezzar saw.

Such are some of the pointers in the Old Testament writings of a latter-day Babylon holding Israel captive, but then destroyed by the prowess of Israel under their immortal King. As we shall see later, this Babylon of the latter days will be a revived Roman Empire showing all the characteristics of the original Babylon, with its military power supplied by Russia and supported by the very powerful influences exerted by the priesthood of the Papacy. This is the picture we obtain by combining the relevant prophecies of the Old and New Testaments.

## ***Chapter 3***

### **Babylon continued in the Roman Empire: first pagan, then ‘Christian’**

#### ***Babylon’s rule and superstitions adopted by Pagan Rome***

Rome brought organization, discipline, and a return to the ways of Babylon, with the individual subservient to the State. Although the Roman world soon adapted itself to Grecian culture and the Grecian gods, and also to the gods of Egypt, it was not until the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD that the religions of ancient Babylon and Persia made their greatest impact on the Roman world. This is because the Mesopotamian region was not conquered until quite late in the second century. The rapid progress of the oriental—Persian and Babylonian—religions in the Roman Empire at this time is commented on by G. H. Box in *Early Christianity and its Rivals*. Speaking of the worship of Cybele or Serapis, the ‘Great Mother’ of the Babylonians, he says,

“In the third century her worship had attained immense popularity — that was the period when the power of the Oriental religions was at its height. At the end of the fourth century, the Great Mother and Mithra were leading pagan resistance in the great struggle against triumphant Christianity.”

This worship of ‘the Great Mother’ and Mithra is, of course, the worship of the Mother and Child of Babylon, which goes back to the original Babel and the corruption of the promise of a Deliverer as the woman’s seed of Genesis 3. Mithra, or Mithras, is the apostate equivalent of the seed of the woman; he was the saviour, the mediator, the one who sacrificed himself. Hyslop in his *Two Babylons*, section 3 of chapter 2 on the Mother and Child, writes:

“This son, thus worshipped in his mother’s arms was looked upon as invested with all the attributes, and called by all the names of the promised Messiah. As Christ in the Hebrew of the Old Testament was called Adonai, the Lord, so Tammuz was called Adon or Adonis. Under the name Mithras, he was worshipped as the ‘Mediator’. As Mediator and head of the covenant of grace, he was styled Baalberith, Lord of the covenant (Judges 7:33). In this character he is represented in Persian monuments as seated on the rainbow, the well known symbol of the covenant”.

So the Woman and the Woman's Seed of Genesis 3, worshipped originally in Babylon as the Queen of Heaven and Mithras, continued in apostate form in the religion of the pagan Roman world in the third century AD. And in later centuries it passed into the Catholic religion. Some further details of this will be found in chapter five, on Mariolatry.

### ***Fourth century Christianity absorbs much of Babylon's religion***

After Constantine declared Christianity the official religion of the Roman world early in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, there followed a century or more of conflict between paganism and Christianity. It is in this period that Christianity became so corrupt, by adopting the practices of paganism, that it was easy for pagans to make the nominal change of their religion. It was but little more than the change of outward forms and names. Mithras the saviour had to be changed to Jesus the saviour. Mary the mother of Jesus was rapidly exalted so she could replace Serapis, the Great Mother. The same feast days continued as before, but linked with Christian connotations. Images continued to be worshipped but under changed names. Ecclesiastical history shows that images of Jesus Christ and the 'saints', and a little later Mary, began to appear in the churches towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Two quotations from well-known writers will show how at this time paganism merged into Christianity.

"Already, in the fourth century, we find images introduced into churches, the bones of martyrs hawked about as relics, the tombs of saints became the resort of pilgrims; and monks and hermits swarming in the various countries. We find pagan festivals, slightly disguised, adopted into Christian worship; the homage offered anciently to the gods transferred to the martyrs; the Lord's Supper dispensed sometimes at funerals—the not improbable origin of masses; and the churches filled with a blaze of lamps and tapers, the smoke of incense, the perfume of flowers, and the goodly show of gorgeous robes, crosiers, mitres, and gold and silver vases; reminding one of the not unsimilar spectacles which might be witnessed in the pagan temples"<sup>1</sup>.

Furthermore –

"The use, and even the worship of images, was firmly established before the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century"... "By a slow though in evitable progression, the colours of the original were transferred to the copy;

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<sup>1</sup> Wylie, *History of the Papacy*, book 1, chapter 2.

the devout Christian prayed before the image of the saint, and the pagan rites of genuflexion, luminaries, and incense, again stole into the Catholic Church" (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chapter 49).

It was, indeed, in the introduction of Image worship into the Church that Christianity 'conquered the ancient Babylonish apostasy'. The Catholic Church itself claims to trace devotion to Mary back to this time. In an Encyclical, 1954, with the English title: "Mary Queen of all Creation", Pope Pius XII writes:

"Moreover, in a letter (AD 498) to Pope Hormisdas, Epiphanius, bishop of Constantinople, says that supplication must be made for the preservation of the unity of the church 'by favour of the holy and consubstantial Trinity, and through the entreaties of our Holy Sovereign Lady, the glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of God'.

Gibbon devotes a whole chapter (chapter 28) to the conflict between paganism and Christianity throughout the fourth century and concludes the chapter with these words:

"The most respectable bishops had persuaded themselves that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of Paganism, if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity. The religion of Constantine achieved, in less than a century, the final conquest of the Roman empire: but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals" (the pagan authorities, G.P.).

### ***Emperor worship and the priesthood***

It was not only in the matter of religion that the Roman world took over the ways of Babylon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. There were two other outstanding features; one is the deification of the Emperor and the other is the establishment of a powerful priesthood under his control. At this time the worship of the Emperor—previously frowned upon—became an accepted idea in the Roman world and was of great help in holding together the diverse nations of the far-flung empire. As with the rulers of ancient Babylon, it was now claimed that the Emperor ruled by divine right and was to receive homage as a god. We remember the golden Image that Nebuchadnezzar erected, before which all must bow down and worship; and the later incident in the reign of Darius (Daniel 6) when the decree was made "*that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions*". This was the pattern adopted by the Roman Emperor in the third century; he ruled by divine right, he wielded absolute power, he was without error.

Further, as with Babylon of old, because he ruled 'by grace of God', he was the religious head as well as the temporal head; he was Pontifex Maximus, the High Priest. We remember Babylon had her 'sorceries and enchantments', her 'astrologers, stargazers, monthly prognosticators' (Isa. 47), and by these things the lives of the rulers and the ruled were governed. The priesthood that dispensed these mysteries was under the control of the king. It was a similar situation under the pagan Emperors in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Constantine was at first a pagan Emperor officiating in the way we have described; then he adopted Christianity as the religion of the Roman world. In doing so he simply continued his position as ruling by divine right, including his position of Sovereign Pontiff, Pontifex Maximus. He became the official head of the Christian Church, and soon organized the bishops and other officials of the Church to function in parallel with the State. There was the bishop; then the metropolitan who administered the ecclesiastical affairs of the province; next came the Exarch or Patriarch; and in due course the system was completed with an Arch-patriarch: and as one would expect, the prince of the Patriarchs was centred at Rome. So there came into being a priesthood to dispense the Christian mysteries deriving its authority from the Emperor, as in Babylon of old (see J. A. Wyllie, *The Papacy*, pp. 19-21).

This harnessing of the Church and State, after the style of Babylon, is expressed in the following quotation:

"It was an alliance between the throne and the altar of which the Caesars dreamed, and it was the priest of Serapis, of Baal, and of Mithra who prepared the way for this by preaching the doctrine of the divine right of kings. In its original form this project was wrecked by the hostility of the Christians. Nevertheless, by a strange irony the church was destined to realize in another form the idea for which the pagan rulers of the third century worked. Under the form of an Established Church, protected by a Christian Emperor, the fateful alliance between Church and State, between altar and throne, became a fact, the influence of which is patent to the world today" <sup>1</sup>.

What a corruption of the simple gospel taught and practised by the apostles, intended to separate a people unto holiness, now becoming a yoke to make all men the servants of the State with their conscience held in the grip of the Church.

The Babylonish hostility to the truth manifested itself even in the lifetime of Constantine. He was persuaded by the Church to persecute

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<sup>1</sup> *Early Christianity and its Rivals*, p. 72.

non-Catholics. Two centuries later, in the time of Justinian, Roman law was revised and enlarged to become favourable to the Church. It bore very heavily on 'heretics' who were really those who denounced the apostasy.

## Chapter 4

# How the Papacy became the Babylon of the Apocalypse

### *Babylon continued in the Papacy*

The apostasy continued to grow in power and influence and to descend to new levels of wickedness. In western Europe, starting in the 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> centuries, the system of popery was gradually built up, reaching its zenith in the 15<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was a system of power, tyranny, and blasphemy greater than had ever been seen before and, as we shall see, possessed all the qualities of Babylon.

### *Absolute power*

The absolute power of the Papacy over men's minds and bodies is recorded in the pages of the history of Europe. But we need not search the pages of history<sup>1</sup> for evidence. We have the guidance of the Word of God and the situation set out in Revelation 13. The several phases of the Roman power are expressed by different beasts in this chapter; and the last beast is called an "image of the beast"—a replica of the beast of the sea that was wounded to death and was healed. This means that the Papacy at the height of its spiritual and temporal power was an Empire—a replica, an image, of the old Roman Empire.

Its dreadful power and tyranny is expressed in the words:

"And he (the beast of the earth) had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of the name" (Rev. 13:15-16).

Here is the power at least as absolute as that of Nebuchadnezzar of whom it is written "*whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down*" (Dan. 5:19). Nebuchadnezzar glorified himself by making an image of

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<sup>1</sup> This has already been done elsewhere in the following Christadelphian publications: *The Wicked One Revealed* (F. Walker), *Man of Sin* (Ron Abel), *Brethren in Christ* (Alan Eyre), *Protestors* (Alan Eyre), *Eureka* (John Thomas).



gold 30 metres high and demanding the worship of all—“*princes, governors, captains, judges and all people, nations and languages*”. At the sound of music they had to fall down and worship: “*and whosoever falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace*” (Dan. 3:1–6).

As with the Babylonish original, the Pope as head of the Papacy claims to rule by divine right, as the basis of his absolute power. So at his coronation, the Pope is addressed: “Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art Father of Kings and Princes, Ruler of the World, and Vicar on earth of Jesus Christ”. Surely in such pride and blasphemy the Papacy warrants the title **Babylon The Great**.

### ***Pontifex Maximus—Supreme Pontiff***

As in the original Babylon and the pagan Roman Empire, the Pope is Pontifex Maximus—High Priest for the gods. The dictionary description for Pontifex is: “A member of the college of priests in ancient Rome which included also the flamens and Vestal virgins, and was presided over by the Pontifex Maximus, the chief pontiff, which title was born by the Roman Emperors and then by the Pope”. So the Scripture was fulfilled (quoting The Emphatic Diaglott): “*That man of sin, that son of destruction, the opponent, who indeed lifts himself above everything called Divinity or Majesty; so as to seat himself in the Temple of God, exhibiting himself that he is God*” (2 Thess. 2:4, 5). As with Nebuchadnezzar, as with the Caesars, he receives the worship of men. His bishops at their consecration prostrate themselves before his presence.

As of old, he is “without error”, as befits the earthly ruler for the gods. In the Papacy this is a ‘fact’ made absolute last century in the dogma of Infallibility (1869). “Without error”! What a perversion of truth from men who are directors of fraud, murder, and political intrigue, all in the name of the Holy One of God, he who was holy, harmless and separate from sinners. It is at every step that the Papal blasphemy exceeds the original, because all is done in the name of the Just One. Truly she merits the name **Babylon The Great**.

### ***How is it possible?***

How is it that one man holds such sway over the minds and bodies of men? The Papacy has applied the religious and political policies of Babylon over many centuries to create this hideous system of power and tyranny. The fundamental is to obtain a grip on the minds of men. This she does through many channels. She intoxicates men’s minds by her ritual and worship, with its superstition and mystery, incense, candles, gorgeous garments and processions. She deceives not only by her

miracles and lying wonders, but also by the calculated use of deception and lying in what she says. She holds men's consciences through confession to the priest. In broad operation it is a seductive process, and a continual appeal to the baser instincts of man. So she is described in the Word of God, *"having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication"*, and *"all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies"* (Rev. 17:4; 18:3). And so it was with the original Babylon: *"Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad"*, says Jeremiah; and Isaiah speaks of *"the multitude of thy sorceries, and the great abundance of thine enchantments"* (Jer. 51:7; Isa. 47:9).

### ***The priesthood***

The Pope could not exercise this tremendous influence over men and nations on his own. Just as with the original Babylon there must be a powerful priesthood under his explicit control. His hierarchy of cardinals, bishops, and priests, aided by the apparatus of government called the curia in Rome, carries the authority of the Pope into the remotest country and smallest village. It is all a replica of the original Babylon and the pagan Rome system of worship. In every church the local priest administers the power and authority of the Church; he manipulates the "mysteries", carrying out the wonder-working of converting bread into the very body of Christ and offering him again on the altar; he gives or withholds the communion; he receives the confessions and pardons sins and demands appropriate penance; he instructs the congregations in the infallible truths of Mother Church (with guidance on next week's voting thrown in). So the people are deceived, intoxicated, and held in the grip of the system. "The Confessional is the master key to the working of the system", says Hyslop (chapter one).

And all this is done with the cloak of piety and the outward attraction of the fair name of Jesus. Every encyclical of the Pope, giving instruction to his bishops and priests begins with words of piety, as — "Venerable brethren and dearest sons, health and apostolic benediction", or, "Venerable brethren and beloved children, health and apostolic benediction". What indignation rises in the heart of Christ's brethren to behold such wickedness and blasphemy. How they will rejoice when this evil system is broken up and destroyed (Rev. 18:20; 19:1–2).

### ***Mosaic gloss***

One of the ways in which the Catholic Church cleverly appears to have divine approval is by her copying the pattern of Mosaic worship. As Aaron was High Priest with authority as mediator for the nation and the final arbiter in the application of God's laws, so is the Pope in his world-wide Church. As Aaron was arrayed in splendid and symbolic garments, "for glory and beauty", so is the Pope. He draws the wonder of the spectators' eyes as he is borne aloft in his gilded chair on the shoulders of twelve men clad in crimson, preceded by a long procession of splendid guards, bishops and cardinals. As there was an altar and sacrifice, so Rome has created her altar in every church, on which Christ is offered by the priest. As Israel had the lighting of the lamps, the incense offering, the smoking frankincense, the priestly ritual; so Rome has copied this, together with tithes and feasts, and redemption money. The holy things of Israel have been made a gloss to cover Rome's apostasy.

### ***Image worship***

The bowing down before images in Roman and Eastern churches is well-known. This can be witnessed in England today. The worshipper selects the image of the 'saint' or of Mary, and falling on his knees, bows his head to the ground before the image. The second of the Ten Commandments receives a footnote in the Catholic Bible (the Douay Version) that destroys its effect, so attempting to justify such actions. Image worship is an essential part of the Romish system and is a powerful factor in enslaving the mind. Instead of religion elevating the mind in faith to contemplate the unseen things of God, His holiness, power and glory, the mind is satisfied with things gross and visible. This is exactly what Rome wants in instilling obedience to her priests and her authority; she finds the ways of paganism and old Babylon are still successful.

Regarding image worship, one can discount the 'theory' that the worshipper is using the image to contemplate heavenly things. In practice it does not work that way. God has never accepted the theory; the second of the Ten Commandments is emphatic about this.

### ***The rule of deception***

As is already apparent, the success of Rome rests on deception. This was the path marked out in the prophetic word: "*Even him (the Man of Sin), whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish...*" (2 Thess. 2:9-10). How amply has this prophecy

been fulfilled to this very day. Not only the sorceries that intoxicate the multitudes in the ‘miracles’ wrought by the priests at Lourdes and elsewhere, and in every church in transforming a piece of bread into the very body of Christ; not only the lying dogmas and superstition taught as the truth for man’s salvation; but worse than these, her policies are founded on a principle of calculated lying. In its general operation the principle may be stated as “faith is not to be kept with heretics when violation is necessary for the interests of the Church”. All Protestants, all outside the communion of Rome, are of course, heretics. The principle means that agreements made on oath do not have to be kept, if this will serve the interests of the Church. This will now be illustrated from Wylie’s *The Papacy*, book 2, chapter 20:

“The doctrine that no faith is to be kept with heretics, when to do so would militate against the interests of the Church, was promulgated by the Third Lateran Council, decreed by the Council of Constance, confirmed by the Council of Trent, and is sworn to by all priests in their ordination, when they declare on oath their belief of all the tenets taught in the sacred canons and the general councils.”

“The practice of the Church has been in strict accordance with her doctrine. Faith she has not kept with heretics, whenever it could serve her purpose to break it. Compacts (agreements) framed with the highest solemnities, and sanctioned by the holiest of oaths, she has violated, without the least scruple or compunction, when the interests of Protestantism were concerned. What, we ask, is her history, but one long unvaried tale of lies, frauds, perfidies, unbroken vows, and violated oaths? Every party that has trusted her she has in turn betrayed... Her wickedness is without parallel in the annals of human treachery. Perfidies which the most abandoned pagan governments would have shuddered to commit, Rome has deliberately and unblushingly justified. In the case of others, these enormities have been exceptions, and have formed a departure from the generally recognized principles of action; but in the case of Rome they have formed the rule, and have sprung from principles deliberately adopted as guiding maxims of her policy.”

“Ah could the soil of France disclose her slaughtered millions—could the snows of the Alps and the Vales of Piedmont give up the dead which they cover—these confessors could tell how Rome kept her oaths and covenants. Their voice has been silent for ages; but history pleads their cause; it has preserved the vows solemnly made and perfidiously violated; and pointing to the blood of the martyrs, it cries aloud to heaven for vengeance on the perfidy that shed it... In the long and bloody war against the Waldenses in the thirteenth century,

Rome never scrupled to employ treachery when the sword was unsuccessful; and it may be affirmed that noble people were crushed rather by perfidy than by arms...It was the same in all the countries of Europe. Wherever Protestants existed they were assailed by arms and treachery, and the latter weapon was a hundred times more fatal than the former. The butcheries of Alva in the Low Countries were preceded by promises and treaties of peace and conciliation oft and solemnly ratified. Philip II pledged the honour of Spain to his subjects in Flanders; and the dungeons, the scaffolds, and the sanguinary troops by which that country was immediately thereafter inundated show how he redeemed the faith he had plighted!"

"But the guiltiest land and throne in Europe, in respect to violated oaths, is France... Two years of profound dissimulation and hypocrisy paved the way for that awful tragedy—the greatest of the crimes of Rome—perhaps the most fearful monument of human wickedness which the history of the world contains—The Saint Bartholomew's Day MASSACRE. The chiefs of the Protestant party were invited to Court, caressed, and loaded with honours. The Protestants generally seemed to be taken into special favour, and now shared the same privileges with the Catholics. So bright was the deceitful gleam that heralded the dismal storm... In a moment the bolt fell. For three days and nights the work of human slaughter went on, and France became a very shambles. At length the dreadful business had an end. Seventy thousand corpses covered the soil of France. Paris shouted for joy, and the cannon of St. Angelo, from beyond the Alps, returned that shout ..."

"The last great national act of treachery on the part of France was the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Never was an edict, law, or treaty, more deliberately made, more solemnly ratified, more irrevocably established, more repeatedly confirmed; nor one where of policy, duty, or gratitude, could have more ensured the execution; yet never was one more scandalously violated...When the old chancellor Tellier, the Jesuit, signed the edict of revocation, full of joy at this consummation of the intrigues and labours of his party, he cried out,—"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation". The proscriptions, the banishments, the massacres, which followed, and which were second only to the St. Bartholomew horror, are well known to every reader of history."

Exactly the same principle has continued in operation on a grand scale in the 20th century, as Edmond Paris shows in his book *The Secret History of the Jesuits*, or Avro Manhattan in his book *Catholic Terror in Europe*.

## ***All Catholics are allowed to deceive for the good of the Church***

But untrustworthiness—to deceive for the good of the Church—is not limited to leaders and policy makers. In ordinary life a Catholic may *dissimulate* for the good of his Church—for instance, pose as a Protestant or Christadelphian and hide his true beliefs and purpose. Again he may *equivocate*—as Liguori the master teacher of all this wickedness illustrates:

“Thus he who is interrogated concerning anything which it is expedient to conceal may say, ‘I say, no.’ that is I say the word ‘no.’” He is only repeating the word, no, and is directly deceiving the inquirer. And so in many other ways, dishonesty is right for the good of the Church. Today the words and fair speeches of Romanists, whether Church leaders or politicians, have no more surety than they did in the past. The famous Newman of the last century who started the Oxford Movement, the object of which was to gradually introduce Romish practices into the Church of England—an object well on its way to fruition in our time—early in his career gave an enlightening glimpse of his idea of a faithful Christian: “He both thinks and speaks for the truth, except when consideration is necessary, and then as a physician for the good of his patients, he will be false or utter falsehood as the sophist says” (“The Arians of the Fourth Century”, 1833).

In Revelation 22:15 we read, “*For without (the Holy City) are dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie*”. “*Whosoever loveth and maketh a lie*”—what an apt description. How foolish for brethren and sisters to be taken in by the respectable image the Catholic Church is projecting today. Jesus has put on record the ‘truth’ that belongs to our times; and some brethren choose to be ignorant of what he has graciously given for our guidance.

Once again we may say, compared with Babylon of old and her sorceries and enchantments (Isa. 47:9), the Roman Catholic system **is Babylon The Great**.

Still another line of major deception practised by the Roman Church from early times is in forgeries and mutilation of records to her advantage. R. P. Blakeney in his *Popery in its Social Aspect* devotes chapter 6 to details of this. There was the so-called “Donation of Constantine” in the eighth century in which he is supposed to have granted the city of Rome and all the western empire to the Pope. There were “the False Decretals”—supposed writings of early Fathers

magnifying the office and dignity of the Pope. And there are misquotations of authorities and of the Bible itself to support the Church position.

### ***Inevitable consequences***

So Rome succeeds by her cunning and deceit, but what an awful price must be paid. Hers is wisdom that is from beneath—“earthly, sensual, devilish” (James 3:16)—and this spirit pervades her society. Her principles of government inevitably leaven the whole community. Many writers have noted how countries under Roman Catholic domination are characterized by a lack of industry and a high crime rate.

## *Chapter 5*

# **Mariolatry— old Babylon with a new emphasis**

### *Catholic veneration of Mary*

In no other aspect more than in Mariolatry does the Roman Catholic Church merit the title **Babylon the Great**. Mary is treated as a goddess, and for most Catholics she is more significant than Jesus. We remember the goddess worship of Babylon; indeed the figure of a woman makes the focal point in all corrupt religions of the world, in ancient Egypt, India, Greece, etc. This is understandable. It brings into operation natural instincts and emotions; so men find pleasure in worshipping the creature rather than the Creator.

As a matter of words, in official teaching—Jesus is the Saviour. But in practice Roman Catholics are directed to look to Mary for all things. So she carries the appealing titles: Mother of God, Queen of the Apostles, Queen of Heaven, Queen of all Creation, Mother of the Church, the Door of Paradise, the Gate of Heaven, Mother of Mercy. The deepest feelings of men are aroused as they contemplate her, and they vow their allegiance to her and the Church. To the Catholic woman, Mary is the exemplar of meekness and obedience which the priests attempt to instil in her heart so that they can maintain their influence and authority.

Mary's present position in the teaching and practice of the Roman Church is a matter of slow development through the centuries. What we wish here to point out is the remarkable attention she has received in recent times. It appears that there is a policy to make her the very centre of the religion, the keystone of the arch. In a darkening world of idolatry and superstition, all will be bound together in their devotion to this goddess. It appears that she is an important element in creating the final **Babylon the Great**. The Eastern Church has always been greatly devoted to the icons of Mary and no doubt the present Pope sees the extension of this devotion in the Western Church as a means of drawing the two together.

### *What the popes are saying about Mary*

I have before me five official Encyclicals of Popes concerning Mary, four of them of relatively recent origin. The first is the definition in 1854 by Pope Pius IX of "The Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin



Mary”. This is not to do with the birth of Jesus, as one might suppose, but her own birth; that as she was to be ‘the Mother of God’, she herself should be born free from sin, with the implication that she did not sin. Her life is perfect, the example to be followed.

The second defines the complementary dogma by Pius XII in 1950 of the Bodily Assumption of Mary to Heaven. Every Catholic must now believe that Mary’s body was miraculously preserved from corruption, that parallel with Jesus, the tomb was empty, and she rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. And now it follows, that she like him makes intercession for the millions who seek her assistance. Whereas this had been a frequent theme in Catholic writings, it now became the official teaching of the Church.

Next, Pius XII in 1953 declared 1954 to be the Marian year. In his Encyclical he requires that “there is in every city, town and village, wherever the Christian religion flourishes, a chapel or at least an altar at which an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary is displayed for the veneration of the people. It is our wish, venerable brethren, that the faithful should throng to these shrines for private prayer, but more especially for public, uniting their hearts and voices in supplication to our beloved Mother”.

Then in the Marian Year, 1954, he issued his Encyclical “Mary, Queen of all Creation”. As “mother of the Church” and “Queen of all Creation”, the faithful must seek her help; Jesus is put in the background. He writes:

“By our Apostolic Authority then, we pronounce the establishment of the feast of Mary the Queen, to be celebrated throughout the world each year on the 31st day of May. We further command the renewal on this day of the consecration of mankind to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On this consecration rest our great hopes of the dawn of a happy era brightened by the triumph of religion and Christian peace. Now, therefore, everyone must make a point of going to the Queen-Mother’s throne of mercy and grace, to beg for help in difficulty, light in darkness, comfort in sorrow and distress. Everyone must put his trust in her as never before. Everyone must strive to free himself from enslavement to sin and then show unshakeable loyalty, coupled with the heartfelt dutifulness of a son to the throne of our noble mother. Her shrines must be thronged, her feasts kept with solemnity...In many parts of the world people are suffering unjust persecution and are being robbed of their natural and civic liberties, all because they are Christians. Fully justified protests and repeated complaints have so far failed to secure protection against these evils. Our Sovereign Lady is mistress of the time and tide of events.

Beneath her maiden foot she can subdue tyranny. Towards her inoffensive and sorely afflicted children may she turn those eyes of mercy, the serenity of whose gaze is capable of dispelling the dark fury of the storm”.

All this in the official Encyclical of the ‘infallible’ Pope! So it would appear that in the eyes of the devout Catholic, Jesus has retired from the scene, leaving the two great figures: the Pope and the Queen of Heaven. Yes, here is **Babylon The Great**.

A further 20 years go by, and the unfolding plan is again made plain. Pope Paul VI in 1974 in a lengthy treatise, *Marialis Cultus*, details the way in which Mary is to hold her preeminence. The title page reads: “To Honour Mary: apostolic exhortation of His Holiness Paul VI to all bishops in peace and communion with the Apostolic See for the right ordering and development of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary”. In the introduction he says: “The Church’s reflection today on the mystery of Christ and on her own nature has led her to find the root of the former (i.e. Christ, G. P.) and as a culmination of the latter the same figure of a Woman: the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Christ and the Mother of the Church. And the increased knowledge has become joyful veneration of her and adoring respect for the wise plan of God, who placed within his Family—the Church—as in every home, the figure of a woman, who in hidden manner and in a spirit of service watches over that Family, and carefully looks after it until the glorious day of the Lord”, He says the purpose of the long epistle is “to offer considerations and directives suitable for favouring the development of that devotion” to Mary. Part One concerns Mary in the liturgy and worship of the Church; part Two concerns “The renewal of devotion to Mary”, various guidelines to renew the bond of the faithful “as sons and daughters of the Virgin Mary”.

### ***John Paul IP’s extreme devotion to Mary***

From the beginning of his priesthood, it is said, the present Pope consecrated himself to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. His trust in her is expressed in his motto TOTUS TUUS (‘altogether thine’) and a large ‘M’ for Mary on his garment. In 1978 he accepted election as Pope “in a spirit of obedience to our Lord and with total trust in his mother, Our Most Holy Lady” (*Catholic Herald* 7.5.82). There was the attempted assassination in 1981—“his life was preserved, he believes, thanks to the intercession of our Lady of Fatima” (*Guardian Weekly* 30.5.82).

In the various countries he visits he makes a pilgrimage to the national shrine of Mary. On his visit to Britain, there was no time for him to visit Walsingham, it is said, and so the statue of the Madonna and

Child had full publicity by being carried to Wembley where he conducted Mass in the stadium. The statue took the central place: “after he kissed it, the statue was placed on the altar with the television cameras zooming in on it for a close-up shot which was seen in homes across the country” (Lynn News and Advertiser 1.6.82).

### ***Babylon unchanged***

In all this we see the latter-day Babylon as a replica of the original Babylon. If we visit the British Museum we can see the images of the great goddess of ancient Babylon, represented as a mother and child. Then we can go to the various shrines at Glastonbury, Prinknash, Buckfast, Fernyhalgh, Walsingham, etc., where the Catholic faithful go to give honour to England’s “Sovereign Mistress”, “The Queen and Mother who has our destiny in her loving hands”, and what do we see? In 24 of these shrines described in the Catholic booklet “The Dowry of Mary”, by H. W. R. Lillie, the image is the identical mother and child! It all stems from the original corruption of the promise in Eden that instead of the seed of the woman bruising the head of the serpent, it is the **woman** that bruises the head of the serpent. This has long been the corrupt text in the Catholic Bible. There Genesis 3:15 reads: “*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel*”. A modern footnote questions this translation but concludes with the same error—“‘Ipsa’, the woman; so divers of the fathers read this place, conformably to the Latin: others read it ‘ipsum’, viz. the seed. The sense is the same: for it is by her seed, Jesus Christ, that the woman crushes the serpent’s head”.

A comment about the child part of these images in Boettner’s Roman Catholicism is enlightening;

“A striking phenomenon in Roman Catholicism is the effective way in which they have caused Mary to usurp the place of Christ as the primary mediator between God and men. Christ is usually represented as a helpless babe in his mother’s arms, or as a dead Christ upon a cross. The babe in the manger or in his mother’s arms gives little promise of being able to help anyone. And the dead Christ upon a cross, with a horribly ugly and tortured face, is the very incarnation of misery and helplessness, wholly irrelevant to the needs and problems of the people. Such a Christ might inspire feelings of pity and compassion, but not of confidence and hope... Because Roman Catholics worship before images, and do not lift their minds to the unseen, these images have a powerful effect upon them. One can understand how they turn to the living mother figure in their prayers.

In Romanism probably ten times as much prayer is directed to her as to Christ. The most popular prayer ritual of Roman Catholics, The Rosary, has ten prayers to Mary for each prayer directed to God. The prayer book contains more prayers which are offered to Mary and the saints than to Christ. Mary is unquestionably the chief object of prayer” (1966 edition, page 191).

A further reason for recent Popes giving new emphasis to Mary’s position in their system of salvation is that in the Eastern Church she has long been more the centre of worship than in the West.

It is well-known that the Catholic theologians insist that the worship of Mary is **hyper dulia** (i.e. worship to the Virgin as inferior to the Supreme Deity, but leading to Him), not **latria** (that given to God alone), but in practice for the Catholic masses this is a distinction of no importance.

In so many ways the Catholic system embraces the features of ancient Babylon: the Sovereign Pontiff authority; the priesthood control of the mysteries; the power of deception and lying; the grip on the conscience through guilt and fear, and on the emotions by ritual and grandeur; and not least this sensual attraction of goddess worship or devotion.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Russian associations with the Roman Empire**

#### ***A Roman power, civil and religious, to exist at the end***

Daniel 7 informs us that the fourth beast represents a kingdom or rulership over the civilized world; that it goes through various phases expressed by the ten horns arising, followed by another special horn; that this special horn with eyes and mouth oppresses the saints for a time period of 3 1/2 times and that finally one like the Ancient of Days comes to the earth and sets up his throne, at which time the saints wrest the kingdom from the special horn and the fourth beast is destroyed, as expressed in the words *“the beast was slain and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame”*. The fourth beast of Daniel has been recognized as a symbol for the Roman Empire since the days of John. So Daniel 7 tells us that, from God’s point of view, the Roman power or the fourth beast is the representative of the kingdom of men right through to the return of Jesus Christ. This is important. The whole Roman beast, whatever its changes with time, exists to the end. A recognition of this guides us to look for the amalgamation of Western Europe into one constitutional power under the influence of a Pope and strong European leader, at the time of the end, just before it is destroyed by Christ.

Further details in Daniel 7 point to how the old Eastern and Western parts of the ancient Roman Empire will be re-united. At the time when judgement is given against the fourth beast, two elements are active—the special horn with eyes and mouth, and the brazen claws.

As to the horn with eyes and mouth, the eyes are like the eyes of a man, and it has a look *“more stout than his fellows”* (v. 20); the mouth speaks *“great words against the most High”* (v. 25); and it was to wear out the saints for 1,260 years, or 3 1/2 times. This is a description of the Holy Roman empire, which consisted of the Pope and Emperor. The 1260 years are now passed, both the Emperor and the Papal power were much curtailed by the French Revolution. But we can be sure it will assume its authority and influence at the end, because at the time of judgement the record says: *“I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame”* (Dan. 7:11). We must expect a powerful Papacy, together with a temporal authority based in Europe at the time of the end.

They are the destroying power, the military power, of the fourth beast at a late stage of its existence. The beast's main way of destroying was with its great iron teeth, with which it "*devoured and brake in pieces*" (v. 7). But we are told there is a residue, that is the remaining territories occupied by the first three beasts which must be stamped upon by the feet with brazen claws. The great iron teeth are expressive of the military power of the original Roman Empire centred in Rome; but now at the end of its life it is to use "*nails of brass*" (v. 19). 'Brass' is the significant word. Used in connection with the fourth beast it must point to military power in the Eastern or Grecian part of the Empire. So we can expect the civil and military direction of the reformed Roman beast to be Eastern in its initial stage. We know from Ezekiel 38 and Daniel 11:44–46 that Gog will take this section of the empire. The picture therefore is of Europe held together under the joint control of the Vatican and Russia; the religious authority being with the Vatican and the military power with Russia. Once Russia is defeated by Christ, the Vatican will turn to Europe and ally itself with a strong European power to become "the little horn with eyes and mouth" once more.

### ***Though divided East and West, still one beast***

Europe has been divided into East and West for many centuries, but the division has never been a fundamental one. There is nothing strange in all Europe being represented by one beast. For most of us, our knowledge of history relates chiefly to Western Europe and we know little about the history of Eastern Europe. A few words on the history of Eastern Europe and Russia may help us to recognize that there has always been more elements uniting East and West than dividing them. This will make it easier for us to recognize that there is yet to be a revived Roman beast, with East and West combined.

The eastern part of the Roman empire rose to importance in the fourth century when Constantinople became the centre of the Roman world—the new Rome. This development is commented on in the following quotation:

"The Empire had always consisted of two halves, corresponding roughly to the eastern and western basins of the Mediterranean, with their respective hinterlands. Under Roman administration, the two cultures had fused in a remarkable way, so that it is justifiable to speak of a Graeco-Roman civilization (a little horn of the goat, G. P.). Yet certain differences always remained. If the West, for example, learned to speak Greek, the East never learned to speak Latin. The East was the seat of far older civilizations than Rome, which could, and did, look down on the upstart conqueror. Despite a formidable

apparatus of propaganda—court poets and historians, coin imagery and legends, Imperial pronouncements, speeches and panegyrics, official and unofficial—employed with the set purpose of spreading Roman ideals, an obstinate resistance was offered in many quarters to the Roman 'way of life'."

"The East, too, was the home of the great cities, with which western Europe, with the exception of Rome herself, and perhaps Carthage, had nothing to compare. Under the successors of Alexander the Great, political and economic organization, banking, commerce and industry in the Aegean world had already reached a high degree of complexity. In the West, Roman civilization, a comparatively new growth in many regions, thinned out as it departed further from the Mediterranean; and the economic preponderance of the East became more marked with the agricultural decline of the Italian peninsula and the chaotic conditions which prevailed during much of the 3rd century (3rd and 4th seals, G. P.)."

"The shifting of the centre of gravity, political as well as economic, was acknowledged in 330 by the foundation of Constantinople as the New Rome, twin capital of the reconstituted Empire as it emerged from the reforms of Diocletian and Constantine" (The Root of Europe, section 4, page 37).

For centuries the whole of the Roman Empire was governed from Constantinople and the whole empire was subject to the revised code of laws and the new religion introduced by Constantine. The laws and government promulgated from Byzantium by Constantine were strengthened by Justinian in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, in particular giving more privileges and immunities to the Church and the clergy. Although East and West drifted apart in various ways, this Roman constitution continued the basic constitution of both East and West right through to the time of the French Revolution.

Christianity was the other great common link between East and West. The schism between the Roman Church and the Orthodox Church is not of any fundamental nature. Both are similarly apostate, worshipping relics and images, showing great devotion to Mary, steeped in superstitious ritual, and having common ideas about heaven and salvation. They differ somewhat on their idea of the Trinity.

### ***Russia the successor of the Eastern Roman empire***

For most, a consideration of Russia means a consideration of Ezekiel 38 and the belief that as a rather isolated happening, Russia will come down on the land of Palestine to take a spoil. This is seen as something

separate from 'European prophecies'. A more detailed knowledge of history will show that it is just as important to take Russia into account as Germany in the final development of the Roman fourth beast. As the western Roman world over the centuries pushed northward into Germany, so the eastern Roman world pushed northward into Russia. In the West, starting with Pepin and Charlemagne in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Christianity, commerce, and Roman civilization pushed north to the Baltic; for ten centuries there was the Germanic-Roman empire known as the Holy Roman Empire. A not dissimilar movement went on in the eastern Roman empire, and Russia is recognized as part of the developed Byzantine civilization.

The eastern Roman empire is usually called the Byzantine empire, after Byzantium the ancient name for Constantinople. The Byzantine civilization is described geographically as follows:

"a compound of Roman, Hellenistic, and Christian traditions, it can be described in terms of the geographical area over which its influence was once predominant. Originally limited to the territories of the eastern Roman Empire, above all to the Balkans and Asia Minor, Byzantine civilization made a thrust northward into Russia shortly before most of Asia Minor was lost to Islam. The Balkans and Russia remained its main strongholds during the remaining part of the Middle Ages. Today the area occupied by the 'heirs of Byzantium' is basically the same, with the addition of the territories won for Orthodox Christianity by Russia's eastward expansion. It comprises the European lands inhabited by the Serbs, the Albanians, the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Romanians, and the Russians. The history of these six people reveals a striking similarity which to some extent overshadows their ethnic and linguistic differences; they are united by a common membership of the Eastern Orthodox Church and by the powerful influence exerted by Byzantium on their medieval culture; moreover they were all subjected for several centuries to the rule of Asiatic empires—the Balkans to the Ottoman, Russia to the Mongol—and on emerging from their political servitude, succumbed, gradually in the case of Russia, more rapidly in the case of the Balkans, to the influence of West European ideas and institutions"<sup>1</sup>

Thus Russia and what we used to call the Satellite countries largely derive their culture and institutions from Byzantium—the eastern Roman Empire—and also from western Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford Slavonic Papers, Russia's Byzantium Heritage, D. Obolensky, page 48.



The following further quotations from Obolensky<sup>1</sup> are enlightening.

“There can be no doubt that the influence of Byzantium on Russian history and culture was far more profound and permanent than that of the Turko-Mongol hordes and more homogeneous than that of the modern West. Russia owes her religion and the greater part of her medieval culture to the Byzantine Empire, both directly, and through her connections with Constantinople in the ninth and tenth centuries, and indirectly, through Slavo-Byzantine schools of the tenth century Bulgaria”.

“Byzantium brought to Russia five gifts: her religion, her law, her view of the world, her art and writing”.

“Byzantine influence, which spread to Russia through the medium of Christianity and the channel of the upper class, was often slow in filtering down to the other sections of society; but filter down it did, and over the course of the Middle Ages it pervaded in varying degrees the whole of Russian society from the prince to the peasant, leaving practically no aspect of Russian life untouched”.

“We may conclude that Russia’s parent civilization was the Byzantine culture of East Rome, in whose terms Russian history remains intelligible at least to the middle of the fifteenth century”.

“I have already suggested that from the early eighteenth century onwards, Russia was living, as it were, under a dual dispensation. The upper strata of society had exchanged the Byzantine traditions of Muscovy for the education and ethos of the modern West, while the peasantry still clung to the old way of life. Yet elements of the Byzantine tradition survived in all classes of the Russian society, thus a notable section of the Russian nineteenth century intelligentsia, the Slavophiles, for example, regarded the Orthodox tradition derived from Byzantium as their surest bulwark against the encroaching rationalism and materialism of western ‘Bourgeois’ culture. Above all, the continuing strength of the Byzantine inheritance in modern Russia has asserted itself again and again in the form of the Orthodox Christian faith to which the peasantry and a section of the educated classes have remained profoundly loyal; and there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that the recent attempts of their rulers to destroy or subvert this religious allegiance have met with any notable or lasting success. Especially, perhaps, the vitality of the Byzantine heritage in Russia is manifested in the liturgy which retains a powerful hold on the mind and emotions of all those, both educated and

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<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*

untutored, who have not succumbed to atheism or religious indifference, and which is one of the greatest and original creations of the Byzantine genius.”

“It is highly significant that Russia entered the European family of nations through her conversion to Christianity, for which she is indebted to Byzantium. The heritage of East Rome was not, as it is sometimes suggested, Russia’s ‘Mark of the beast’ that isolated her from medieval Europe: it was in fact the main channel through which she became a European nation. Byzantium was not a wall, erected between Rome and the West; she was Russia’s gateway to Europe.”

### ***Russia always part of Europe***

A few further quotations emphasize how interconnected has been the history of Russia and Western Europe.

“For all the theological disputes between Rome and Constantinople, the rivalry of conflicting jurisdictions, the differences of language, customs, and traditions, in spite even of Charlemagne’s coronation as Emperor of the Romans, there is no convincing evidence to suggest that, at least until 1054, the majority of the churchmen and statesmen of East and West were not conscious of belonging to one Christian Society”.

“Recent research has revealed the extent to which Russia in the eleventh and twelfth centuries shared in the common life of Europe: trade relations with Germany, the continuing immigration of the Scandinavians, intermarriages between members of the Russian dynasty and those of the principal reigning families of Europe, cultural connections with Bohemia and Poland, ecclesiastical contacts with Rome—these facts of Russian history in the pre-Mongol period do not suggest any segregation from, or hostility towards, the nations of the West.”

“The really significant fact is that the beginning of Russia’s turning away from her Byzantine heritage in the late fifteenth century coincided with the growth of her connections with the West: Ivan III’s marriage with Zoe was a harbinger of these connections: for the niece of the last Byzantine Emperor came to Russia from Italy accompanied by a papal legate, and the marriage had been arranged by Rome; the relations then established between Russia and Renaissance Italy were paralleled by the growing Western influences in Novgorod in the late fifteenth century, which soon spread to Moscow.”

“The reforms of Peter the Great were patently a response to the impact of outside forces, pressing on Russia from the West; their

purpose was to transform Russia's military machinery, social structure, and economic life in accordance with Western institutions and with the help of Western technology. Alexander II's reforms, particularly the emancipation of the serfs, were both a product of Western liberalism and a consequence of the Crimean War; they too, aimed to give Russia the efficient machinery of a progressive Western state. Finally, the Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviet regime to which it gave birth were at least in part the product of forces which arose and developed outside Russia: the two corner-stones of the Soviet State —Marxism and technology—were borrowed from the West."

"Nor has she been a mere recipient: since the time of Peter the Great Russia has formed an inseparable part of the European system; for more than a century she has powerfully contributed to European culture, in literature and music, in science and scholarship, and in recent years she has exported to the West in a new and to some extent characteristically Russian form, the creed and practice of Marxist Socialism."<sup>1</sup>

These quotations will help us to appreciate that Russia is inevitably linked to Europe and part of the last phase of Daniel's fourth beast.

### ***Russia and Babylon***

An important feature of Russian constitution and history has been left to the last: its characteristic Babylon-type sovereignty. We have earlier described the absolute power of the Emperor in Constantinople, and his control of the supporting priestcraft in governing the people. Russia for centuries fitted into this system centred in Constantinople, and later established a similar pattern of the Tzars in Moscow. In recent years this kind of rulership has been modified by the impact of communism; but with the innovation of democracy, the Church has received freedom and political clout. It is not difficult to see a similar head arising and feeling comfortable with the Papacy's absolute authority and Babylonish qualities. So we ought not to fix our eyes entirely on the Papacy as the essence of Babylon the Great. Babylonish qualities belong to the East as well as to the West. The following quotations will make this clear.

"The Russians were as keen as the Bulgarians and the Serbs on Byzantine political thought. They acknowledged the Basileus (Emperor, G. P.) of the Romans as the representative of God on earth

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<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*

and the head of Christendom, submitting to his laws and referred to him all important decisions in religious matters”.

“The metropolitan of Kiev, who for centuries remained the head of the Russian Church and Russia’s cultural leader, was appointed by the Patriarch of Constantinople, confirmed by the Basileus (Emperor), and was usually a Greek...Such a situation was only possible in Russia because the Russians had taken from Byzantium besides the Christian faith, the Byzantine and Christian version of the Hellenistic notion of the divinised king—the Law Incarnate, the Basileus, the successor of Constantine the Great, the only representative of God on earth, who wielded supreme power over all Christians. This alone explains the sort of subordination to Constantinople in which Russia was held during the first four centuries of her existence. It was not the dependence of a vassal, as many historians have wrongly assumed. The supreme authority of the Orthodox Basileus (Emperor) was perfectly compatible with the political independence of the Grand Prince of Kiev and other Russian princes. The basic principles of Russian legislation were Byzantine, and this helped both Byzantines and Russians to reconcile the notion of a supreme legislator in Constantinople with an independent growth of Russian law, in which sufficient allowance was made for the gradual absorption of Western principles after her first codification of the *Russkaya Pravda* or Russian Law, started by Yaroslav the Wise...This Byzantine conception became the principle of all Russian religious and political thought.”

“Under Mongol rule, Russia remained closed to every Western influence and Byzantium served as the only source of inspiration; the Emperor still acted as head of Orthodox Christianity and his decisions were law in Russia, even though contact with the tottering Empire and its influence steadily declined...In Russian estimation the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 was God’s punishment. Ivan III was the legitimate successor of the Greek Basileus and Moscow was henceforth the Third Rome. Ivan’s marriage to Sophia, the last Byzantine princess, and the adoption of the Byzantine Emperor’s coat-of-arms, the double-headed eagle, symbolized the transformation. There followed an intensive study of Byzantine political literature under the inspiration of the clergy, in search of Russian formulations...In 1547 Ivan IV, the Terrible, lent to this general feeling a concrete and final expression by accepting the Imperial crown and officially assuming the title of Tzar. The court of Moscow was organized on the Byzantine model, and the Tzar defined his own powers in words which could have been used by the Byzantine Basileus: ‘The autocratic regime comes from God and the Tzar carries out God’s

wishes. He wields every power over all things and it is his duty to provide for the salvation of his people which God has entrusted to his care.' Moscow took its succession to Byzantine seriously and the first synod of the Russian Church in 1551 was held after the model of the great ecclesiastical gatherings as they were once held in Constantinople under the chairmanship of the Basileus. The erection of the Moscow patriarchate in 1589 finally sealed the transition."

"A Byzantine leaven has always conditioned Russian institutions, even to the present day. It is still present in...that curious blend of Byzantine autocracy and Western democracy...The Russo-Byzantine idea of the Third Rome and of Russia's messianic mission is still very much alive, and the Byzantine student will readily recognize in the diplomatic and administrative methods of modern Russia features that were once familiar in the city of Constantinople and in the empire ruled by the Basileus."<sup>1</sup>

These quotations show that Russia is truly the heir to the old Roman Empire; more so, in fact than present-day Western European democracy. The chapter has provided us with a picture of Russia as a nation prepared by her long history to play her part in the final brief revival of the Roman Empire—the fourth beast of Daniel—when the saints slay the beast and take the kingdom. Confederate with the Papacy, they will together provide the first phase of the civil and religious elements of the last Babylonish power on earth. The second phase comes after Russia's defeat in the land of Israel.

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<sup>1</sup> The Root of Europe, sections IX and X, entitled "Byzantium and the North", and "Byzantine Influences in Russia, by Prof. F. Dvornki.

## ***Chapter 7***

### **Vatican–Soviet relations**

#### ***Publisher's additional notes to chapter 7***

The following comments by Bro. Pearce have been retained in this publication because they were true and relevant at the time of their writing and because they contain some very interesting accounts of earlier happenings in the sweeping changes that broke up the Soviet Union and replaced it with a series of eastern republics known sometimes as the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The last seven years have witnessed a remarkable resurgence in the prominence of the Russian Orthodox Church. No major government occasion is without some Church representation. Vast numbers of new churches have been built throughout the land. Attendances have been strong and enthusiastic and Sunday School instruction and a new catechism have been given hearty government support. A vast new Cathedral is being built in the capital and will again stir Russians to go back to their past when the Church had such a major role in the lives of the people.

The Pope has desired for some years to identify with this religious revival in the Russian Federation. He has been very prominent in the restoration of the Church in other eastern European countries. He is on very good terms with the head of the Greek Orthodox Church based in Constantinople (Istanbul), Patriarch Bartholomew. This man is ecumenically minded and Pope John Paul would be delighted to work with him in healing the breach of the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, there since 1054. The Russian Patriarch, however, is wary of working too closely with Rome. So too is the Serbian Orthodox church and the recent split-up of Serbia and Croatia has accentuated this antipathy. Remarkably the Pope's role in the four years of civil war in Yugoslavia was very low key; rarely was any comment made from the Vatican during the four years of the terrible war. Yet it was essentially a religious war.

Some of the grievance with the Roman Church involves defections from Orthodox membership. So much smaller than the world-wide Catholic Church, the Eastern Church bitterly resents the conversion of its members to the Roman Church.

For example, when the Ukraine obtained its independence and religious tolerance came with the new democracy, four million Ukrainians declared their conversion to the Catholic Church. Such an awesome charismatic personality as John Paul II would out-perform any of the Russian church leaders, so the Orthodox Church is wary of inviting him in among their fold!

But the healing of the 1054 breach of Eastern and Roman Churches remains a very high ideal of the present Pope. He has stated in fact, that he wishes to welcome the year 2000, the next millennium, with a joint mass meeting on Mount Sinai with the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church and also Muslim leaders! This is a very pretentious concept but this remarkable man has achieved so much in the politics of Europe that it would not be hard to see him achieve significant improvement in the relationship of the Roman and Orthodox churches. If this could be achieved, then the Russian Government would be quite prepared to work more closely with the Vatican. Russia wants closer ties with eastern Europe. A healthy relationship with the Pope would go a long way to help this as the Pope's role in the gathering unity of Europe has been a major embarrassment.

### ***Religion in the Soviet Union***

Before looking at Vatican-Soviet relations it is important to appreciate the perspective on religion in the Soviet. The concept of a joint rulership by the Soviet and the Vatican may seem very unlikely to many, because they think of the Soviet as an atheist country. This idea has been created by the British press and media generally, which are largely Catholic-dominated. It is not true.

The Catholics have for many years loudly proclaimed the propaganda that the Church is persecuted and suppressed by the Soviet. Few realize that when the word 'Church' is used, they mean exclusively their Roman Catholic Church; all outside are heretics, or at the kindest, 'separated brethren'. It is true that the Russian authorities did try to suppress the Roman Catholic Church in Russia and the Satellite countries under Soviet control; for the very good reason that her activities are generally against the well-being of the State, and her members are more loyal to Rome than to their own country. But this attempt was not successful, and that phase has passed, replaced by uneasy toleration. Several of the eastern Slav countries are predominantly Catholic—Poland 93%; Hungary 62%; Czechoslovakia 60%.

The Orthodox Russian Church and religion were re-instated by Stalin in 1943. Just after the war the Times Moscow correspondent reported on the state of the Orthodox Church: "The past year has been an important one for the Russian Orthodox Church, adding much to its consolidation at home and abroad. It has seen the enthronement of the present Patriarch, the holding of the Church Assembly attended by Church leaders from many parts of the world, and the repair and reopening on many church buildings, including monasteries and convents" (8.1.46).

Although the Communist party was officially atheist, its membership was only around 10 million out of a total population of 125 million. The Russians are still attached to their church and their attendance is said to be greater than in Britain. Here are a few newspaper extracts:

"Russia has a higher percentage of regular church-goers than Britain, claims a survey of religious conditions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, published today" (Daily Telegraph 30.9.74).

"Religion existed in Communist countries more than was usually recognized, the General Synod of the Church of England was told yesterday during a debate on religious conditions in Eastern Europe. The working party said 'Taken as a whole, the story of religion in Eastern Europe is one not of survival, but also of revival. It is a chapter in the mighty acts of God'" (Daily Telegraph 6.2.75).

In 1978 the Guardian Weekly had a complete page on "Religious life in the USSR." which concluded with the words from the 1976 report: "No one suspects the scale of the intensity of religious life in the USSR. It is without doubt the biggest volcano in Christendom" (8.10.78).

The Russian Church has to conform to State policies, as indeed is the situation in most countries in the world. The State uses the Church to promote its own policies, just as the Vatican does. In particular the Soviet has sponsored the Christian Peace Conferences. These started in the early 1960's, with Christian World Peace Conferences held every three years. 1200 delegates from 50 countries attended in 1964. Billy Graham has participated in one of the conferences. The leaders of this movement are nominal Protestants from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany, together with those from the Orthodox Churches. The headquarters are at Prague, with subsidiary headquarters in Africa and Latin America. The head of the Russian Church is the president of the conferences. These conferences promote the view that Christians should fight against injustice and support Marxist activities. The movement has become such an important influence by the Soviet, that it was the subject of a report by the Institution for the Study of Conflict in 1978.



The above details have been taken from it. The Study in its conclusion said: “The latest CPC (Christian Peace Conference) actions and statements leave no doubt that it acts, in fact, for the East bloc countries as one of their international transmission channels. A European movement which ten years ago was of little importance has grown today into a world-wide organization with branches in Asia, Latin America and Africa.”

The same delegates and the Russian Church leader play an important part in the conferences of the World Council of Churches.

### ***Giddy days for the Russian Church***

The above title appeared in a special *Time* magazine report dated June 20, 1988. It carried the sub-heading, “Historic events signal growing respectability for long-persecuted Christians.” 1988 was the country’s 1000<sup>th</sup> year of Orthodox Christianity. Church bells, so rarely heard in the land of Lenin, pealed noisily as some 500 church leaders from 100 nations attended a special anniversary ceremony. The largest Catholic assemblage ever to visit the Soviet Union was in attendance. A Russian prelate was recorded as saying, “It’s like a honeymoon—we feel drunk and hope we don’t ever wake up.”

So intent was the Communist regime on honouring the occasion that it consigned the Bolshoi Theatre to be the site of one of its major celebrations and insisted that Raisa Gorbachev take part in the ceremony. Some of these events were broadcast to a nationwide TV audience of millions.

The man responsible for negotiating Papal interests with Gorbachev is Cardinal Casaroli, who is regarded by many as a brilliant diplomat. He has been quietly working to settle the long-standing obstacles between Catholics and Eastern Orthodoxy.

Alongside these developments, the Russian hierarchy held its first council since the Russian revolution to elect a new Patriarch and resolve the issue of who controls the local parishes. In 1961 Khrushchev forced the Church to accept Communist-party approved priests. In a major concession from the Gorbachev regime, the much hated regulation was revoked allowing enormous freedom for selection of priests.

Despite these concessions, including the return of 325 Orthodox sites over the last 3 years, church activities remained restricted. But some major analysts point out that Gorbachev vitally needs the support of his country’s 50 million Orthodox Christians in order to succeed in his far-reaching reforms. The church is the largest organized body in the Soviet

Union, far exceeding the Communist Party in membership. One of the Vatican delegates said quite openly, “Gorbachev realizes he needs more than the party. He needs the people.”

### ***Gorbachev and the Pope***

No Pope has even had an audience with a general secretary of the Soviet communist party before, until the historic meeting between John Paul II and Gorbachev in December 1989.

In an article entitled, “Cross Meets Kremlin”, *Time* wrote, “of all the events that have shaken the Soviet bloc in 1989, none is more fraught with history—or more implausible—than the polite encounter which will take place in Vatican City. There, in the spacious ceremonial library of the 16th century Apostolic Palace, the czar of world atheism, Mikhail Gorbachev, will visit the Vicar of Christ, Pope John Paul II.”

“The moment will be electric, and not only because John Paul helped inflame the fever for freedom in his Polish homeland that has swept like a brush fire across Eastern Europe. Beyond that the meeting of the two men symbolizes the end of the 20th century’s most dramatic spiritual war, a conflict in which the seemingly irresistible force of Communism battered against the immovable object of Christianity.”

This certainly is a dramatic change from the Kremlin’s plans to assassinate the Pope in 1981.

Greeted—a rare privilege—by the Pope in person in the throne room of St. Peter’s, Gorbachev conceded that the meeting “was truly an extraordinary event.” Here are some excerpts from Gorbachev’s address.

Concerning Communism he said, “We have abandoned the claim to have a monopoly on the truth, we no longer think that we are always right, that those who disagree with us are our enemies. We have now decided, firmly and irrevocably, to base our policy on the principles of freedom of choice, and to develop our culture through dialogue and acceptance of all that is applicable in our conditions.”

Concerning Europe he said, “In the final analysis we envision Europe as a commonwealth of sovereign democratic states with a high level of equitable interdependence and easily accessible borders...Respect for the people’s national, state, spiritual and cultural identity is an indispensable condition for a steady international environment that Europe and the world now need to cross the historic watershed and attain a new period of peace.”

Concerning religion he said, “We have changed our attitude towards some matters—such as religion—which, admittedly we used to treat in

a simplistic manner...Now we not only proceed from the assumption that no one should interfere in matters of individual conscience; we also say that the moral values that religion generated and embodied for centuries can help in the work of renewal of our country, too.”

These topics were obviously discussed between the two leaders and Gorbachev was the one who was changing to accommodate religion in his plan of economic revival.

## **Section Two**

# **Preparation for the overthrow of Babylon**

## ***Chapter 8***

### **The sounding of the last trumpet: the vials**

#### ***The climax of European history***

World events and changes, however complex, are in the hands of Jesus Christ and the angels, who control men and affairs according to “the times appointed”. Nebuchadnezzar was made to know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men: *“This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men...”* (Dan. 4:17). It has always been so. Paul declared on Mars Hill that God *“has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of the nations’ habitation”* (Acts 17:26).

As we move towards the climax of 6,000 years of earth’s history, when the Creator is about to install His Son as *“Heir of all things”* (Heb. 1:2), we should expect that God has detailed the penultimate happenings in the world that prepare for the introduction of Christ on the scene. Like a play with its many acts and scenes, the stage has been set for the final drama; nations have to be manipulated into their correct position; archaic things have to be taken out of the way. It is not surprising that 150 to 200 years should be occupied in the *“Time of the End”*—a short period compared with the 6,000 years’ scale of divine working. These events, we shall see, are set out in the seven vials of Revelation 16. This book has an integrated structure with seven seals, seven trumpets and seven vials. The seventh seal contains the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet contains the seven vials.

#### ***History is mostly God’s judgements***

History from the end of the first century has been a fulfilment of the unloosing of the seven seals on the scroll of chapter 5. The unloosing of the seventh seal revealed seven trumpet events, warlike movements of nations that brought judgements through the centuries. It is made clear that these judgements were directed against the Christian apostasy in both the East and West of the Roman Empire. Christ’s brethren were oppressed by the apostasy, and their prayers are described as the smoke of incense ascending to God from the golden altar before the throne (ch. 8:3, 4). As a result the angel took fire from the altar and cast it into the earth, and this brought the seven trumpets of war into operation. After six of the trumpets had taken

effect, occupying ten centuries, chapter 9 concludes: *“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor their thefts”*. The reader can relate these events with what has been written about the development of the papal power and wickedness through these centuries. It is apparent, that from God’s point of view, history is largely concerned with His response to the crimes of the Christian apostasy.

With the sixth trumpet finishing its sounding at the French Revolution (ch. 11:11–13), we enter a period of exciting events:

“The second woe is past, and behold, the third woe cometh quickly”.  
“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever... And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come and the time of the dead, that they should be judged ... And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament:: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail” (Rev. 11:15–19).

In these words the culminating events of the last trumpet are briefly stated.

### ***The seven vials***

The brief reference to the last trumpet at the end of chapter 11 is filled out in chapter 16 in the detail of the seven vials of the wrath of God. There are several reasons for believing that the seven vials are equivalent to the seventh trumpet. First, it continues the pattern of the seven trumpets being equivalent to the seventh seal (Rev. 8); so the seven vials are equivalent to the seventh trumpet. Secondly, the vials complete, or ‘fill up’ the wrath of God; and the seventh trumpet is described as “the last woe”: both involve the ending of prophetic time. But perhaps the most impressive point is the striking similarity between the language at the end of chapter 11, describing the climax of the seventh trumpet, and the language of the seventh vial in chapter 16. We have just quoted from the last verse of chapter 11. Compare this with the seventh vial, *“And there were voices, and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake...and there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven”*.

So we now give our attention to the vial events of prophecy, the first six vials showing those events prior to Christ's return; and the seventh vial the climax—"It is done". We should note for later study that chapters 17–20 are a further section detailing the effect of the last vial, leading to the overthrow of the Christian apostasy, Babylon the Great, and its replacement by the Holy City rulership for 1,000 years.

### ***An analysis of the vials***

It will be found that the vials divide into three parts which are summarized as follows:

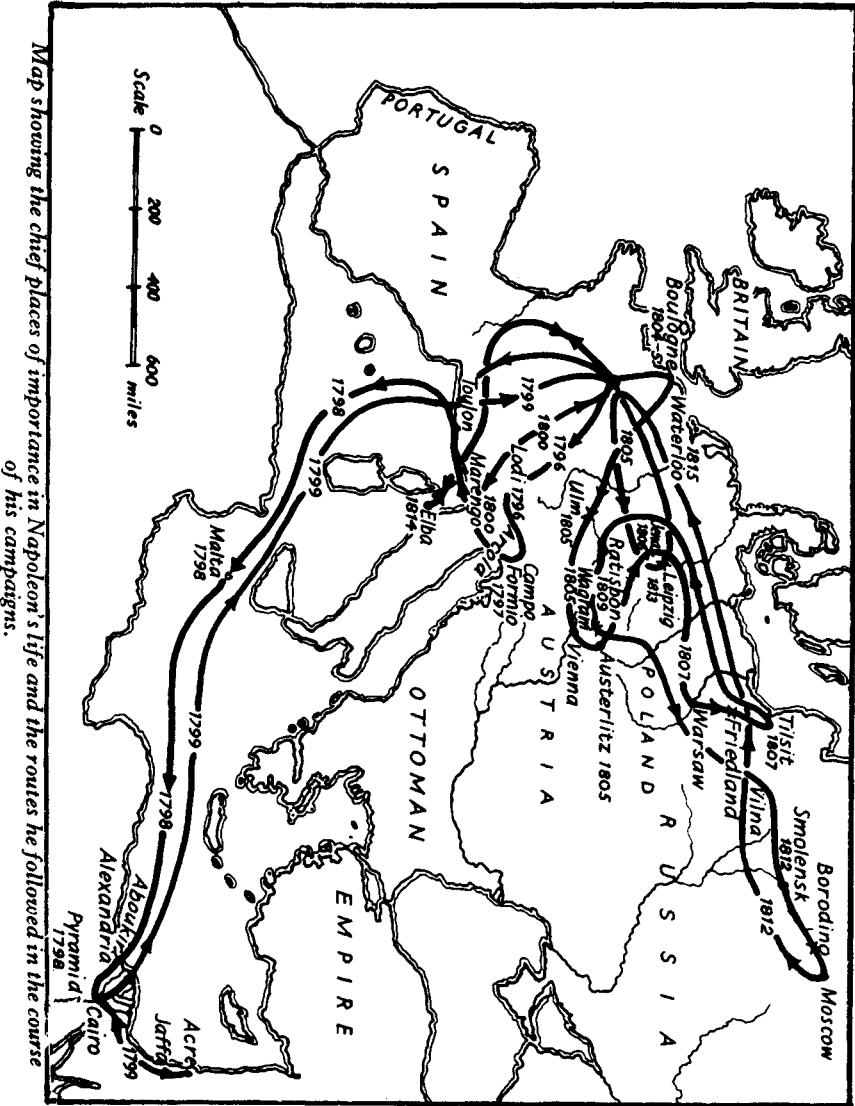
<b>Part</b>	<b>Vials</b>	<b>Breaking down</b>
1.	1-5	Events which break down the old Order in Western Europe after some 1000 years domination by the Holy Roman Empire and the Papacy.
	6a	The disappearance of the Turkish Empire in the East
<b>Preparing the nations for the Day of Christ</b>		
2.	6b	1. Preparing the land of Israel
		2. Frog-like spirits gathering for war against Christ.
		3. The resurrection.
		4. Operations and policies bringing the nations to Armageddon
<b>Consummation</b>		
3.	7	The work of Christ and his saints in subduing the nations and Europe in particular.

### ***Great changes in Western Europe: The old Order passes away***

For the history that fulfils the first five vials the reader may care to consult the book *Apocalypse and History* by Barker and Boulton, or *Eureka*, vol. 3, chapter 16. We learn from chapter 11 of the Revelation that the last trumpet, (that is, the seven vials) starts immediately after the French Revolution. History shows the first group of five vials are in rapid succession, and are the work of Napoleon. This is typical of God's way of working. One man, whether it be Alexander, Constantine or Napoleon carried through a great work of change, set a new course, and put into operation new principles that flowed on after his death. Napoleon carried the principles of the French Revolution across Europe

Section Two: Preparation for the overthrow of Babylon

in a brief 20 years, but the forces he generated went on working through the 19<sup>th</sup> century and on to our present time.



Map showing the chief places of importance in Napoleon's life and the routes he followed in the course of his campaigns.



A detailed study of the five vials and how they fit Napoleon's work provides a wonderful proof of the hand of God at work in human affairs. The fulfilment is so exact, with everything in its right order, that only the foreknowledge of God could have set out these symbols. By his brilliant military strategy and his administrative skill Napoleon caused various effects, symbolized as:

<i>'a malignant ulcer'</i> ,	vial 1;
<i>'the sea became as the blood of a dead man'</i> ,	vial 2;
<i>'the rivers and fountains of waters became blood'</i> ,	vial 3;
<i>'men were scorched with great heat'</i> ,	vial 4;
<i>'the kingdom of the beast was full of darkness'</i> ,	vial 5.

These represent the intense judgements on the Catholic powers and the people of Western Europe. The map below indicates the areas of Napoleon's wars, and the dates of his campaigns.

It must be emphasized that the vials are not to be limited in their effect to the time of Napoleon. After his death there was the expected reaction, a swinging back of the pendulum to a considerable extent. But like a smothered fire, the flames burst out afresh in 1830 and 1848, with new waves of revolutionary zeal. And so it went on through the 19<sup>th</sup> century into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed the Holy Roman Empire carried on in a limited power until 1917. The revolutionary forces of 'democracy' surge on unabated throughout the world today. So although the first five vials had their specific fulfilment, their effect spreads over a century or more.

### ***The importance of the French Revolution***

As chapter 11 of Revelation indicates, the seventh trumpet and its seven vials follow on from the French Revolution. Historians recognize the French Revolution as the key to the events of our time. This is well expressed in the Larousse *Encyclopedia of the Modern History* (1964), at the beginning of the section headed "The Present Age":

"In a political sense it is proper to date the age in which we live from the French Revolution. The shock carried by that Revolution and the spread of its principles has produced repercussions ever since. They will continue today, whenever people claim the rights of a national determination and equality before the law...The Republican ideal, launched by the 'insurgents' of the thirteen Colonies in America, now embroidered and developed by the theorists of the French nation in arms, would little by little spread over the whole world".

The spirit of the Revolution has been the driving force that has brought about the vast changes resulting from the pouring out of the first six

vials; thus preparing the world stage for the introduction of Christ at the end of the sixth vial—“*Behold I come as a thief*”. We have already noted the immediate effect of the French Revolution on the first five vials, in which Napoleon carried the Revolution into Europe. Likewise under the sixth vial. It was the spirit of the Revolution that broke up the long established Turkish empire; it emancipated the Jews of Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, leading to their return to the land of Israel in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; it is the frog-like spirit going forth to gather the nations for the war of the great day of God Almighty. These great movements flowing from the French Revolution are the substance of history from God’s point of view. The six vials are a summary of some 200 years history, including the First World War, the Russian Revolution, Hitler and his murder of the Jews, their return to Israel, the revival of the nations in the Middle East and the revival of the Papal influence in Europe. In this assessment, we must bear in mind that the Bible record primarily concerns itself with Europe and the Middle East.

## ***Chapter 9***

### **The sixth vial: preparation for Christ's return**

#### ***Drying up the river Euphrates and healing the land of Israel***

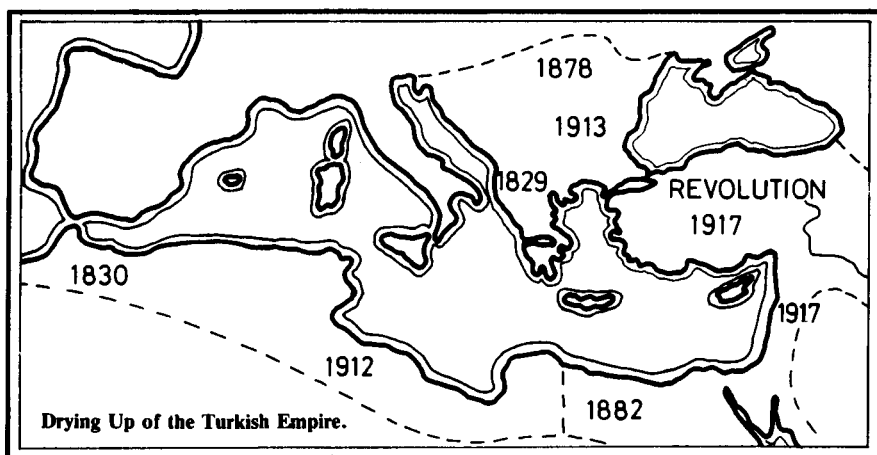
The 'drying up of the river Euphrates' was a necessary preliminary to the way being prepared for the kings of the East. This drying up of a river is symbolic language, and in the Revelation takes its sense from earlier Bible events.

In Isaiah 8 the waters of the Euphrates are said to overflow their banks and sweep through the land of Judah. This represented the Assyrian power in its military conquest, as verse 7 tells us.

Under the sixth trumpet in Revelation chapter 9 a similar figure is used. Four angels bound by the river Euphrates are loosed. This was fulfilled in the four waves of invasion from the east of the Euphrates into the Roman Empire: the Seljuks in the 11<sup>th</sup> and again in the 12<sup>th</sup> century; the Mongols in the 14<sup>th</sup> century; and the Ottomans in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. These peoples from Turkestan, called generally Turks, were the scourge of God against the idolatrous Catholics, and they followed up the earlier conquests of the Saracens. They conquered the whole of the Eastern Roman empire, and held the vast region once called Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and Greece. Their rule extended through Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Algeria. This was certainly a great flood of water from the Euphratean regions.

It is reasonable that the symbol under the sixth vial of the drying up of the water of the Euphrates takes its meaning from this earlier enlarging of the Euphratean power. The history of the last century does show a steady 'drying up' of the Ottoman empire. Starting early in the nineteenth century the weakening of power and the loss of land went on for over a hundred years, until at the end of the first World War, 1917, Turkey was reduced to Asia Minor, an area about twice the size of Great Britain. The map below gives the dates when the various lands were ceded. Algeria went to France in 1830, Greece became independent in 1829, Egypt came under British control in 1882, the nations of the Balkans, Rumania, Bulgaria, etc., emerged during the latter half of the nineteenth century; and as we well know, the Turk was driven out of the Holy Land and the Middle East during the 1914-1918 war. Such a

slow steady process is well symbolized by the flood of a river drying up. The first item of the sixth vial had been fulfilled.



### ***Who are the kings of the East?***

The next step is preparing a way for the kings of the East. With the removal of the Turkish power from the Middle East, various nations have come into being in this region: Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine. It could be said that these are the “kings of the East” for which the removal of the Ottoman was the necessary preliminary. But one immediately questions whether this is an important enough matter to find such prominence in this part of the prophetic record. And the further question arises, if these are the kings of the East, where in the Apocalypse is the continuation of the prophecy of Arab kings to be found? If these nations are brought on the scene at this critical point in God’s prophetic record there ought to be some further apocalyptic action to take place in which they are involved. But there are no further symbols that could be interpreted as the Arab powers. The record is not likely to bring them on the scene and then forget them. The Arab idea can be dismissed when the detailed text is studied.

Bro. Thomas shows in *Eureka*, that “east” is not the right translation here. The word “east” occurs several times in the Apocalypse and the Greek word *anatole* is used. It has the sense of ‘a rising’, so, the dawn; and this developed its use for the east. But here, and significantly, in 7:2, the word *helios*—sun—is added. Reference to the RV will confirm

this: thus, “*kings that come from the sun rising*”. But the RV is not quite correct; the word *anatole* is plural, and the accurate translation is “*kings from a sun's risings*” (see Diag.). So the text is far removed from the normal word for east.

Bro. Thomas develops the sense of “the kings from the sun's risings” beautifully in *Eureka*, as the resurrected and glorified saints. Quoting only a few sentences:

“All that springs up out of the earth is caused to rise by the power of the sun acting on the seeds therein. Everything therefore brought up from beneath, or from the darkness into view, is a ‘rising of the sun’... The Sun of Righteousness, who rises only once to set no more, causes righteousness to spring forth from the earth, in causing righteous men to spring from the grave; who, when ‘clothed upon with their house from above’, will praise him before all nations. The righteousness first pours down from heaven, then the earth opens, salvation is brought forth, and salvation and righteousness spring up together (see Isa. 45:8): thus also ‘truth shall spring up out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven’” (Psa. 85:11).

The drying up of the Euphrates is, then, for the purpose of preparing a way for Christ and his brethren. This fits into the record very well. Under the earlier vials there were the judgments on the apostate Christian world, and then before Christ actually appears to complete the work of judgment, and takes the kingdoms of the world to himself, the record announces that a “Way is prepared” ready for him. This has a harmony that is absent in the suggestion that the kings of the East are the Arabs.

### ***What is ‘the Way’?***

But what is the idea of this “Way” for the kings? The figure is modeled on the original taking of Babylon by Cyrus, when he unexpectedly made a way into the heart of the city by “drying up” the Euphrates, or diverting the river from its customary bed. It is apparent to all who study Isaiah 45 that the greater Cyrus is in view: “*I have raised him up in righteousness, and will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives*” (v. 13). In the antitype, Christ and his brethren are to enter the European “Babylon the Great” and overthrow it. How does he enter? He first comes to Arabia and Palestine, and this provides the base from which to conquer Europe and the fourth beast of Daniel, apocalyptically Babylon the Great. For a fuller account of the original and the antitypical Cyrus entering Babylon see *Eureka*, vol. 3, p. 540–542 [Old Edition].

So the “Way” is being prepared first by the removal of the Turk from that region, and then by the return of the Jews and the development of the land of Israel.

As watchmen figuratively on the walls of Jerusalem (Isa. 62:6) we have been watching the preparing of the Way for over 40 years in the partial restoration of Jews to their land, and Israel becoming a significant power in the world. This wonderful happening is the necessary preliminary to the coming of Israel’s King and princes. So the first part of the sixth vial stretches from 1820 to our present time and beyond. How wonderful that a few words of prophecy can comprehend so great an event. A few words exactly in the right place in the prophetic word! Surely this is the word of God.

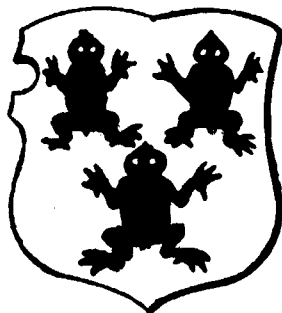
### ***The going forth of the frog-like spirits to gather the nations***

There follows the second part of the sixth vial, which must also be fulfilled before Christ appears. This is the going forth of frog-like spirits to Europe and then the whole world to “gather” (Gr. ‘lead together’) the nations to the great conflict with Christ. The sense is of some powerful and extensive activity that prepares for the nations joining together to oppose the dominion of Christ.

The “spirits” or policies that go out of the centres of Europe (see next section) are “*unclean spirits like frogs*” (Rev. 16:13). This is sign language for the spirit of the French Revolution—that socialist impulse under the banner of “liberty, equality, and fraternity” that first surged through Europe, and then like a spreading fire has passed to Russia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and all parts of the world.

The use of the frog as a symbol for France has been well documented by Elliott, and by Bro. Thomas in *Elpis Israel*, p. 378-382 (11<sup>th</sup> edn.). The frog symbol is peculiarly suitable to France as a Republic developing out of the Revolution. Before the Revolution she was a monarchy, and had the heraldry of the three lillies. The frog symbol goes back to earlier times, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the national leader was chosen by popular acclaim. It therefore suits France as the source of the democratic and nationalistic impulses—the voice and the power of the people.

The question is, how do the frog-spirits “gather to the war of God Almighty” and prepare the nations to be ready to join together against Christ when he comes? Let us trace out some of the effects of the French Revolution, and see the general fulfilment of this prophecy first. Afterwards we will examine the frog-like spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet.



### ***The French Revolution spirit breeds defiance of God***

Two features stand out in the history of the past 200 years since the French Revolution. The first is the growth of intense nationalism, the second is the unparalleled increase in the rate of human ‘progress’. In these two channels we shall see the preparation for human opposition to Christ when he comes.

Let us take the second feature first. The revolutionary spirit—liberty, equality, fraternity—was the assertion of the rights and power of the people. As government passed into the hands of the people, education of the masses followed. This in turn generated new and tremendous forces in the economic, scientific and social worlds. We see a wonderful increase in knowledge, marvellous invention, and gigantic industrial development. The material well-being resulting from this has been grasped by the masses. In all countries of Europe, and then farther afield, the degree of education and the standard of living have risen tremendously, and the peoples everywhere feel their power.

With these great changes there has come a developing tide of godlessness; education, science, invention, industrial development have given man a sense of great importance, and a feeling of self-sufficiency. He does not want God. When Christ is back in the earth and demands the submission of Europe to his righteous laws he will be met with defiance.

A vast image of human power will be formed against him—that image of Nebuchadnezzar of the latter days—and the nations will confederate against him:

“The nations rage, the peoples conspire, the kings of the earth take counsel together, against Yahweh and his Christ, saying, let us burst their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us...Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (Psa. 2).

In this wide sense we can see how the spirit of the French Revolution has bred an intense spirit of nationalism, and the nations arm themselves to defend their national rights. To the historian, it is a strange perversion from good to evil that the spirit of the Revolution—liberty, equality, fraternity—working in the heart of each nation has produced. Instead of a happy confraternity of peoples, mutual suspicion and hostility are evident.

As the revolutionary spirit stirs up the masses, each nation asserts its own national independence, its own equality, its own rights. The material progress resulting from the Revolution is harnessed to maintain the State, vast armies are organized, indeed, the whole nation organized, for the maintenance of national independence in a way never before seen in history. The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries have been filled with wars of increasing national intensity and military power, and today we see each nation carrying a ruinous burden of armaments and military organization to preserve its national independence.

When in the future all these nations drop their mutual hostility, and combine against the common enemy, Christ, what a gigantic human power will be revealed. Nebuchadnezzar saw this as a “*great image whose brightness was excellent*” and “*the form thereof terrible*”—nations no longer opposed to each other, but confederated into one vast organization to oppose the Stone Power.

The frog-like spirits are not limited to Europe, but go forth to the whole world (v. 14). And this we see today. In Africa, in India, in Eastern Europe, in Russia and the former Soviet Republics, the same spirit of independence, national rights, economic and industrial progress, education, and armaments. So the preparation goes on for that day when the King of the Jews demands the obedience of the world. In that day the nations will rally to the support of the Image power. So the Image, erected on the iron-clay feet and toes of Europe will reveal a confederacy vastly exceeding anything previously seen in the earth. “Liberty, equality, and fraternity”, the “rights of man”, and “nationalism and democracy”—these various voices of the French revolution, will find their climax in human resistance to the “bondage” of divine law promulgated from Zion (Psalm 2:1). The frog-like spirits will have accomplished their work.

### ***Spirits of demons working signs***

In Greek mythology demons were the lower gods who mediated between men and the supreme gods. (Clearly this is a corruption of the position of angels). So in symbol they aptly represent the leaders and officials in the political and ecclesiastical heavens. The spirits of the demons are



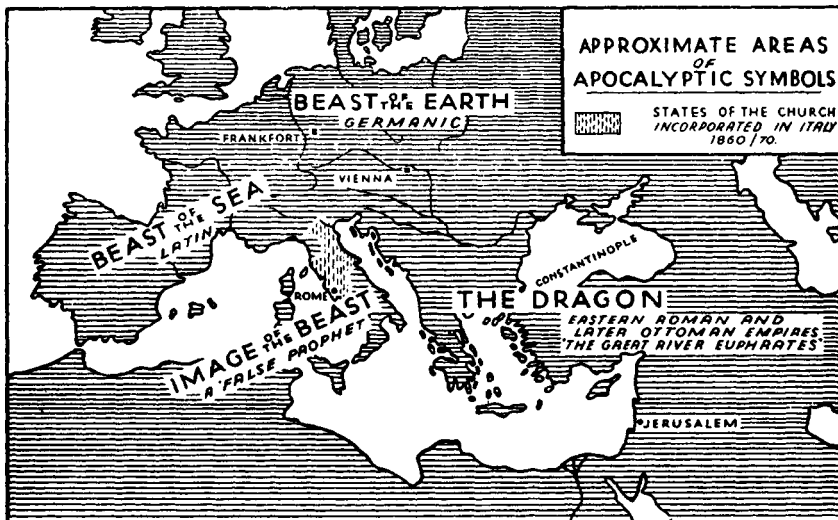
the policies they formulate and which go out from the “mouth”—with the authority of the government. They are unclean or unholy spirits—*“earthly, sensual, demoniacal”* (James 3:15). They work “signs” as the Greek word ‘*semeion*’ properly means; that is, they manipulate events and affairs that delude the people and cause them to conform to their policies. This is particularly true of the activities of the Catholic missionaries in their frog-like activities, the technological marvels that amaze the peoples of undeveloped countries and the political unfolding of events in Eastern Europe in 1989/90.

### Tabulation of the details of the Beasts and Dragon

<i>Beast</i>	<i>Scriptural Reference</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Approximate Interpretation</i>
Red Dragon	12:3, 9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seven heads (crowned).</li> <li>2. Ten horns.</li> <li>3. Called "the old serpent, Devil and Satan."</li> </ol>	Whole pagan Roman World
Dragon	12:16-17; 13:2; 16:13	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Loses its 'red' character by losing its pagan qualities.</li> <li>2. Moves to Constantinople and becomes a military power.</li> </ol>	Byzantine Roman Empire
Beast of the Sea	13:1-7, 12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seven heads.</li> <li>2. Ten horns (crowned).</li> <li>3. The dragon yielded to him throne and authority.</li> <li>4. A head wounded and then healed.</li> <li>5. Given a lion-mouth speaking blasphemies.</li> <li>6. Power to make war against the saints 1,260 years (42 months).</li> </ol>	France and the Latin Kingdoms with the Papacy
Beast of the Earth	13:11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Two horns like a lamb.</li> <li>2. Speaks as a dragon.</li> <li>3. Exercises all the authority of the sea beast "in his sight".</li> <li>4. Causes all to worship the sea beast.</li> </ol>	Germanic Holy Roman Empire with the Papacy
Image of the beast	13:14-18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The earth beast causes an image of the sea beast to be made.</li> <li>2. He gives life to the Image.</li> <li>3. The Image practises, speaks and causes all who will not worship it to be killed.</li> </ol>	The Papacy and the States of the Church
Scarlet-coloured beast	17 19:19-21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seven heads.</li> <li>2. Ten horns.</li> <li>3. Full of names of blasphemy.</li> <li>4. Carries the harlot.</li> <li>5. Its horns make war with the Lamb and the Lamb overcomes them.</li> <li>6. Described in enigmatical terms: — "Was and is not; and shall ascend out of the abyss and go into perdition".</li> <li>7. Cast into the lake of fire.</li> </ol>	Europe and the Catholic Church in the Time of the End

## ***Identifying the Beast and the Dragon***

The frog-like spirits emanate from three centres, the Beast, the Dragon, and the False Prophet. The Beast concerns Western Europe, and the Dragon the Eastern portion of the Roman Empire centred in the old Byzantine empire. This geographical identification comes from a study of the various beasts in Revelation 12 and 13. For those who have not previously studied the matter, the most concise presentation will be found in section 6 of *Apocalypse and History*: entitled "The beasts of the sea and earth and the image of the beast". The table opposite summarizes the beasts and their characteristics. The map shows the approximate position of the Beast, Dragon, and False Prophet.



Europe in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was more or less in a disintegrated state after the break-up of the Holy Roman Empire in the West, and the Turkish empire in the East. Since World War II we have seen develop politically active groups in both Eastern and Western branches of the ancient Roman empire. These will mature into the final Beast in the West and the Dragon in the East.

Probably when the Beast is fully developed Germany will take the lead as it did in the Holy Roman Empire. This may come about perhaps by a secret agreement between the Vatican, Russia and Germany.

The Dragon will be fully formed when Russia moves southward to take Turkey and Constantinople. But we do not have to wait for this full development to see today a frog-like spirit operating throughout Europe and Turkey.

### ***The frog-like spirit in the mouth of the Beast and the Dragon***

We have no difficulty in recognizing how the frog-like spirit pervades the countries of both eastern and western parts of the ancient Roman Empire. The revolutionary principles of the Dragon in Constantinople have been seen in Turkey's democratic convulsions which have shaken the country since World War I. The present Turkish occupation of the Dragon Throne, however, is temporary and at present most of the frog-like spirits emanating from that region have come from the heir-apparent to the Dragon empire—the Russians. We are yet to witness further frog-spirit policies from the Dragon or Byzantine section of the Empire. The croaking will doubtless result in Russia's swift advance into that region.

The frog-like spirit also prevails in the countries of western Europe. They are practically all controlled by Socialists. In all countries the so-called will of the people is said to govern; hence most are republics.

In Western Europe after WWII a new spirit of cooperation was manifest, replacing the century of hostility between France and Germany. Guided behind the scenes by the Vatican, there came into being the Common Market, or European Economic Community. This was launched by the Treaty of Rome in 1956. After a development of some 30 years there was a new drive in 1984 to realize a more political integration of the countries of western Europe. This further integration is set out in the "Single European Act" which has been signed and approved by all the Member States. "The Act takes a giant step towards the centralization of power in Europe. It increases the powers of the EEC Commission to a dangerous degree; the Commission can have delegated to it the powers of the Council..." (Daily Telegraph 11.4.86).

The most amazing frog-spirit emanating from the Beast developed over the years 1991–92. Besides the dramatic drive towards a united Europe, we have stressed the dismantling of the old order and the official conclusion of the cold war.

Fanned by the winds of change in Russian foreign policy, the [former] eastern European states fell like dominoes as they switched from Communist regimes to free-market democracies. Poland, followed by Hungary, East Germany and then Czechoslovakia all succumbed to the

frog-spirits of nationalism and democracy. Even hard line regimes like Romania, Yugoslavia and Albania couldn't resist the sweeping changes.

The dramatic fall of the Berlin wall signalled the removal of all the old barriers. Suddenly German reunification was no longer a Teutonic dream. It has now become an amazing reality. The reunification of both Germanys will result in a strong West Germany dominating its eastern colleague and forming the foundation of the Magog of Ezekiel 38:2.

The speed with which these events took place stunned the world, but where will they lead? Germany's ambition to lead Western Europe into a rapprochement with Russia will continue as it seeks to discover its place in history and discharge the debt it owes to Europe following Hitler's rise to power. Its economic vigour will mean a stronger voice in world affairs and particularly as a spokesman for the EU.

But of major importance is the inexorable swing of European alliances towards a balance of power which existed prior to World War II. After a 50 year interval born of war and sustained by totalitarianism, the countries of Eastern and Central Europe have recorded their history. Political forces and alliances which were thought to have been swept aside by war and Communism have reappeared with stunning speed and vitality. Poland had adopted a pre-war political in-fighting along pre-war prejudices. Catholicism has once more become the national institution it was previously. Hungary has adopted its centuries-old pattern of alliance with Austria and antagonism toward Romania. [Former] Yugoslavia<sup>1</sup> has returned to its pre-World War I ethnic rivalries. And a powerful united Germany once more raises the ugly spectre of dominating the centre of Europe.

In short, we have the reforming of the old Austro-Hungarian or Holy Roman Empire type alliances. In the words of Daniel we have the reforming of the beast with its 10 horns and its little Papal horn. In the words of the Revelation we see the rising of a woman astride a beast with 7 heads and 10 horns. More information will be outlined in Chapter 14 concerning these details.

But the frog-like spirit from the Beast and the Dragon not only operates among their own rulers, or 'kings'; it is said to go forth "*to the whole world*". This, too is part of prophecy fulfilling, another sign that we are near to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have seen the frog-like spirit going forth from the eastern and western groups in the great economic drive of the two groups into the underdeveloped countries of

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<sup>1</sup> See Holy War in the Balkans by Paul Billington, available from the publishers, for much greater detail.

the world. Schools, hospitals, roads, factories, harbours, dams, agricultural machinery, etc.—all elements of education and economic progress that ‘liberate’ the masses. This is the spirit of the French Revolution moving into all the world.

### ***Out of the mouth of the False Prophet***

The prophecy of a frog-like spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet going forth into the world is most interesting. This is a prophecy the fulfilment of which has only recently become apparent, and is a thrilling proof that events have been brought by God near to the great moment when He will send Jesus.

The False Prophet occurs only in this sixth vial, and in Revelation 19 where it is destroyed. It would appear, therefore, it is a symbol for something particular to the vials and the time of the End.

Paul defines a prophet as one who teaches the word of God (1 Cor. 14:3). A false prophet will be a teacher of false Christianity. In the book of Revelation, a false prophet must be understood as a symbol, and it will signify something greater than an individual false prophet. The Roman Catholic hierarchy is the outstanding “false prophet” of our time. The pope, cardinals, bishops and many other officials who make up the hierarchy, promulgate the false teaching of the Catholic church on all matters of faith and practice.

The False Prophet symbol takes the place of the earlier “Image of the Beast”. Before the French Revolution the pope was a temporal and spiritual king ruling at Rome over the Vatican States, and over the vast empire of the Princes of the church—the leaders of the various churches of Europe were appointed and controlled by the pope, as in Spain to this day. The revolutionary call that swept through Europe during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century changed all this. In 1870 two things happened: the pope lost his temporal power in the Vatican States; and he promulgated the dogma of Papal Infallibility. This would mark the change from the Image of the Beast to the False Prophet symbol. By the dogma of Infallibility the pope forced upon the whole world-wide Catholic church the absolute acceptance of the idea that when he speaks as pope—when he “prophesies”—he is infallible. He claims that his utterances are God-inspired, that he is God’s prophet; but in truth he is the False Prophet!

Having established the papal hierarchy directed by the pope as the False Prophet of the sixth vial, we now look for the fulfilment of the prophecy of a frog-like spirit emanating from the Vatican and the Papal hierarchy. The frog-like spirit—the French Revolutionary spirit—

working through the Papacy, must strike one as a very remarkable sign. For the French Revolution was primarily aimed *against* the Papacy, and the privileged classes; and it provoked a very *anti-frog* spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet. For centuries the Papacy had kept the people in subjection, choosing to keep them uneducated, and more or less slaves to their masters. By this means it had ruled the countries of Europe, stolen half of the lands of Europe, and grown rich and powerful. The French revolutionary spirit in the various countries of Europe rose against this tyranny, and fulfilled, in one sense, the prophecy of hating the whore and burning her with fire. How, then, can it come about that a frog-spirit is found in the very mouth of the False Prophet? It must require a great change in the working of the Papacy. This is in fact what has happened. And it reminds us that the Papacy has long experience in adapting herself to new circumstances, and overcoming new enemies.

After suffering, complaining, and resisting through the first half of the 19th century, she saw that the new forces of the Revolution were permanently established, and there could be no going back to the old Order. In the second half of the century she began slowly to adapt herself to the new spirit and power of the masses. A policy was begun which has now worked itself out sufficiently for all to see. Especially in the last twenty years or so, we are able to see the many ways in which she is successfully turning to her own account, the circumstances of the present age and is managing to harness the forces of socialism. The Papacy aims to build a Catholic socialist society as the successor to "godless" Marxist-Communism. This will be the iron-clay feet under the direction of the military-ecclesiastical Babylonian head of Nebuchadnezzar's Image. The Vatican system is enlisting the masses in her cause. She is working boldly within democracy, championing the cause of the people, and they are becoming intoxicated with her wine.

The frog-like spirit going forth from the mouth of the False Prophet has been manifest in a variety of ways. We list them as follows:

1. The pope's socialist pronouncements in Encyclicals.
2. The Catholic church in politics and trade unions.
3. The lay apostolate, Catholic Action.
4. The Ecumenical Council.
5. European Justice and Peace commission.

### *1. The Pope's socialist pronouncements in Encyclicals*

Every year or so, the pope addresses himself in his official capacity to the Fathers and Bishops of the Church on matters of doctrine and conduct in letters that are called Encyclicals.

The foundation of the present advocacy of a Christian socialist State goes back as far as 1891, to the Encyclical "Rerum Novarum" of Leo XIII. In this Encyclical the pope dealt with the unhappy condition of the working classes at that time, and declared himself their champion. In the book "The Evolution of the Papacy", this new development is noted as of historical importance.

"The long reign of this remarkable pope (1878-1903) marked important historical developments particularly in the social and political spheres. For it was Leo's Socialist Encyclical Letters that marked the beginnings of the powerful modern movements of 'Christian Democracy' and 'Catholic Action'." In 1931, the reigning pope, Pius XI developed the picture further in his Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* with the title "On reconstructing the Social Order. He made it conformable to the precepts of the Gospel, in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the Encyclical Letter "Rerum Novarum". In the introduction the pope writes: "You know, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, and you are well acquainted with the admirable teaching which has made the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* for ever memorable. In this document the Supreme Shepherd, grieving for the misery and wretchedness pressing unjustly on such a large proportion of mankind, with lofty courage took upon himself to defend the cause of working men, surrendered, isolated, and helpless to the hardhearted employers and the greed of unchecked competition".

The frog-spirit was even more clear in the 1961 Encyclical of Pope John XXIII, "Mater et Magistra", celebrating the 70th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, and bringing up to date the Catholic Church's teaching on the social order in modern society. In particular it took up the cause of the underdeveloped countries, and so was a frog-like spirit going forth to the "whole world" (Rev. 16:14). It gave support to science and technical progress; it approved of socialization, though maintaining the right to private property; it reasserted the workers' right to a just wage, and to a say in economic matters. The real socialist flavour of this Encyclical attracted the Liberal Party in Britain. The Catholic Herald of 9th Dec. 1961, drew attention to the welcome the Encyclical had received in the Liberal magazine, *New Outlook*, and quoted from an article by John Hutchinson. He writes:

"A generation ago it would have been unthinkable that Liberals should seek inspiration and support in Papal documents, but times have changed. In his encyclical letter *Mater et Magistra*, Pope John not only demands co-management and co-ownership of industry, but states bluntly that the initiative is unlikely to come from the employers. The impetus must come from the artisans."



Who could have imagined popes speaking in these terms 100 years ago? But it had been on record for nearly 20 centuries that a frog-spirit would go out of the mouth of the False Prophet. And so for over 100 years, Rome has come to terms with her new enemy, and learned to master the new forces of the French Revolution, and to appear as the champion of the masses.

## *2. The Catholic Church in politics and trade unions*

Since the French Revolution most of the nations of Europe have been governed by the voice of the people, and the majority political party. In France, Italy, Belgium, and Germany, the Papacy has managed to create Catholic Christian democratic parties, such as the M.R.P. in France. These Catholic political parties extensively influence, and in some cases control, the national policy—to the advantage of the Catholic Church. So the Papacy works through Catholic politicians; they are part of the frog-like spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet. In Italy for a number of years there has been a coalition government of the Catholic Christian democratic party and the Socialist party.

There are Catholic trade unions in these countries, and so in the industrial field the power of the people is used for the well-being of the Catholic Church. These Catholic trade unions are well organized, and meet annually in congress, as the Catholic Trade Union Federation.

## *3. The lay apostolate, Catholic Action*

The most extensive frog-spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet is the movement known as Catholic Action—the efforts of the ordinary believer under the guidance of the Catholic hierarchy. Catholic Action is made up of a variety of associations in every country, committed to advancing the Catholic Church in various walks of life. A few names are—“Papal Volunteers”, “Extension Volunteers”, “The Holy Name Society”, “The Legion of Mary”, “Knights of Columbus”, and “The Sword of the Spirit”.

Catholic Action, as the major part of what the Church calls the “Lay Apostolate”, has, in recent years, received the special attention and support of the pope. It represents probably the Church’s most successful avenue of progress. A quotation from Pius XII’s address to the Second World Congress of the Laity in 1957, is revealing: “The consecratio mundi (consecration of the world) is essentially the work of the laymen themselves, of men who are intimately a part of economic and social life, and who participate in the government and in legislative assemblies. In the same way, only the workers can establish the Catholic cells which must be created among workers in every factory, and bring back to the

Church those who have strayed from her". A simple illustration of this in action is shown in a cutting from *The Catholic Herald* of May 4th, 1964, headed: "Where only a layman can enter". The speaker was a Mr. W. T. Wooton, director of a firm of heating engineers. The report reads "After referring to recent papal encyclicals, he continued, 'The influence of the Church must penetrate into every department of life: domestic, social, political, economic, industrial, commercial and educational. There are many of these departments into which the priesthood has no entry, and would not be welcome if it did. It is in those departments that the catholic layman is called by his vocation to exercise his participation in the priesthood of Christ'."

Activity is not limited to European countries. A 12-page report describes the activities of "The Africa Committee of the Sword of the Spirit". It details publishing of books, seminars in Africa, Press conferences, research, lessons in schools on "Africa Today and Tomorrow", etc.

Imagine then this Lay Apostolate operating in every country of Europe and America, and we can see a powerful harnessing of the whole body of ordinary Catholic believers, under the control of the bishops and priests, as an influence in the social, political, and economic spheres, and directly extending the interests of the Church. This is a vast frog-spirit from the mouth of the False Prophet.

#### *4. The Ecumenical Council*

The second Vatican Council, also known as the Ecumenical Council, held in 1965 was another aspect of the frog-spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet. It aimed to project an image of the Catholic Church, as both devoted to the welfare of all humanity, and meeting the needs of ordinary people in a modern world. This is a necessary part of her "new look" in society. She hopes to give the appearance of being more charitable, that people may forget her oppressive and tyrannical past. The dictatorial rule is to be softened with a degree of democracy. The laity have had a respected place in her wide-ranging discussions. In a book "The Changing Vatican", Faber and Faber, Alberto Cavallari says: "Other declarations go still further. There are some which definitely mean, as one theologian has written, a Catholic reconciliation with ideas of the French Revolution, which only yesterday were unconditionally condemned. Liberty, fraternity, and equality are in fact the keystones of the council doctrine concerning the Church and the modern world, towards the non-Christian religions, and towards atheists." How better could this be summarized than by the words: a frog-like spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet?

Let us not think that Vatican policy has really changed. It is but the outward appearance that has changed; the sheep's clothing of a wolf. The Scripture warns us not to be deceived. At the time of her destruction, when she disappears like a millstone cast into the sea, the record says "*for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived*" (Rev. 18:23); and when the False Prophet is cast into the lake of fire, his characteristic is that he wrought miracles of signs "*with which he deceived them that received the mark of the beast*" (Rev. 19:20).

What we witness in Ulster is proof of her continued support of violence to promote her own ends. Priests continue to give support to the IRA. No doubt, if the Vatican, the Jesuits, and the Church called a halt to violence, it would suddenly stop.

### *5. The European Justice and Peace Commission*

This Commission is of great significance. It is built upon the elements we have already described—the basic teaching of the Socialist Encyclical, 1961; the decisions of The Second Vatican Council, 1964-65; and the enlarging work of the Lay Apostolate. It was established in 1967. In each country of the Common Market, including Britain, the national hierarchy has set up "a Commission for Justice and Peace" an agency "to further justice and the love of Christ for the poor", "to pursue, through various means, questions of world development, justice and peace". The European Commission is the integration of the national Commissions. It is a strong pressure group influencing the EU committees in their aid to the underdeveloped countries—the so called Third World. It seeks to introduce Christ—that is, the Catholic Church—into these economic matters. It is an important factor in preparing for a Christian-socialist system.

Another activity somewhat in the same class is the organization in this country known as CAFOD—Catholic Fund for Overseas Development. The money collected is channelled through their missionaries in Africa, Brazil, Burma, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Equador, Hong Kong, Peru, India, etc., helping to establish the Catholic grip on these peoples. The money is used for "nutrition and welfare schemes, farming, sanitation, and allied projects training for trades and occupations". Similar schemes no doubt exist in all other countries. One can see how closely parallel this is to the efforts of Comecom, the eastern European unit, to control the peoples of the world.

### ***Gathered to the war of that great day of God Almighty***

We have sketched the great changes in Vatican policy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century—changes forced on it by the great changes in the world. This

new policy is well described in the words "*spirits like frogs [coming] out of... the mouth of the False Prophet.*"

What a vast activity this is: the frog-like spirit from the mouth of the False Prophet, the Dragon and the Beast! We have given detailed attention to the going forth of the frog-like spirits, and in particular the spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet, because this is such a significant sign in our times. It is comparable in magnitude with the first part of the sixth vial, the drying up of the river Euphrates and the preparing of the Way. These two slowly unfolding signs span the time from the initial intensive activity of the first five vials through to the coming of Christ. Together they are the symbols of the preparatory work for the appearing of Christ to take the kingdom of men.

It is while these frog-like spirits are doing their work of preparing the nations for the conflict with Christ, that Christ returns. This will be the great event of our lives. And the exhortation is given that we should be watching and waiting, keeping our garments, lest we are found "*naked*" to our shame.

It is not only a day of crisis for ourselves; it is the great "*day of the LORD*" for all mankind. As spiritual leader of Europe and the world, the reigning Pope of the time will rally the nations of the world to crush this Jewish 'Antichrist' established in Jerusalem. But the Rainbow Angel (ch. 10) is almighty and will surely conquer. In the symbolic language of chapter 19:

"Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on [his] vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (15-16, 19-20).

Such is the terrible conflict in Europe, before peace and righteousness can prevail.

## **Chapter 10**

### **The coming of Christ and the seventh vial**

#### ***Behold, I Come as a Thief***

With the Euphrates dried up; with the 'Way' in Israel preparing apace; with the socialist frog spirits flowing from the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet to every corner of the earth—what an amount of prophecy is fulfilled and is fulfilling!

At this time the most momentous event of our lives is to take place: "*Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth*". How stimulating is a correct understanding and belief of fulfilling prophecy to maintain our expectancy, self-examination and preparedness. How sad it is that so few brothers and sisters are allowing these influences to operate. For how many will it be an unexpected thief-like coming for which they are not ready?

"*Found naked to their shame*". Similar language is applied to the ecclesia at Laodicea; it was spiritually poor, blind, and naked, rich in the things of this world. The hour is late, brothers and sisters. If on self-examination we think we may be in the Laodicean class, let us buy gold and eye salve. It requires our initiative. Put on one side the confusing propositions of today's writers. Study the careful unfolding of Scripture by our earlier brethren, not only in prophecy, but in the whole realm of divine revelation. It needs determination and patience to lift our minds and hearts to be in tune with the divine mind. Let our increasing appreciation of the harmony and beauty of the word of God develop our character, regulate our actions, increase our experience in the narrow way of separation. So shall we possess the "tried gold" of faith that endures and sees the eternal things, while we wait for the appearing of our Saviour and King.

#### ***He gathered them to Armageddon***

In Revelation 16:14 we have the frog spirits doing a work of 'gathering' the nations—causing them to flow together—in readiness for the war of that great day of God Almighty. Distinct from this is a specific gathering to Armageddon in the land of Israel. This is after the resurrection, and the sequence of ideas [in verses 14-16] is that the gathering to Armageddon is done by Christ and the saints. By this time the saints have been "*made like unto the angels*". They are not seen or known by men, and like the angels they will work behind the scenes

exerting such influences on men and affairs as caused them eventually to come to Armageddon. The Beast, Dragon, and False Prophet will be 'gathered together' into Nebuchadnezzar's Image of human power, and thus confederated, and supported by the many nations they influence, they will invade the glorious land. The coming down on the land is not only to take a great spoil—it is also a Christian crusade, and initiates what Isaiah calls "*the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion*" (Isa. 34).

The record of the sixth vial closes with the gathering to Armageddon. The great overthrow in the land of Israel becomes the '**Way**' into Babylon the Great. Armageddon itself may be regarded as the end of the sixth vial or the beginning of the seventh. Armageddon involves the breaking of the mighty Image on the mountains of Israel, followed by an extensive work of grinding it to powder. After a pause in which the gospel of coming judgement on the nations is preached (Rev. 14:6, 7) resistance to Christ's rule centres round the Beast, the Harlot, and the Ten Horns of Europe. The Rainbow Angel strides forth with one foot on the sea and the other on the earth, and roars as a lion (Rev. 10:1–4).

### **'He' or 'they' gathered?**

It will be noticed that the Revised Version and most modern translations read verse 16 "they gathered" instead of "he gathered" as in the AV. The intended sense in the RV is that the frog spirits of verse 14 do the gathering to Armageddon, and this view is favoured by most brethren in their recent interpretations of the Apocalypse. It fits in with their idea that Christ does not actually appear and carry out the judgement of the household at this point in time despite the wording of verse 15: "*Behold I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth...lest he walk naked and they see his shame*". It is important therefore, to examine whether "he" or "they" is correct. From a simple grammatical point of view the Greek is certainly "he gathered", but it is pointed out that the plural "spirits" in verse 14 can take a singular verb, and therefore it is permissible to refer the "he gathered" to the frog spirits. This, of course, ignores the fact that the immediate context to "he gathered" is the thief-like coming of Christ, and the natural sequence is that it is he who gathered. Modern translators having no belief in the literal appearing of Christ in the earth again, fall back on their 'rational' interpretation of "he gathered" and consider it makes more sense to refer back to the gathering done by the frog spirits. But to us who know God's purpose, it is satisfactory to take the straightforward sense of the Greek that it is Christ who is referred to when the text says "he gathered".

### ***The seventh vial: it is done!***

When the pouring out of the seventh vial is completed, the divine judgement expressed in the vials is accomplished, for we are told in chapter 15 “*in them is filled up the wrath of God*”. The seventh vial covers the period of the transfer of the kingdoms of this world to the rule of Christ and is a time of great woe. The events of this time are outlined in the description at the end of Revelation 16. But before we look at this we must consider another deviation in interpretation that has become popular.

### ***Is the seventh vial being poured out now?***

From the time of the first World War many have supposed that the seventh vial is operating in the form of aerial warfare. The vial is said to be poured out into the air, and in the first World War, the dropping of bombs from Zeppelins added a new dimension to warfare. This new aspect of war has developed dramatically since 1914–18, and aerial warfare now dominates military strategy. The phrase: “*There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven*” is taken as atomic bombs. The phrase: “*Every island fled away*” is seen as an expression of the meaninglessness of islands for defence now there is aerial warfare. So Bro. F. Bilton in his book *Apocalypse and Gospels*, 1955, gives the seventh vial as starting in 1914, and has several pages under the heading “Incipient commencement—atomic warfare”.

There are various reasons for rejecting this interpretation, and for believing that the seventh vial belongs to the future. It is important to establish this, because if the seventh vial is now in operation, Babylon is in process of “coming up for remembrance”, and the view of those who think Babylon is destroyed by the beast and the ten horns is strengthened: for them the destruction of Babylon will happen before Christ and the saints go into action. The case against the seventh vial being already in operation and for it belonging to the future work of the saints, is set out under six headings.

#### **1. “*Into the air*”**

In examining the recent interpretation just mentioned, the first question to be asked is: Can *into* the air mean *out of*? For the proposed idea is that the pouring out of the vial means attack from the air into the earth; a pouring out *from the air on to the earth*. Strong’s gives the following meaning for “into”: “Eis, a primary preposition; to or into (indicating the point reached or entered) of place, time, or purpose”. So the text of Rev. 16:17 is telling us that the seventh vial is to be poured into—as far as—the air. The Greek does not allow the idea of “out of the

air". The vial has the purpose of doing something to the air. The language is inappropriate for attack from the air on the earth.

The Revised Version supports the emphasis given; it reads v. 17, "*The seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air*".

## 2. *Symbolic usage*

The Book of Revelation is a book of symbol. Verse 1 of chapter 1 says the Revelation was "signified" to John—shown by signs. It is therefore inadmissible, in any primary sense, to give a literal meaning to the word "air" in the vial. The air is a symbol for the governments of the world. They are the constituted authorities, civil and religious, of this present order of things who receive the destroying wrath of this seventh vial. The present governments of the world, especially the Ten Horns of Revelation 17:14, oppose Christ when he sets up his throne, and they have to be destroyed before Christ's Kingdom can be established. The opening phrase of the seventh vial says this in the broadest terms: the vial is poured "upon the air". This is the work of Christ and the saints.

The apostle Paul used the word "air" in this figurative sense in Ephesians 2:2. "*Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*".

In defence of a literal interpretation of the "air", it is said that nuclear bombs explode *in* the air, but this does not really help the aerial warfare interpretation. The explosion in the air is for its effect upon the earth, not for its effect upon the air.

## 3. "*From the throne*"

As the vial is poured out, "*there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done*". The RV misses out "*of heaven*", and reads: "*Out of the temple from the throne*".

So the important thing is, that at the time of pouring out of this vial the throne and its associated temple have appeared. The temple, which in the Greek refers to the nave or innermost part of a temple, represents the saints. The throne is the rulership of Christ and the saints. So when this last seventh vial is poured out the saints are in a ruling position. The first event of the seventh vial is probably Armageddon itself, by which Christ and the saints establish their throne "in heaven"; they take Jerusalem and become one of the ruling powers.



#### *4. The parallel with chapter 11*

After the great voice from the throne and temple in verse 17, verse 18 follows on with the words: “*And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake...*”. Note the close parallel between these words in verse 17 and 18, with the end of chapter 11:19, “*And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail*”. Even the last item here, “great hail” is also referred to in the seventh vial (see ch. 16:21). The close parallel in details from the opening of the nave in heaven onwards makes it fairly certain that the verse at the end of chapter 11 is a condensation of the details of the seventh vial, and is referring to the same time. So chapter 11:19 confirms the fact that the voices, thunders, lightning, earthquake, hail, that make up the seventh vial are **after** the temple of God is opened in heaven and the ark of His covenant made manifest. These are symbols for the manifestation of Christ and the saints “in heaven”, in a ruling position. They confirm that the seventh vial has to do with events after the initial overthrow at Armageddon, which sets Jesus and the saints “in the heaven”.

#### *5. The significance of the seventh*

The structure of the Revelation is based on 7 seals, 7 trumpets and 7 vials. In studying the seals it is found that the 7<sup>th</sup> seal starts a new series of events which are detailed in the seven trumpets and make up the 7<sup>th</sup> seal. Similarly, the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet is of different kind from the previous six trumpets; this last trumpet starts a new series of events detailed in the seven vials. Is it not likely, therefore, that this special character of the 7<sup>th</sup> shall be found in the vials also? that the 7<sup>th</sup> vial is of a different kind from the previous group of six vials, and starts a new series of events? It was Brother Thomas’s view that the 7<sup>th</sup> vial was a new series of events when Christ is in the earth, and that the full details of the 7<sup>th</sup> vial are contained in the 7 thunders associated with the going forth of the Rainbow Angel of chapter 10. These seven thunders have not been made known, but it is clear they belong to the time when Christ and the immortalized saints are in action: they are the Rainbow Angel planting its feet upon the sea and land and roaring as a lion. This is the warfare of the 7<sup>th</sup> vial against the powers of Europe in particular.

We can at least say that this idea of a special significance to the 7<sup>th</sup> item is likely to be applicable to the vials, and if so, it means the 7<sup>th</sup> vial is not part of the grouping of the previous six, and that it starts a new series of events, still in the future.

### ***6. The sea of the second vial***

It has been said the “sea” of the second vial is literal, and therefore why should not the “air” of the seventh vial be literal? Examination will show that in the second vial (and the second trumpet) there is an essential symbolic element in the use of the sea; the desire for literal interpretation cannot be established.

The second vial is part of the group of five vials pouring out the judgments on Western Europe, chiefly at the hands of Napoleon and the French, and also by the blockade of Europe by Britain. This second vial covers the supremacy of the British navy over the European navies, and its effective blockading of all European ports. The text briefly says: “*The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea.*” In this language the “sea” cannot be taken literally—the sea did not literally become blood; every living creature in the sea did not actually die. “Sea” is used (1) to point to maritime activities, (2) to define a geographical area of action. This area is described earlier in the Revelation in the phrase “*the Beast of the Sea*”, and covers the regions of France, Spain, Italy and the coastlands of the western Mediterranean (cf. the “Beast of the Earth” for the Germanic Middle Europe). The “*sea as the blood of a dead man*” represents maritime war resulting in stagnation (no circulation of blood) of sea-life and trade, with its consequent ill-effect on the life of the people of Europe.

As “sea” in the second vial defines activities affecting the coastlands of Western Europe, as a part of the Babylon that is being punished; so in the third vial, “*rivers and fountains of waters*” define another geographical region of the same Babylon; it points to the wars of Napoleon against Italy and Austria, 1796-1802, which were fought largely in the region of the Alps and the Pyrenees. Similarly in the sixth vial the drying up of the Euphrates points to a region associated with the actual river, but does not mean a literal drying up of that river.

So, in these various vials there is a background of the geographically literal, but like the rest of the many items of the book of Revelation, in the details, they are symbolic.

### ***The outline of the seventh vial***

As we have already said, the 7<sup>th</sup> vial completes the judgments of God, and is a time of dreadful trouble before the reign of righteousness and blessing can begin. In the outline given in chapter 16:17-21, there are seven elements. The things stated do not necessarily take place in chronological sequence.

The seven items are:

1. Voices, thunders and lightnings,
2. An earthquake greater than ever before,
3. Islands and mountains disappear,
4. There is a tremendous plague of hail,
5. Men are still unrepentant, blaspheming God for the dreadful pain and woe,
6. The great city is divided into three parts,
7. Great Babylon comes up for remembrance, to receive God's cup of wrath.

*“Thunderings and lightnings”* are the symbol of war; *“voices”* are the policies and directives, whether from the Gentile heavens or the new heavens, established in Jerusalem. *“The earthquake”* is the great event of the time—*“Such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great”*. There are several earthquakes (of varying intensity) in the times of the apocalypse. There was a great earthquake, Revelation 6:12, when the pagan constitution of the Roman world was changed under the laws of Constantine, and Christianity and a respect for the God of the Bible was introduced. But the earthquake of Revelation 16:18 will be far greater. There will be such a shaking of the decrepit institutions of today that they disappear from the scene as ruined heaps, and society everywhere will learn to submit wholeheartedly to the laws of God. The effect of this great earthquake is that *“every island fled away, and the mountains were not found”*. Compare this with the lesser earthquake of Revelation 5:14, where every mountain and island were *“moved out of their places”*, but not destroyed. The islands are the many independent countries, each with their peculiar constitutions, the mountains are the super-powers of the day. When these disappear, there will be only one political mountain—*“the mountain of Yahweh's house, to be established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills”* (Isa. 2:2). The rule of Christ will embrace the whole world, and no rival mountains will be permitted.

### ***Symbolic hail***

The symbolic “hail” is interesting. Old Testament usage is illustrated by the description of the Assyrian army in Isaiah 28:2; *“Behold the LORD hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand”*. Such was the violence of the enemy against Ephraim, or the ten tribes. So a destroying army is like destroying hail. In Revelation 16:21 each hailstone weighs a talent,

which is said to be over a hundredweight. This emphasizes the terribleness of the judgement that makes men blaspheme because of the plague of the hail. Bro. Thomas suggests that the 125 lb. hailstones symbolize the power of the saints descending from 'heaven' upon the Gentile earth, each saint being represented by one hailstone, 125 pounds (50 kg.) or 9 stone being the average weight for an immortal man.

## **Judgement on Babylon**

One specific result of the earthquake and its other accompanying phenomena is that the Great City is divided into three parts. There can be no certainty as to exactly where this division takes place, but we have the precedent of the three-fold division in the time of the trumpet judgements. The three-fold division then was: the western Latin Europe; the eastern Grecian Europe; and the south-east Mediterranean countries, usually known as the eastern Hellenized East—those countries that came under the influence of the Grecian civilization without being completely absorbed. This division would fit the events of the future. After Armageddon the lands immediately around the Promised land will have been subdued; the Dragon or eastern Europe will next be dealt with (Micah 5:6); leaving the Latin West to mount the resistance to Christ and his saints.

The next words are important: "*Great Babylon came in remembrance before God*". Truly God does not forget, though He may seem to ignore the cries of His children. From the days of the fifth seal, when the souls under the altar cried for vengeance, through all the dark centuries of the "*wearing out of the saints*", down to the small cry of enlightened Christadelphians today, God has heard. And at the appointed time Christ will initiate the response of God: "*Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her...*" (Rev. 18:6, 7). What is involved in God remembering Babylon, and giving her the cup of the wine of His wrath, is contained in chapters 17, 18 and 19, and in the seven thunders of the Rainbow angel standing on the sea and the earth.

**Section Three**

# **The fall of Babylon**

## ***Chapter 11***

# **The Papal system becomes the chief enemy when Christ returns**

### ***The central position of Babylon when Christ comes***

The fall of Babylon is the central political-religious event in Christ's setting up of his Kingdom. This we can confirm by glancing through Revelation 14 to 19. Chapter 14 is the first place in the Apocalypse where a sequence of events at his coming is given. The Lamb and the 144,000 of the redeemed triumphant on Mount Zion is in contrast with the previous chapter where the wild-beast nations are dominant and the holy ones are trodden down. So Revelation 14 introduces a new power, the righteous invincible ones, bearing the Father's name who will transform the world. The first action—characteristic of God's mercy and justice—is to give a warning and opportunity: the gospel message goes forth. "*Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of judgement is come*" (vv. 6-7). Then Babylon falls: "*Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication*" (v. 8). There follows under the third angel-power further judgement on the stubborn unrepentant supporters of this dreadful system, those who bear the mark of the beast on their forehead or hand (v. 9–11). The rest of the chapter uses a figure first of reaping the harvest, and then of reaping the grape-vine; thus indicating that there are two stages in the removal of wickedness from the earth. Thus chapter 14 shows Babylon as the centre-piece in the resistance of the kingdoms of men to the Kingdom of God.

Further details about the vials unfold as we come to Revelation 15 and 16. After the preparation work we have already considered we arrive at the seventh vial which links up with chapter 14. In the general phenomena of an earthquake, symbolic mountains and islands fleeing away, etc. the one specific matter is; "*and great Babylon came up in remembrance before God*". It is the day of retribution, as the next words tell us: "*To give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of divine wrath*". Greater detail of this judgement unfolds in chapters 17 and 18. Babylon is first identified as a woman and then as a great city. In chapter 19 there follows the great Hallelujah rejoicing of the saints because the great whore has been judged, and the Babylon city has disappeared for ever like a millstone dropped into the sea.

So if we are willing to be guided by the word of God, we know beforehand the shape of things to come. We shall expect to see in our time events taking shape which indicate the emergence of a dominant system described as Babylon the Great. All else, however powerful, must be given a secondary place to Babylon the Great; this we can say with confidence, having the help of the Father's foreknowledge made known to us by His grace. Such a conclusion from the book of Revelation is reinforced by what we have learned in part One from the earlier prophets, that the Babylonish power that opposed the Truth of God in ages past is to have a final phase at the setting up of Israel's Kingdom and glory, and Israel is to triumph over Babylon.

We have already seen that the Papacy was the successor to Babylon's ways. When we consider the further detailed description in the book of Revelation—the harlot woman riding a beast with seven heads and ten horns, the name Babylon the Great on her forehead, her wine intoxicating the nations, that she is drunk with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus, that she is likened to a trading city—it should leave us in no doubt that the harlot and the great city represent the final form of the papal domination of Europe. This is the terrible system that Christ and the saints destroy. These various items that help us to identify the Roman Catholic power as the harlot and the great city Babylon we shall examine in the following three chapters. Before doing so it may be enlightening to the reader to appreciate that the Vatican is a vast complex system of power and authority.

### ***The Vatican***

The Roman Catholic Church claims over 900 million members out of a world population of over 5,800 millions. The number is probably exaggerated. But it impresses one with the vast system of central government needed to control so many adherents distributed in every country of the world. If one added to this figure the 200 million Catholics of the Eastern Churches, and the 375 million of the Protestant 'separated brethren', both groups she hopes to reclaim, one can envisage her vast grip on over a quarter of the world's population.

The Vatican is the official residence of both the Pope and the Papal government. It takes its name from the Vatican hill on which the Papal Palace and other buildings are built. The Vatican City State only occupies one-sixth of a square mile, but is an independent sovereign state set up by the Lateran treaty in 1929. The word 'Vatican' is used in the same way as Westminster, the Kremlin, the White House or Washington in that it covers all the elements of the central government at Rome. It is essentially an ecclesiastical rulership, but since the

establishment of the Vatican State in 1929 by Mussolini she has been able to have ambassadors in many countries, with full diplomatic privileges, and to receive ambassadors from those countries. More recently the Vatican has developed a world-wide financial empire, and controls banks, industrial assets, and property throughout the world, but more particularly in Europe and America.

Let us first examine the Vatican's primary ecclesiastical control of the Roman Catholic world. There is the central authority and the local authority. The quotations that follow are taken from the Catholic Truth Society's pamphlet *The Government of the Catholic Church* (C.T.S. S 256). First, the '**Local Authority**':

"The Church is organized territorially, and the command of each territorial unit is normally in the hands of a bishop... In his territory he is the accredited teacher of the Catholic faith, the official legislator and the official judge in the first instance... The importance of the bishop in the organization of the Catholic Church is difficult to exaggerate. His duties are weighty: he must govern his diocese, see to the observance of the laws of the Church, prevent abuses, safeguard the purity of faith and morals, and promote Catholic education and Catholic Action. Every five years he is obliged to visit the shrines of the Apostles in Rome, and on this occasion he presents a report to the Holy See as to the state of his diocese".

"Just as the Pope governs the Church through the bishops, so the bishop governs his diocese through his parochial clergy". So, 'the parochial clergy'—the priests—by the Confessional, and their sermons, extends the arm of control to every part of the city and to every village.

Each country has its national hierarchy. This is the board of bishops with the Archbishop, Primate or Metropolitan as the chairman. They co-ordinate national activities.

Now the **Central Authority**. The Pope is the head, supported by his 70 (more or less) Cardinals, whom he personally appoints, just as a British Prime Minister appoints his cabinet. As his collaborators and counsellors they form "the Senate of the Church". The complex business of the Church is handled by seven Congregations, which are permanent commissions of cardinals. "The Congregations are similar to the Ministries of a secular government, and the Cardinal Prefect to a Cabinet Minister. They are in fact the instruments the Pope uses in the exercise of his teaching authority or 'magisterium', and in the application of the law of the Church. In the direction of the tribunals of the Church they exercise judicial power. They include also various offices engaged in administration. Taken in their entirety these bodies



form 'The Roman Curia', while the Roman Curia and the Pope are called 'The Holy See'. Briefly the seven Congregations and their functions are as follows:

*The Holy Office:* 'The Watch-dog of the Church'. It guards and defends the Catholic faith in the widest sense, and also acts as a criminal court in the investigation of apostasy.

*The Oriental Congregation:* is concerned with the Eastern Church and its reunion with the Roman Church.

*The Consistorial Congregation:* has full jurisdiction over all bishops and dioceses throughout the world, except the missionary territories.

*The Congregation of the Sacraments:* controls their seven sacraments, including marriage and 'divorce'.

*The Congregation of the Council:* is concerned with the application of the decisions of the Council of Trent and more recent General Councils.

*The Congregation of the Religious:* The Roman Church claims one million 'sisters and nuns', and a quarter of a million 'monks and male religious', spread over almost innumerable Orders and Societies. They are controlled by this Congregation. The Jesuits, or Society of Jesus, of such ill-fame, have a close association with the Pope himself.

*The Congregation of Propaganda:* controls the missionary activities throughout the world.

*The Congregation of Rites:* deals with the liturgy in every country.

*The Congregation of Ceremonial:* is quite important, controlling all ceremonial aspects of visits to the Pope, visits by the Pope, and similar activities of the cardinals.

*The Congregation of Studies:* is concerned with both ecclesiastical and secular learning at the higher levels.

*The Secretariate of State:* may be called the Foreign Office of the Church, and has the importance attached to all such ministries concerned with foreign affairs. "This instrument of government the Pope will normally employ whenever any issue has what may be called a strong political angle to it, and in that sense it is above the other Congregations whose work it supervises and coordinates". The representative of the Pope at a foreign court is called a Nuncio. "The Nuncio, himself a title archbishop, is empowered to represent the Holy See and promote the interests of Catholics living in those countries with which the Holy See has diplomatic relations. As doyen of the Corps he has precedence over all other diplomats, and corresponds to a full-ranking ambassador".

In addition to the Congregations there are three Tribunals or Courts of Justice: the Roman Rota, the Sacred Penitentiary, and the Court of Cassation.

All these bodies involve many secondary administrative offices, as in British government. Finance is handled by the Office of "The Administration of the Properties of the Holy See", and its 'Vatican Bank'.

Such is the Vatican today, astonishingly complex, rich and powerful, world-wide in her operations, inheriting the 'wisdom' of many centuries and skilled in deluding mankind. God saw this last phase of the Babylonish system, and described it long ago for the benefit of his servants in the imagery of a trading city, rich with fine linen, purple and scarlet, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls; with merchants, traders, shipmasters, musicians, craftsmen, etc., and all the accompanying activity of a city.

The harlot also is outwardly splendid—"*decked with gold, pearls and precious stones*", and has a golden cup full of intoxicating liquor with which she beguiles the people and rulers. How true this is of Rome: her splendid churches; her ritual with incense, candles and music; her dominating processions in Catholic countries; her teaching and practices that aim at dulling reason and securing blind devotion.

## ***Chapter 12***

# **The Roman Catholic system identified as the Great Harlot**

Revelation 17 describes the judgement of the great harlot and a variety of details are given that help us to identify the harlot in history and in the world today. In this chapter we will consider the following features of the harlot.

1. The harlot, a symbol of apostasy.
2. Sitting on seven hills.
3. Mystery, Babylon the Great, on the forehead.
4. Drunk with the blood of saints and the martyrs of Jesus.

The harlot is also identified by the beast on which she sits and considerable details are given about the beast. This will be examined in the next chapter.

### ***1. The harlot, a symbol of apostasy***

#### **Virgins contrasted with harlots**

In the Revelation, true believers, who will be the bride of Christ are contrasted with the harlot apostasy of Rome (cp. Rev. 14:4; 19:7–8; 21:2 and Rev. 17:1–2, 18; 18:3, 7). In fact the latter system has come from the former bride of Christ. The faithful, virgin quality has been lost in the harlot because of the attractiveness of the world (cp. 2 Cor. 11:2–3).

There are other examples of the same thing in Scripture. In the prophecy of Isaiah 23 Tyre is spoken of as *“a harlot that has been forgotten”* (v. 16). Nahum says of Nineveh, *“Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms...”* (3:4). These examples do not express a different principle. Their harlotry was a departure from God. The king of Tyre had been in covenant relation with Israel (see 1 Kings 5). In Ezekiel 28:16 God says: *“...thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire”*.

As to Nineveh, we know from the book of Jonah that she was held responsible by God. And indeed, she responded to the preaching of Jonah in a dramatic way, and repented: *“Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands”* (Jonah

3:8). The indictment in Nahum is presumably later, after they had responded to the preaching of Jonah, and then turned back to apostasy.

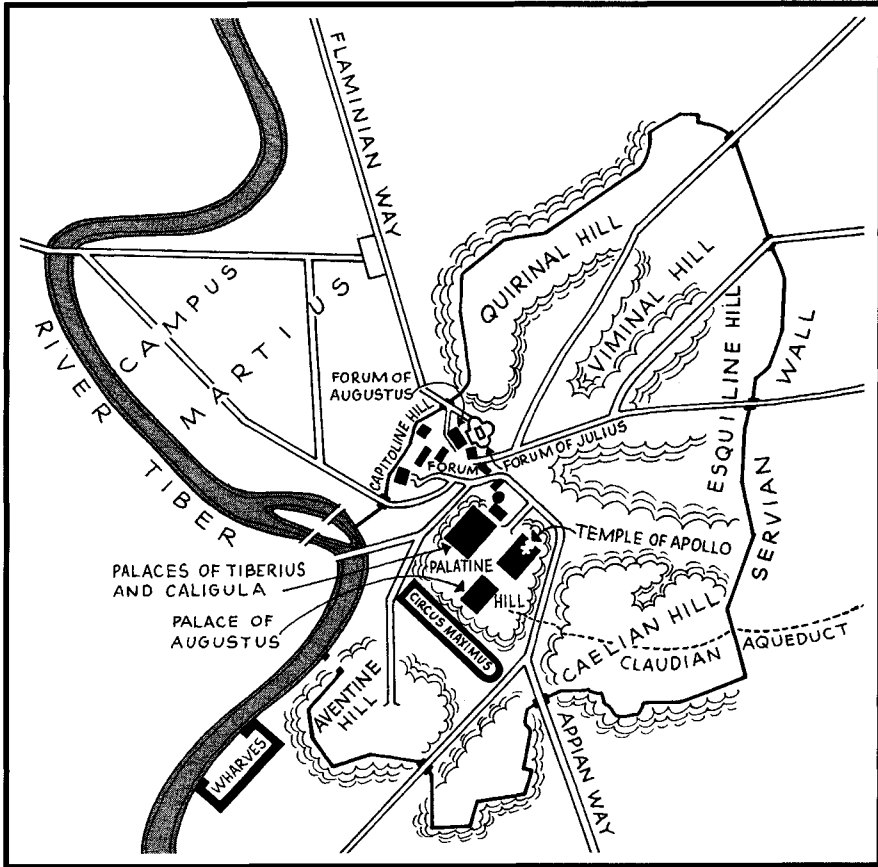
Though Tyre and Nineveh had less responsibility than Israel, they conform to the same principle that a harlot is symbolic of an apostate system that turns to pleasure and unrighteous gain. This is true also of Britain, the latter day Tyre.

### **“Not defiled with women”**

The 144,000 whom Christ redeems are described as *“not defiled with women; for they are virgins”*. This means that they had not committed fornication with ‘women’. Stating this in reverse, those who are defiled have committed fornication with ‘women’. Who can these symbolic women be? There is only one group of women in the Revelation to which this could refer, and that is the mother of harlots and her daughters. When a true believer is defiled and ceases to be a virgin it means he has turned from the Truth, and frequently accepts some of the fables of Christendom whether in belief or practice. So, in an indirect way, this phrase *“not defiled with women”*, points to the apostasy as the source of defilement; the apostate systems are the harlots, the ‘women’ of Revelation 14:4.

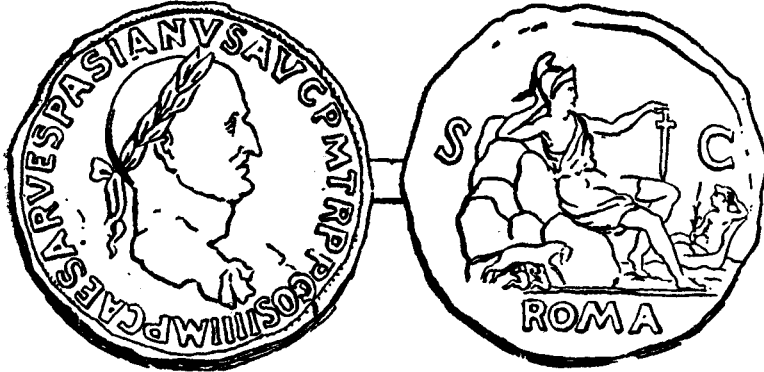
## **2. *Sitting on seven hills***

*“And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth”* (17:9). This feature is given as something particularly significant, as expressed in the phrase—*“here is wisdom”*. It was a crucial identification that we suppose even John was expected to perceive, though the events were a long way on in history. A woman cannot literally sit on seven mountains but recognizing the form of symbol proper to the book of Revelation, who can deny the fitness of seven hills or mountains for Rome? Significantly, in John’s day it was a well-known hieroglyphic for Rome. So we read in Dr Smith’s *Smaller History of Rome*, page 20: “The celebrated seven hills upon which Rome stood”. At a much later date the boundary was extended and an eighth hill was included. Recently published and ancient atlases clearly show the seven hills and the city boundary in the time of John.



A very impressive piece of evidence for Rome being the city of the seven hills in John's day is a coin that can be seen in the British Museum, issued by the Emperor Vespasian around AD 70, showing a woman sitting on seven hills, with the legend 'Roma'. There is also a statue found in 1927 at Corinth in similar style and actually having the names of the seven hills carved on it.

*From Roman Coin in the British Museum  
Struck A.D. 69-79*



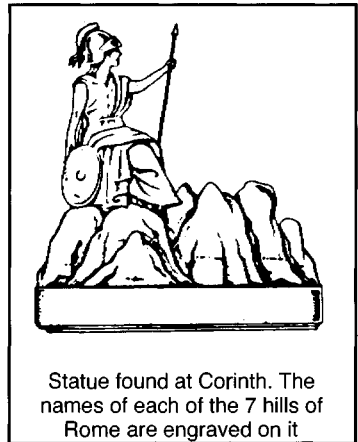
ROME SEATED ON SEVEN MOUNTAINS

So there can be no doubt that John would understand the 'seven hills' feature to refer to Rome and no other place.

It has been argued that the seven hills of Rome are not seven mountains. This is not a valid objection. The Greek word 'oros' used here means something lifted up above the plain, and is translated hills as well as mountains. Thus in Luke 4:29: "And they rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill (Greek 'oros') whereon the city was built, that they might cast him down headlong".

### 3. "Mystery, Babylon the Great" on the forehead

We have already shown in Section one how the Roman Catholic religion and system is a replica of the original Babylonish system of apostasy. "Babylon" written on the forehead of the harlot is therefore very appropriate. Written on the forehead means that the thinking, teaching, and direction given are similar to those of original Babylon.



Statue found at Corinth. The names of each of the 7 hills of Rome are engraved on it

“Mystery”—or things hidden from the public gaze—was a hallmark of the Babylonish system of religion and government. This quality of “mystery” was inculcated by the priest, astrologers, and sorcerers. Today the Roman Catholic priesthood is a secretive closely-knit community. There are many years of initiation for the novice before he is installed. He must learn the administration of the mysteries and how by his wonder-working the people can be kept in awe and subjection. How does the word “mystery” fit the alternatives<sup>1</sup> proposed for the symbol of the harlot?

The religion taught by Rome is admitted to be a mystery, particularly the claim that the bread and wine is converted into the body and blood of Christ; and also the co-eternal, co-equal dogma about the Trinity. The recent General Council reemphasized that the Eucharist was a great mystery. They issued an Encyclical after the Council, entitled “Mysterium Fidei”, on “The Doctrine and worship of the Holy Eucharist”, 1965. The Pope addressed his ‘venerable brethren and dear children’ with greetings and apostolic blessing. In the Catholic Truth Society translation, the second section is headed, “The most Holy Eucharist is a very great mystery; strictly speaking, to use the words of sacred liturgy, it is *the mystery of faith*”. Under the later heading “Christ the Lord is present in the sacrament of the Eucharist by Transubstantiation” the section begins:

“If no-one is to misunderstand this mode of the presence, which oversteps the laws of nature and constitutes the greatest miracle of all its kind, our minds must be docile and we must follow the voice of the Church through her teaching and prayer. This voice continually re-echoes the voice of Christ. It informs us that Christ becomes present in this sacrament precisely by a change of the bread’s whole substance into his body, and wine’s whole substance into his blood... When Transubstantiation has taken place, there is no doubt that the appearance of the bread and the appearance of the wine take on a new expressiveness and a new purpose since they are no longer common bread and common wine... Beneath these appearances Christ is present whole and entire, bodily present too, in his physical ‘reality’, although not in the manner in which bodies are present in place”.

Such is one of the ‘mysteries’ of the Catholic Church. Yes, “Mystery” is very appropriate to the Roman system. How does the word fit any alternative interpretation?

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<sup>1</sup> As detailed in chapter 15 “The Jerusalem Antichrist Theory”.

#### ***4. Drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus***

The text here defines a system that is addicted to the murder of God's people. It is important to note that this is not for a brief time, but over many centuries, for at the end of chapter 18 we read: "*And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth*".

Regarding Papal Rome, those who have stood in her way, and not submitted to her rule, have been dealt with by guile, torture and persecution. It is a dreadful record over long centuries. Some evidence of this has already been given. If we inform ourselves from the pages of history—see for instance *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*—we must accept Papal Rome as the power indicated. There is no other harlot system so hostile to God that such extreme language can be used: "drunk with the blood of the... martyrs of Jesus".



## ***Chapter 13***

### **The Roman Catholic system identified as the great harlot: additional details**

To help with the identification of the harlot, the Spirit added various details about the beast on which the harlot was sitting. This was in response to John's wonder at so wicked a picture: "*Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath seven heads and ten horns*".

We will examine the details of the beast under the following headings:

1. The relation of beast and rider
2. A Roman power: seven heads and ten horns
3. Five are fallen, one is, and one is not yet come
4. The eighth, and its long reign
5. Was, is not, yet is
6. A scarlet beast
7. Full of names of blasphemy
8. The beast from the abyss.

#### ***1. The relation of beast and rider***

We are told in Revelation 17:3 that the harlot "sits upon" the beast. She is in the position of a rider; just as in Revelation 19:11 the 'Faithful and True One' "sat upon" his white horse. The sense appears to be that the harlot has control of the beast, as a rider has control of a horse. The beast and its rider should be regarded as a unit, and the description given makes the harlot the active element. She is holding out her golden cup of abominations to intoxicate the nations that make up the beast. The harlot is the papal system, and the beast—the body of the beast—represents the nations of Europe under her influence.

#### ***2. A Roman power: seven heads and ten horns***

We loosely refer to the beast as Europe. More precisely it is the final phase of the Roman Empire. We deduce this from the characteristic phrase, "*having seven heads and ten horns*". The Dragon of Revelation 12, and the Beast of the Sea of chapter 13 have these characteristics. In chapter 13 we are told how the Dragon, (the Emperor of Constantinople), gave power to the new Beast of the Sea in the West centred on Rome; and how its papal 'lion mouth' developed. The original symbol for the Roman power goes back to the fourth beast of Daniel 7. It

has the ten horns but the seven heads are not shown. Daniel's attention is focussed on one particular head, the one that had the special horn with eyes and mouth, and that made war on the saints. This is parallel with the Beast of the Earth with its twin horns of Pope and Emperor.

Though complex, a patient study of Daniel and the Revelation will make clear the various phases of this Roman beast, and assure us that the last phase of the beast at the time of judgement in Revelation 17 is centred on Rome. This will be clear from what follows.

### ***3. The seven heads: five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come***

In addition to the seven heads representing seven-hilled Rome, we are told they represent seven rulerships of the beast. Regarding the sequence of "*five are fallen, one is*", this would have particular significance to John, for he would recognize the reference to the five previous constitutional changes of government at Rome, with the sixth, the imperial, being the government of John's day. The earlier five forms of government may seem insignificant to us, after so many centuries, but not so from John's viewpoint. The seventh head we are told was future to John's day, and we are able to look back in history and see it fulfilled in the brief Gothic rule in Rome from AD 476 to approximately 553. These details, with their historical fulfilment, confirm that we have in Revelation a Roman power.

### ***4. The eighth head and its long reign***

The beast in Revelation 17 on which the harlot sits, is said to be "*the eighth*"; that is, controlled by an eighth head. Its development must be after the seventh Gothic head has gone. It may seem strange to speak of an eighth, when the beast is described as having seven heads. We are helped to understand this by the further phrase, "*it is of the seventh*", meaning it is a further development of the Roman beast. Revelation 13 gives the explanation of this "eighth" head. We are told in verse 2 that John saw one of the heads (the sixth) "*as it were, wounded to death*". This happened when the Gothic kings reigned in Rome. The text goes on to tell us that "*his deadly wound was healed*". The healed sixth head is this "eighth" of chapter 17. We are told it was given a lion's mouth to blaspheme God and it made war on the saints (13:4-7). In these words we have the revival of Rome's fortunes, when the papal system developed in the eighth century onwards with the Pope supported by the Germanic emperors.

We come to the important point. The eighth head began long ago—when the sixth head was healed—and it is still the eighth head in the future

time of the judgement of the harlot. The start of the eighth head was the start of Papal domination of Europe. Surely as it is still the eighth head at the end, it must still be the associate of the Papacy, even though certain features may have changed. This rules out the speculation that the beast of Revelation 17 is some new beast, an atheistic power for instance.

We may expect that the harlot sitting on the 'eighth' beast will be a constitution in Europe similar to the earlier days of the Papacy. Russian, German and Papal cooperation will create the harlot on the eighth beast. After Armageddon, the Gog power being destroyed, the beast will be the Papacy supported by the ten horns of western Europe. The harlot sitting on the eighth beast is a future situation—the time when she says *"I sit a queen and am no widow"*. We are living in the time just before this final greatness, and are able to see the many indications that events are moving towards this final situation.

### **5. Was, is not, yet is**

We have stressed the continuity of the Roman power through various phases of its history. This continuity is expressed in the phrase *"was, is not, yet is"*, relative to the beast on which the woman sits. To John these words would mean: first, the Roman power had been in existence for centuries—it *"was"*, then, the final phase of the Roman power was in the future, so in that sense *"it is not"*. But when it does develop it would be *"of the seven"* it would still be a Roman power, and in that sense it could be said to John, *"yet is"*.

### **6. A scarlet-coloured beast**

Scarlet is the colour for **sin**. For this final Roman beast to be specially described as scarlet, indicates its degree of sin is worse than before. It is pervaded with papal wickedness and the time of its destruction has come. One is reminded of the nations of Canaan, which Israel had to wipe out. In the time of Abraham *"the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full"*. Another 400 years would pass before the long-suffering Almighty decreed their destruction. The colour of the beast being scarlet, sin, it tells us that the peoples represented by the beast still carry some form of national responsibility to God. They are nominally Christian, not atheistic. It is an apostate Christian system, Christendom astray from Christ.

### **7. Full of names of blasphemy**

At the beginning of the beast of the sea there was but one name of blasphemy on it (Rev. 13:1). This was the papal power, the lion mouth,

speaking blasphemies against God (verse 6). But many centuries later, in the final state, the beast is **full** of names of blasphemy. The one Catholic Church has become many churches—the mother harlot and her daughters. The description that the beast is full of names of blasphemy indicates that the blasphemous doctrines and practices have permeated all European society.

The English word “blasphemy” is used loosely to mean profanity. But the Greek word “blasphemeo” has the precise sense of ‘to injure the good name or character of a person’. The churches do great harm to the good name of Christ by the lies they teach in his name. “In the name of Jesus Christ” is to be in the true ecclesia. “In the name of blasphemy” is to be in the false church.

It is a feature of our time that the various national churches of Europe are moving towards re-union with the Roman church, the daughters returning to their mother. If and when they unite, they will probably retain their separate identity, though in communion with Rome. The beast will be full of names of blasphemy.

## ***8. The beast from the abyss***

John was told that the beast at some future time “*shall ascend out of the bottomless pit*”. “*Bottomless pit*” is not an accurate translation of the Greek word “abyssos”. The word does not have the idea of bottomless, but simply deep. Does this description of the beast help us to identify it? Yes, because the same language is used in chapter 11 where God’s two ‘Witnesses’, oppose Catholic apostasy, both in teaching and in warfare, for a period of 1260 years. But the time came when their effectiveness declined and they were overcome and silenced:

“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them” (11:7).

This was the triumph of Papal power over those who “tormented her” (v. 11). This success of the Papal power over her anti papal enemies is a well-known fact of history, usually dated from the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes AD 1685. So in this correlation of Revelation chapters 11 and 17, we have another evidence that the beast that carries the harlot is the associate of the Papacy.

The phrase ‘*beast ascendeth from the abyss*’, or deep, is probably used because the beast came into being as the many barbarian tribes flooded into Germany, France, Spain, Italy, etc., and settled down as part of the Roman Empire. It was over these peoples, the ten horns, that the Pope gradually cast his spell; and the beast of the sea and its lion mouth

came into existence. The waves of barbarians over a century or more swept in from the unknown, uncivilized north. They were like the waters from an unlimited deep or reservoir.

### ***So much evidence***

What an amount of detail John was given about the harlot and the associated beast. We have already listed 12 items (and there are more). There was some purpose in such detail. The Spirit does not waste words. Surely it must mean that this is a very important matter for those who live in the time of Christ's coming. God is giving us so much evidence, that we ought not to be in doubt about the character and nature of this powerful, evil system pervading the world in which we live. It provides warning and guidance, so that we are not ensnared; that we may be found as virgins, not defiled by women. Also, it should give us such conviction about the matter that we are emboldened to adopt the stance of our earlier faithful brethren, and become God's witnesses against the God-dishonouring system.

There remain two more features to be identified: the harlot sits upon many waters; and in Revelation 18 she is likened to a great trading city. We have put these into a separate chapter, because they are features which we see developing before our eyes. They are part of prophecy fulfilling, and provide us with encouragement because we can see where we stand in the prophetic record.

## **Chapter 14**

### **The final greatness of the Papal system**

#### ***Papal influence***

As stated in the last chapter there are two more features recorded by the Spirit to describe the great harlot in the epoch of its destruction. They are expressed as:

1. She sits upon many waters
2. She is likened to a great trading city

#### **1. *She sits upon many waters***

It may escape our notice that at the beginning of chapter 17 where the angel says, “*I will shew thee the judgment of the great whore*”, she is said to be sitting on “*many waters*”, and not as one might expect, sitting on the beast. Although she sits on both, emphasis is given to sitting on many waters, rather than sitting on the beast. This emphasizes the world-wide influence she has developed, for “*many waters*” represent “*peoples, and nations, and multitudes, and tongues*” (17:15). Such words surely indicate an influence beyond the European beast. This is her ultimate triumph, for it is characteristic in the Revelation, that the opening phrase of a section summarizes what is to be attained.

This sitting on many waters is another of those remarkable developments we see taking place before our own eyes. It is something which until recently we had not perceived the full meaning. In past years we had contented ourselves with the idea that this referred to the world-wide missionary activities of the Roman Church. The Roman Church has spread abroad extensively in the last century, chiefly in the under-developed countries, but also in China, Japan and Australia. She has indigenous priests, upholding the Mother Church in the local tongue and traditions. She claims 900 million adherents in the world, and about half of these are outside Europe.

But now we see a new dimension to the words, in the world travel of the previous Pope, Paul VI; and more strikingly with the present Pope. This represents a great change. After the Churches’ ‘ill-treatment’ by the revolutionary movements in the nineteenth century, the Popes for a century chose to regard themselves as prisoners in the Vatican. With Paul VI a new era began when he became the travelling Pope. He made history by visiting Jerusalem on Christmas day 1964, meeting the

Patriarch of the Eastern Church there, and exchanging greetings of peace. In his 15 years reign he visited Turkey, India, Australia, Portugal, Columbia, and New York to address the United Nations on world peace.

Pope John Paul II has outshone his predecessor, not only in the extent of his visits, but in the powerful influence he has exerted. He is establishing himself and his Church as the world's spiritual leader. He has visited Mexico, Poland, Ireland, the United States, Turkey, the Far East, Brazil, West Africa, France, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Argentina, Spain, Australia, Central America several times, Poland a second time, Canada, Austria, the Benelux countries and has planned a future visit to Moscow.

Although on the one hand John Paul II stands firmly for Catholic doctrines and practices, and does not yield to the moral freedoms called for by the modern world, he conceals this when addressing the masses, and at the great rallies that he loves so much, he presents himself as the pastoral Pope, using all his actor skills to grip his audience, putting across his theme of justice and peace, non-violence and love. He sets a higher standard, and at least temporarily lifts the moral sights of his listeners. The editor of *Le Monde* commenting on his visit to New York and the United Nations asks the reasons for his popularity and its significance for the future. He answers: "The reasons are not legion—in fact they can be boiled down to one alone; the emergence of the right man at the right time."

He goes on to explain that the world, faced with uncertainties, crises, lack of purpose in life and fears for the future, turns to a man speaking with authority on a higher spiritual plane; a man whose presence is solid and reassuring.

Conscious of his power and authority, he offers himself as a mediator in the world's problems; between Chile and Peru; the turmoil in Central America, in the status of Jerusalem; and particularly in the relation of Church and State in Poland. He is a particularly influential figure in western Europe, visiting most of the countries, and working behind the scenes. And in this way he is a big influence in the frog-like spirits going forth from western Europe to the Third World.

In yet another way the Vatican "*sits upon many waters*". She beams her propaganda from Radio Vatican to the ends of the world, sending out her broadcasts in 35 different languages, intoxicating all nations with her wine.

Under the heading on Papacy World Power through Finance, we reveal still another aspect of her sitting on many waters.

## **2. Likened to a vast trading city**

This symbol of a great city and its many aspects of trade, particularly expresses that the final greatness of the Papal system. In this context she brags: *“I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow”* (18:7).

Also in this chapter the Spirit expresses its loathing of so vile a city. After the enlightening angel has instructed the people (18:1), Babylon is then seen in her true colours. In their eyes she has become *“the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird”* (18:2).

When we study chapter 18, four features regarding the city stand out:

- (1) the city’s wealth;
- (2) its vast influence;
- (3) the complexity of its organization;
- (4) it sees itself as a queen and no longer widowed.

- **The city’s wealth and greatness**

*“The merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies”* (v. 3).

*“Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city”* (v. 10).

*“What city is like unto this great city”* (v. 18).

There is an extensive list of her merchandise: gold, silver, purple, silk, scarlet, thyine wood, all manner of vessels of ivory, most precious wood, brass, marble; cinnamon, odours, ointments, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, beasts, sheep, horses and chariots; and slaves and souls of men. (vv.12, 13).

- **Its vast influence**

*“She reigns over the kings of the earth”* (17:18).

*“All nations have drunk of the wrath (fierceness or passion) of her fornication”* (18:3).

*“The kings of the earth have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her”* (v. 3, v. 9).

*“For by her sorceries were all nations deceived”* (v. 23).

- **Its vast organization**

This is expressed in the figure of the internal activity of the city, and in its outgoing trade. This is the description of the life of the city: *“And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and*



*trumpeters, shall be heard no more in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more in thee*" (vv. 23, 23).

As to the trading, there are "merchants, sailors, all that company in ships" (1815–17). This is figurative language. The 'merchants' will be the officials of the Vatican and the hierarchies in the various countries of the world—cardinals, bishops, priests,—who handle the 'merchandise' of the Church, and who "*waxed rich through the abundancy of her delicacies*". The "shipmasters" will be the commercial, political, and financial great men with whom she deals. The 'sailors' etc., will be the many executives involved in her business. The "*kings of the earth*" who have "*committed fornication and lived deliciously with her*" will be the rulers and great men of the earth.

This picture of the great city wonderfully conveys the character and complexities of the Roman Catholic system as we see it in operation today. We have already described on page 87 the complex organization at the Vatican, similar to a national government. The organization reaches out to every priest and bishop in the world, the government of a world-wide society. In addition to this she now functions as a temporal State with all the paraphernalia of ambassadors and diplomatic privilege. Then there is her truly world-wide organization, the Apostolate of the Laity including the Sword of the Spirit, under the control of the hierarchy in each country to see that the ordinary Catholic promotes the interest of the Church. Through such a complexity of international organizations she has a grip on men and affairs.

The Catholic Church possesses a power which no other system has, viz., the Confessional, by which the mind and conscience of the great men and rulers as well as the ordinary citizen are revealed to the priest and subject to his influence, under instruction from Rome. In this particular aspect she is the most formidable power for evil on earth, involving the covert activities of that dreadful misnomer 'the Society of Jesus', or the Jesuits, who so often are the Confessor priests of the great men in Catholic countries. They are the special ambassadors of the Pope. If we wish to be informed of their present and past influence for evil, read *The Secret History of the Jesuits* by Edmund Paris. Truly by her guile the harlot-city commits fornication with the great men of the earth; and these great men use the wine of Rome to maintain their control over the people. So "*all nations have drunk of the wrath (passion) of her*

*fornication*". The Common Market today is a special field of this activity.

We have considered the harlot-city sitting on many waters. There can be no doubt that the papal system is to dominate the world and will be the prime mover in gathering all nations against Christ—the spoiler of their wealth and pleasure.

## **World power through finance**

It may seem strange that after the harlot was hated and burned with fire by the ten horns in the last century (as outlined in Rev. 17:16-17), as the revolutionary spirit spread through Europe, that she should be described as so wealthy and glorious at the coming of Christ. Though strange, events today show how it is coming true. The wealth she lost in the last century has been regained many times over. Her purely religious wealth has been increased because of the world-wide increase in the number of her adherents. By 'religious' wealth, we refer to the well-established 'merchandise' of the Church: penances, tithes, Peter's pence, rich men's wills, pilgrimages to shrines, church fees for pews, marriages and burials, estates and property as gifts to the Church; and all matters to do with the "bodies and souls of men". Today there are many rich people in the world, and under the guidance of the priest in the confessional, they can be persuaded to give generously to the Church for the good of their souls.

But the major wealth of the Roman Catholic Church today derives from a different source, and it is wealth of a different order of magnitude to the past. This new financial and business wealth has been described in detail by Avro Manhattan in his book, *Vatican Billions* (revised 1983). This development certainly throws light on the picture in Revelation 18.

This new feature of the Vatican's wealth began in 1929, when Mussolini under the Lateran Treaty paid the Church 750 million lira and 1,000 million Italian bonds, as compensation for the land and property confiscated in the previous century. This provided the launching capital for the new venture. In the chapter of *Vatican Billions* entitled "Member of the Billionaire Club of the U.S.A.", the opening and closing paragraphs read as follows:

"The Roman Catholic Church in the U.S.A. is an economic giant, not so much because she has penetrated the economic sinews of the giant corporations, trusts, and banks of America, but because she has accumulated lands and real estate, and controls institutions whose real, solid and material value in terms of money made her an economic colossus in her own right; indeed, perhaps the greatest colossus of all."

“The Catholic Church in America, therefore, operates like a giant corporation—not only as a potential maker or breaker of politicians at all levels, but equally as a financial giant consorting with her peers in the running of the economic life of the country”.

He claims the hierarchy may know little about theology, but they have a “unique knowledge of rates of interest”.

“In terms of business acumen and successful dollar operations, they can truly stand on a par with the chairman of any top oil, steel, or giant motor car trusts of America”.

The Catholic Church has similar financial investments in Europe.

“The Vatican, as we have already reiterated, has large investments with the Rothschilds of Britain, France and America, with the Hambros Bank, with the Credit Suisse in London and Zurich. In the United States, it has large investments with the Morgan Bank, the Chase Manhattan Bank, the First national Bank of New York, the Bankers Trust Company, and others. The Vatican, as we have already seen, has billions of shares in the most powerful international corporations, such as Gulf Oil, Shell, General Motors, Bethlehem Steel, General Electric, IBM, TWA, etc.”

An estimate is made that in the financial and business world the Church is worth 80 to 100 billion (100,000,000,000) dollars. In addition to business wealth, there is the inestimable wealth, described in a chapter entitled “The Intangible Billions of the Catholic Church”. Throughout the world there is the wealth of historic architectural and artistic buildings and their contents. The actual gold and precious stones in these buildings and on numberless idols and shrines must be fabulous.

Yes, Revelation 18 suggested such wealth, but not until this has developed in our time could we really appreciate it in its fulness. It was certainly not apparent to the same extent in Bro. Thomas’ time. With such all-persuasive power the Catholic Church will drive the rulers of this world to fight against the Lord Jesus Christ. The ‘great men’ of the Church will not readily give up their wealth; nor will the ‘great men’ of the world who have cooperated in the ‘trading’. But the outcome is certain. The bitter struggle in Europe is described as a lake of fire and brimstone into which the beast and the false prophet are cast. And when it is finished the nations that are left shall come to Jerusalem to worship, as Jeremiah says: *“O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the days of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit”* (Jer. 16:9).

## **I sit a queen**

In the light of all we have said, it would seem a fitting symbol to call the harlot-city a queen. There is however a precision in the use of the word, reflecting in the additional phrase, "*and am no widow*". For long centuries she was 'married', having the support of kings and princes of Europe. In other words the Church was married to the state. At the height of her power she claimed preeminence over them, and required them to do her bidding, as expressed in various decrees of the Church. Thus, in a decree of Pope Innocent III about AD 1200 requiring the searching out of all 'heretics' that they might be punished and destroyed, he placed the following commands on the rulers:

"We enact, moreover, that counts, barons, prefect, and consuls of cities and other places, at the admonition of the archbishops and bishops, promise under oath that whenever they shall be required of them, they will boldly and efficiently aid the church against heretics and their accomplices, and study in good faith, according to their duty and power, to execute in the cases of which we have spoken, the ecclesiastical in the same way as the imperial laws. And should they refuse to observe their oath, they shall be divested of their offices which they enjoy and become ineligible to others. They shall moreover, be excommunicated, and their lands put under an interdict of the church"<sup>1</sup>.

After the French Revolution this mighty Church was "burned with fire" and left desolate by these civil powers of Europe. It is only recently that the papal system has begun to regain her power and authority over the kings of the earth. From the words of Revelation 18, "*I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow*", it is certain she will be restored to her old status in Europe. When Christ comes, and the hour of her destruction has arrived, she again has the support of civil and military power; she "*reigns over the kings of the earth*" (17:18; 18:3). They will do her bidding, as in the past. In the words of chapter 17, she sits upon the beast.

## **Russia as part of the beast**

In the first stage of the conflict with Christ the beast is all Europe, led by Russia. Later, after Armageddon, when the Russia-Magogian confederacy has been destroyed, the ten-horn powers of western Europe rally around the Papacy in the final warfare with Christ (17:14). Some may ask, Why include Russia in the beast of Revelation 17? We have dealt with this in Section One of the book. Daniel 7, the basic prophecy,

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<sup>1</sup> Eureka, vol. 3, page 344.

has the whole of the Roman beast in existence when Christ comes; and when it is judged, the opposition is from its **brazen** claws, and from its little horn speaking great words. The military power is brass, that is Greco-Roman, belonging to the eastern Roman Empire. In chapter 13, the beast of the sea with its Papal lion mouth, represents western Europe and its ten horns., But notice the full description of the beast of the sea: *“And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion...”* (Rev. 13:2).

In Daniel 7 the **leopard** represented the Greeks of Revelation 17 and the **bear** the Medes and Persians. So the full description of the beast of Revelation 17, its full development, does involve the eastern part of the ancient Roman Empire as well. The beast of chapter 17 on which the harlot sits is this fully developed beast of Daniel 7, that is the ancient Roman dominion with its Latin and Byzantine sections.

## Reflection

As we let our minds reflect on the chapter, identifying Babylon the Great, what an extensive amount of evidence there is pointing to the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical system, both from the past and from contemporary events. We have considered her as a harlot—with mystery Babylon the Great in the forehead, riding a scarlet-coloured beast full of names of blasphemy, drunk with the blood of the saints of past ages, sitting on seven mountains, a vast organization like a trading city. What other system can fulfil all these distinctive elements? What a wonderful amount of evidence our Lord has given us so that we should not be deluded by her claims to respectability, as is the world. And if we have this certainty of identification, what a responsibility we have to testify to the truth of the matter, and defend the name and honour of our God who is blasphemed by these Catholic perversions.

## *Chapter 15*

### **The harlot city is not Jerusalem**

#### *The Jerusalem Antichrist theory*

There is a popular idea current that Antichrist will appear in Jerusalem.

Around the world Christian leaders are warning of the coming of a man (“the Antichrist”) who with satanic powers will rule the world for seven years. They claim his initial act will be to **defeat Russia** when it invades Israel. They believe he will then form a special agreement of **covenant with the Jews** guaranteeing them peace and security. Part of this agreement will allow the Jews to **rebuild their temple in Jerusalem** and begin to again offer animal sacrifices. They further teach that “the Antichrist” will establish his **headquarters in Jerusalem**, claiming to be God on earth, and require all people throughout the world to worship him and follow his teachings. Finally, these leaders state that once “the Antichrist” has taken over the control of the earth **he will establish peace** in all nations.

The essence of this theory is that the beast and harlot of Revelation 17 do not belong to Rome, but to Jerusalem. It is not a new idea, but started five centuries ago, in an attempt by the Catholic Church to show that the Papacy at Rome is not the Antichrist of the Bible.

Unhappily this concept of Jerusalem, not Rome, has been taken up in the brotherhood, and so it seems necessary to point out how totally at variance this is with the Scriptural record. We propose, briefly, to direct attention to the various details in chapters 17 and 18 we have already examined, so we can see that they cannot be applied to Jerusalem and her people. Altogether there are ten features.

#### *Ten features relating to Jerusalem*

***Sitting on seven hills.*** It can be said emphatically that Jerusalem in John’s day was not a city of seven hills or mountains. At the most there were three hills or mountains within the walls of Jerusalem. Historians, such as Josephus, never describe it as the city of seven mountains; whereas this was the common phrase for Rome, as we have seen.

***Sitting on a beast with seven heads and ten horns.*** The seven heads and ten horns are the characteristic of the Roman power. In John’s day and for centuries Rome had control of Jerusalem. But when

can the harlot—assuming this is Israel—be found in a controlling position over the Roman power in Jerusalem? It was the reverse; the Roman power was on top and the beast was being sat upon. It has never been otherwise since.

***Reigning over the kings of the earth.*** When has Jerusalem, or the harlot, reigned over the kings of the earth; whether we take ‘earth’ in the limited apocalyptic sense of Europe, or give it a wider meaning? Israel and Jerusalem have been trodden down of the Gentiles, they have not been ruling over them. And there is no prospect of that until they are redeemed by their king.

***Sitting upon many waters.*** It is true that the Jews are found in all parts of the world. But what authority have they in these many parts of the world? They have no world-wide controlling influence<sup>1</sup>, even though they are experts in finance.

***All nations deceived by her fornication.*** Fornication is unfaithfulness to God. It could be said this is the position of Israel. But how does their Jewish behaviour ‘deceive all nations’? One can see no meaning in the phrase, relative to the Jews and Jerusalem.

***Extremely rich and a great trading city.*** Jerusalem and the nation of Israel have a large debt round their neck. In the midst of a hostile world, she is not likely to be rich like Rome is.<sup>2</sup> Nor do the kings of the earth commit fornication with her, and live deliciously with her, She is not near to a ‘universal trade’ expressed in the great city Babylon of Revelation 18. We have earlier listed the range of symbolic merchandise. How can this be applied to Jerusalem? Does the Jerusalem harlot trade in bodies and souls of men; or is she likely to do so in the future?

***On her forehead mystery.*** What interpretation can we give to this? What system of ‘mystery’ can we associate with Jerusalem, or her harlot qualities?

***A beast full of names of blasphemy.*** What beast-organization centred on Jerusalem, known as the eighth head, exists or is about to come, that is full of names of blasphemy? Jewish religion may be called a name of blasphemy—but not ‘names’. The city is full of ‘Christian’ and Moslem

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Secret War Against the Jews* for evidence of the very opposite world-wide position.

<sup>2</sup> Although Israel is to have sufficient gold, silver and goods to cause Gog to invade to grab the spoil (Ezek. 38:12, 13), this is small compared to Rome’s billions.

churches, but they are not an organization, a beast, controlled by the 'harlot'.

***Drunk with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.*** How utterly inapplicable to Israel and Jerusalem. Jerusalem has been desolate, 'trodden down'; the Jews have been subject to the same torture and murder as the saints and witnesses of Jesus. In no sense can Israel and Jerusalem from the days of John be charged with this blood. Nor can the present Jerusalem and Israel be so charged.

***Cast like a mill stone into the sea, to be found no more.*** If Jerusalem is Babylon, then its fate is to be: "*thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be no more*".

This would mean that Israel of today and the immediate future is to be completely destroyed. This is completely contrary to Scripture. Even now she is beginning to receive favour from God, as shown in her partial return to the land and the fact that Israel never ceases to be 'my people'—see Ezekiel 38:16; Joel 3:2. They are not appointed to total destruction. God's favour, with chastisement, will continue towards them until they become the righteous and holy nation, the light of the world (Isa. 60).

The proposition that the harlot and the city Babylon are related to Jerusalem has at least this usefulness: it makes us realize how appropriate all the details are to Rome and the Papacy, and not to any other system.

### ***Zechariah 5: The harlot leaves the land of Israel<sup>1</sup>***

It is hardly necessary to say any more about the Jerusalem idea. But it is worth drawing attention to the fact that God has given a specific answer to this proposal. Through the prophet Zechariah, He foretold that apostasy would not continue centred on Israel but that it would leave the land of Israel to be established on a new base elsewhere.

In chapter 5 there are two visions, both describing the apostasy of Israel. The first vision of the flying roll describes the curses to come on Israel for their apostasy from the holy things of the tabernacle and the Mosaic covenant, through the 'stealing'; and 'false swearing' of the prophets and priests of Israel. The curses reached their climax in the

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<sup>1</sup> For a more extensive study on Zechariah 5 there is Bro. J. Carter's *Prophets After the Exile*; and "The Apocalypse Rooted in the Prophets", *Eureka* vol. 1, by Bro. Thomas.



violent ending of the Mosaic commonwealth after the murder of the Son of God.

The second vision follows on and describes more particularly the apostasy of the Christian Jews, the Judaizers, in the first century, and prophecies of the migration of the apostasy out of the land of Israel to a new base. As in Ezekiel 23 and Revelation 17, the main symbol in this vision in Zechariah is a woman. There is a woman sitting in an ephah covered by a talent of lead representing wickedness. This woman and the ephah are carried away from their original place in Israel *“to build it a place in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.”* (5:11). We learn from Daniel 1:2, and Genesis 10:10 that Shinar is Babylonia. The vision cannot be describing a future migration to the literal Babylon, for it was already a declining city in the days of Zechariah, and doomed according to the word of prophecy to political extinction. So we must link this vision to Zechariah with the visions of Revelation: the Shinar or Babylonia of Zechariah 5, must be the Babylon of the Revelation. This Zechariah vision is describing a major happening in the affairs of Israel. A ‘house’ of apostasy was to be set up upon “her own base” outside the land of Israel. The apostate woman leaves the land of Israel to set up another house in Babylon. It would be an apostasy—established not upon God’s holy foundation, but “upon her own base”; that is to say, upon the thinking of the flesh which is characteristic of Babylon. As history shows this Christian Babylon is based on Rome. So Zechariah 5 teaches us that the centre of apostasy, once in Israel, was to migrate to a new centre “in the land of Shinar” or Babylon. Appropriately Shinar means ‘land of the enemy’s tooth’— a place of persecution. So we conclude that the harlot Babylon the Great is not to be found in Israel or Jerusalem, but in Rome and the land of the beast with ‘great iron teeth’, that has always been hostile to God’s truth, both when pagan and Christian. The ‘enemy’s tooth’ has inflicted suffering on both the true believers and on the Jews.

## Chapter 16

# Babylon destroyed by Christ and the saints<sup>1</sup>, not by the beast

### *Differing interpretations*

In Revelation 16 under the seventh vial Babylon comes up for remembrance before God, and in Revelation 18 we have the details of her judgement by fire, death, and famine, and the city finally destroyed by plunging into the sea like a millstone. Prior to this in Revelation 17, we have judgement on the Babylon harlot by the ten horns burning her with fire and eating her flesh. What is the relation between these two judgements, the one in chapter 17 and the other in chapter 18? This is a crucial question. In the brotherhood's traditional interpretation, the judgement in Revelation 17:16 is pre-adventual—it is the work of the revolutionary powers of Europe in the last century, energized to rebellion by the French Revolution. Chapter 18 is the judgement in the future meted out by Christ and the saints through the agency of Israel, the chapter being introduced by the words: "*And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory*". This is Christ and the saints on the scene. After this, verse 2 declares: "*Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen*".

In contrast, in most of the recent interpretations<sup>2</sup> there is only one judgement, and the burning of the harlot with fire by the ten horns in chapter 17 is taken as the complete destruction of the apostate system; chapter 18 being taken as an enlarged detail of the same happening. This interpretation changes God's purpose drastically. If the Papacy is to be destroyed by the beast, before the resurrection, how can the promised vindication take place when the saints, as "the heavens" rejoice over her? Those faithful martyrs of earlier centuries are to be brought from the dead and given immortal strength so that they can "*reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works*" (v. 6). It is surely appropriate that the final conflict should be between Christ and Antichrist; that the world should see

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<sup>1</sup> Including refined Israel. See the first paragraph and chapter 17 of this book.

<sup>2</sup> For more detail see *The Revelation: Which Interpretation?*, by Graham Pearce, available from CSSS.

everything in its true perspective, with the mask torn from this deceiving system, so that she shall be seen as *“the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird”* (v. 2). These things cannot take place if chapter 18 is fulfilled before the resurrection.

### ***The resurrection takes place before Babylon falls***

There is ample evidence to show that the resurrection has taken place and the saints are on the scene before Babylon finally falls. Here are seven points of evidence.

#### **1. Revelation 14**

In Revelation 14:4 we are told that the redeemed *“shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth”*. There follows in this chapter a sequence of three ‘angels’: the **first** declares that the hour of God’s judgement is come (v. 7), the **second** announces the fall of Babylon (v. 8) and the **third** follows saying that the worshippers of the beast will be punished in the presence of the Lamb (v. 9–11). As the redeemed are with the Lamb (v. 4), it follows they are with Christ when Babylon falls (v. 8) and the beast-worshippers are punished.

#### **2. Revelation 16**

The 7<sup>th</sup> vial events belong to the future when the temple is opened in heaven. This may be established by comparing the language of the 7<sup>th</sup> vial with Revelation 11:15–19. In chapter 11 the resurrection takes place at verse 18, and in verse 19 the temple is opened in heaven and there follows *“lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail”*. It will be found that these elements are also the characteristics of the 7<sup>th</sup> vial: a great voice out of the temple of God in heaven, thunders and lightnings, a great earthquake, and hail. And it is during this 7<sup>th</sup> vial that Babylon comes up for remembrance before God. So Babylon is about to be destroyed: it has, therefore, not been destroyed already. Also chapter 11 has told us the resurrection has already taken place.

This sequence of events is also established by the sequence of symbols in chapter 16. At the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> vial we have the announcement: *“Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth...”* This is the point in time for the resurrection. The 7<sup>th</sup> vial and the judgement of Babylon follows.

#### **3. Revelation 18**

The fall of Babylon is announced in verse 2. The previous (opening) verse has, in symbolic language, a mighty angel coming down from

'heaven' to the 'earth'; and the earth is enlightened with his glory. So the enlightening work of the 'angel' is in hand before the announcement of Babylon's fall.

The enlightening of the nations is the work of Christ and the saints. They are the mighty 'angel' coming down from the new 'heaven' to the Gentile 'earth'. So once again, the sequence of events requires that the saints are resurrected and on the scene before the fall of Babylon. It is through the enlightening work of the saints that Babylon "*is become the habitation of demons and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird*" (v. 2)—the nations now see her in her true light.

#### **4. Revelation 18:6—reward her as she hath rewarded you**

As Babylon is about to be destroyed, the words are heard, "*Reward her even as she rewarded you*". Are they addressed to the beast, or to the saints? They are appropriate to the saints who have suffered at the hands of Babylon. They are obviously not appropriate to the beast, but to the saints who are going to destroy Babylon. The RV variant, "*Render unto her as she hath rendered*", does not alter the sense: to 'render' is to requite.

Later in this chapter we read: "*Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her*" (v. 20). The saints must be there to be 'the heaven' and to make the rejoicing. As to carrying out the avenging, this is a principle of God, expressed by the Psalmist: "*Let the saints be joyful in glory...a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people...to execute upon them the judgements written: this honour have all his saints...*" (Psa. 149:5–9). So there can be no doubt that the saints take part in the overthrow of Babylon; the resurrection having taken place at an earlier stage.

#### **5. Revelation 19: the Hallelujah rejoicing**

At the beginning of chapter 19 there is a great rejoicing at the judgement on the harlot-City. We read: "*And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God*". Much people in 'heaven' means the saints are in power. This is confirmed by the 24 elders and the four living creatures being before the throne (v. 4). Clearly the saints are alive, not still sleeping in the dust.

## 6. Daniel 7

We have in an earlier chapter pointed out that the saints take the kingdom from the fourth beast and its little horn. The little horn with its eyes like the eyes of a man, and speaking great words against the most High, is the Roman Papal system. This is equivalent to the harlot in the Revelation. The saints must have been resurrected to carry out the work of taking the kingdom from the beast and its little horn.

## 7. Israel conquers Babylon

We have earlier quoted from Jeremiah 51, that the nation of Israel in the future is God's battle-axe against Babylon. The saints will be the head of Israel in the future. Therefore it is the Lamb together with the saints and Israel who destroy the latter-day Babylon.

## The Evidence Regarding Paul's Man of Sin

Paul tells the believers in Thessalonica, in the second chapter of his second letter, that the Mystery of Iniquity was already working, and the Man of Sin would be revealed in due time. He is described in bold terms:

“The son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (v. 4).

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish” (v. 9–10).

The Papal system is the only power in history that fulfils these words. The destruction of this Man of Sin power is declared by Paul in the words: “...Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (v. 8).

From this we see there is no escape from the fact that the Papal power is not destroyed until Christ is here. And, moreover, the destruction is with the **brightness** of his coming meaning that Christ has manifested himself. This is after the resurrection. The saints are part of ‘his brightness’; they are with him. This ‘brightness of his coming’ is parallel with Revelation 18:1—“...another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory”. Immediately after this Babylon falls (v. 2).

In the face of all this testimony it is impossible to propose that the Papal system is destroyed by the horns of Europe before Christ is manifested and the saints are on the scene. The new interpretation fails when examined carefully in the light of the Word of God.

### ***Some difficulties to be solved***

There are three difficulties (i.e. objections raised in the modern interpretations) to be considered in maintaining that the saints carry out the destruction of Babylon:

1. The horns burn the harlot with fire (Rev. 17:16).
2. The call in 18:4—“Come out of her *my people*”.
3. The marriage of the Lamb takes place in chapter 19.

#### **1. The horns burn the harlot with fire (Rev. 17:16)**

This verse reads: “*And the ten horns ...shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her utterly with fire*” (RV). Burning with fire is also used in chapter 18 regarding Babylon:

“Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her” (Rev. 18:8).

Apart from other evidence, it would not be unreasonable to assume **these two burnings are the same event**; and as all agree that the harlot and the city are the same system, it would follow that **the horns burn the City Babylon with fire, not the saints**. In other words **if the horns burn the harlot, the horns burn the city**. Further, it will be contended, **does not the phrase ‘utterly burn’ denote complete destruction, so that when the horns utterly burn the harlot, she is destroyed?**

#### ***Two different burnings***

In considering this difficulty we will first examine whether the two burnings are the same situation and occasion. Careful comparison shows that they are not.

- a) In chapter 17 the horn-kings hate the harlot; in chapter 18 they have affection towards her: “*and the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning*” (v. 9). Living deliciously with her, and lamenting her fall is the opposite of hating her and eating her flesh. Again, at the time of the destruction of the City she “reigns over the kings of the earth”. This is different from being hated and burned by these kings.
- b) In chapter 17 she is desolate, her flesh eaten—she has lost her temporal power, she is widowed; but in chapter 18 she is again supported by temporal power, and says: “I sit a queen and am no

widow". Surely these are two different situations, belonging to two different times.

- c) Though the character of the judgement in the two cases is similar, it is not identical. There is no doubt that in chapter 18 the judgement and destruction are final: "*And a mighty angel took up a stone like a millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all*" (v. 21). There is not this finality about the judgement in chapter 17. 'Made desolate, naked, flesh eaten' represent severe judgement, but there is still life. Even the phrase 'burn her utterly with fire' that is added, does not necessarily mean final destruction. In Old Testament times Jerusalem was 'utterly burned with fire', but that was not her end. Jeremiah says she was subjected to a fire "*that cannot be quenched*"—extreme language like utterly burn. But after 70 years' captivity Jerusalem revived in a weaker form and continued for centuries.

### ***The judgement of Revelation 17:16 fulfilled in the last century***

What then is the relation of these 'two burnings' in chapter 17 and chapter 18? The structure of chapter 17 needs careful attention. It appears at first sight that the horns hating the harlot (v. 16), occurs **after** the beast and ten horns have made war on the Lamb, and the Lamb has overcome them (v. 14). This of course, cannot be, and on closer examination it is found that verses 8–14 inclusive, are a parenthesis about the beast, and is introduced to help explain the 'mystery' of the harlot. If we remove the parenthesis, we are left with the clear sequence regarding the harlot, reading verses 1–6 and following with verses 15–18; and verse 18 links the two chapters. According to the continuous historical interpretation, the hating of the harlot, making her naked, burning her with fire, have already been described in Revelation 16, in the judgements of the first five vials, particularly the fourth and fifth. The fourth was poured on the Sun the civil powers supporting the Papacy, and it was given unto it "*to scorch men with fire*". "*And men were scorched with great heat.*" (Surely almost identical words with ch. 17:16). The fifth vial turned the kingdom into darkness. These judgements poured out by Napoleon on Catholic Europe, on the horn kingdoms that had been under the feudal system for a thousand years, certainly brought distress to the Catholic Church; the Church lost most of its vast lands, wealth, and influence.

Brother John Thomas, writing in 1869, illustrates this eating of her flesh and burning of her with fire, with an apt newspaper quotation: "The Times and Evening Mail of April 16th (1844) speaks of 'the

signalization of her former government by the confiscation of Church property, burning of monasteries, desecration of churches, and the massacre of monks, when the infidel party in her name tore up the old ecclesiastical machinery of Spain, and shot down its adherents': and then proceeds in these words, 'the corruptions of the church have been beyond denial or apology. Friend and foe alike confessed and proclaimed them. A fiery ordeal was necessary for it; and a fiery ordeal it has had. It has emerged from the flame shorn of much of its paraphernalia'."

This sort of thing happened in practically all the countries of Europe during the last century. No more apt language could be used in prophecy than "making desolate and naked, eating flesh, and burning with fire". This was the first stage of the harlot's judgement. She has been allowed to revive for the final conflict with the Lord Jesus himself, and her final judgement.

## 2. "Come out of her my people"

In recent interpretations that claim *Babylon is destroyed by the horns of Europe before Christ reveals himself*, support is sought in the words of Revelation 18:4 exclaimed just before Babylon falls: "*Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins*". It is said that **this proves that the saints have not been gathered at the point when Babylon falls.**

Such a proposal is erroneous in two respects. Firstly, Christ's brethren, those truly in the Name, are never in Babylon, and so cannot be called on to come out of her; therefore these words cannot apply to them. Revelation 14:4 says that they are "*not defiled with women*"—they have no association with the harlot and her daughters.

Secondly, there is a class of people to whom the words properly apply. Before the fall of Babylon the gospel is preached to every nation, kindred and people (ch. 14:6, 7), calling on them to fear God and worship Him because the hour of judgement is come. Those who respond to this call must come out of Babylon, and repudiate her teachings and practices so that they will be 'my people'. Jews are included in this call, for not only do they hold Babylonish ideas—the immortal soul and heaven-going—but they will at this time be held captive in Europe; in the Great City in a geographical sense. Zechariah had prophesied of this situation:

"Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon" (Zech. 2:6, 7).



### 3. The marriage of the Lamb, chapter 19

The marriage and the marriage feast of the Lamb are referred to in chapter 19, and it is proposed that this means **that the resurrection does not take place until chapter 19. If this is so**, it is asked—**how can the saints take part in the destruction of Babylon, which has already taken place in the previous chapter?** But it is not true that the resurrection occurs in chapter 19. A study of the first half of chapter 19 will show that the event in view in chapter 19 is the marriage supper or feast of the Lamb, rather than ‘marriage’—in the sense of putting on immortality.

It should be noted that the translators have not rendered the tense correctly in verse 8. The Diaglott reads: *{the marriage of the Lamb came, and his wife prepared herself. And it was given unto her that she should be clothed with fine linen...}* The past tense is used; and the marriage, in as far as it concerned resurrection and being arrayed in white linen were things of the past. Clothing in white linen is the symbol of putting on immortality (see 3:5; 6:11; 7:9). In the language of Revelation 19:8, fine linen is “the justification” of saints. So at the time at which we have arrived in chapter 19, putting on immortality is something in the past. The time has come for a Halleluyah rejoicing and an invitation to the marriage feast of the Lamb.

### The preparation of the bride

In verse 6 of chapter 19 there is the third and final Halleluyah, and the reason is, “*for the Lord God Almighty reigneth*”. This must be the rejoicing together of the saints, expressed as “*the voice of mighty thunderings*” or praise. So when in the next verse it says “*the marriage of the Lamb is come (or came) and his wife hath made herself ready*”, it cannot mean that resurrection and immortalization are about to take place; they have occurred earlier. What is interesting is the phrase “his wife *hath made herself ready*”. Substantially the same phrase occurs in chapter 21. In verse 2 John sees the New Jerusalem “*coming down from God out of heaven*” “*prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*”. This tells us that the saints viewed as the New Jerusalem rulership of the world are the bride prepared for marriage. ‘Marriage’ as a symbol does not mean receiving immortality. The brides preparation for marriage has several steps. It starts with her life of moral preparation. Then there is the clothing with immortality; followed by the removal of the hostile Babylon rulership, and the organization of the saints as a divine theocracy, the New Jerusalem, for the governing of the world. **When thus prepared** she is ready for the symbolic marriage. She is ready to “find rest”—a Hebrew idiom for the married state (Ruth 3:1); finding rest

and dwelling in one's own house. This married state for the saints is their dwelling in the many "abiding places" of the Father's house (John 14:1) when the Master returns. Every saint will be "*a pillar in the temple of God and shall go no more out*" (Rev. 3:12).

The highlight of the first half of Revelation 19 are the words: "*Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper (feast) of the lamb*" (v. 9).

The marriage feast probably takes place when the saints have taken the kingdom from Daniel's fourth beast. It is a time of great rejoicing. It will mark the inauguration of the New Jerusalem rulership, at the great administration centre built at Jerusalem.

A harmonious piecing together of all relevant Scripture could never arrive at the conclusion that the saints only come from the dust of death at the point in time we have reached in chapter 19. It would be quite contrary to the clear picture of Revelation 14, where the redeemed are with the Lamb before the aionian gospel is preached and the angel declares that Babylon has fallen.

The question of when the resurrection took place is not involved in this chapter; the marriage supper does not define when it occurred. We have shown that resurrection takes place at an early stage, to allow the saints to carry out the judgements that bring about the fall of Babylon. In chapter 19 they are "*the much people in heaven*" (v. 1)—in a ruling position—rejoicing because the harlot has been judged, and the city destroyed.

## Chapter 17

### The smoke of her burning

#### *Two stages in the overthrow of Babylon*

After the dramatic overthrow of Babylon in Revelation 18 there is an Alleluia rejoicing by the much people in Heaven because the great whore has been judged. But at this point the judgement is not complete, because the record goes on to say: *“And again they say, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up to the aion of the aions”* (AV ‘for ever and ever’). This picks up the language of the previous chapter where the kings of the earth lament for Babylon when they see *“the smoke of her burning”* (v. 9). Later in verse 18 of the chapter, the ship masters *“stood afar off and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!”* The phrase ‘the smoke of her burning’ to the age presents a picture of Babylon, having received a dramatic overthrow, being set on fire and the process of destruction continues, creating clouds of smoke.<sup>1</sup>

These two phases of the destruction of the Babylon system are very clear in Revelation 14. In verse 8 there is the dramatic announcement: *“Babylon is fallen, is fallen”*; then in the next verse a third angel follows, declaring that all who have the mark of the beast shall be *“tormented with fire and brimstone”*, and *“the smoke of their torment ascendeth up until the aion of aions”*. This language is very similar to the phrase *“smoke of her burning”* in chapter 19.

The idea of two stages, an initial overthrow, and then a process of destruction is apparent in the earlier prophecy of Daniel 7. At the time of her judgement when Christ comes there is the little horn with eyes and mouth on the fourth beast speaking “great words”. In the judgement, first the beast is slain, then his body is destroyed and given to the burning flame. Burning the body of the beast is equivalent to the *“smoke of her burning”* in Revelation chapters 14, 18 and 19.

In the destruction of Babylon the Great the first step is probably the destruction of the Vatican rulership at Rome. It is good military strategy to destroy the capital and centre of government of the enemy. Thus Nebuchadnezzar’s objective was to take Jerusalem and the king and princes. Germany’s first objective (with France) in the last war was

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<sup>1</sup> Fire and smoke are symbols of divine judgement.

to take Paris and destroy the government. The capital city and its government represent the head and brain of the body; and while they are intact resistance can be maintained. When they are destroyed resistance may go on for a long time in the field, but the battle is more than half won. At the beginning of chapter 19 before the reference to the “*smoke of her burning*”, we are told that the great whore has already been judged. This could be accomplished by the destruction of all things in Rome by literal earthquake, fire, and other extraordinary means, killing Pope, assembled cardinals, innumerable ministers, together with all its churches and administrative buildings. In this way the head of government of the Babylon system would be destroyed. The beast would be riderless. But there would still remain the vast opposition throughout the countries of Europe. A work has still to be accomplished to destroy this dispersed but powerful opposition. This work is described as the smoke of her burning until the Kingdom Age.

### ***Three descriptions of the “smoke of her burning”***

In the latter half of Revelation 19 this “*smoke of her burning*” is described in three different ways. Three descriptions which again emphasize the importance of these matters. First, there is Christ and his army in warfare riding on white horses; then there is the figure of birds of prey called to eat flesh at the supper of the great God, and lastly the beast and the false prophet are cast alive into a lake of fire.

The **first** description is in verses 11–16 and verse 19, where a great army “in heaven” is waging war with the beast and his associates. Here the figurative language is easy to understand. The leader is Christ, who is called “*the faithful and true witness*”, “*the Word of God*”, and he has many crowns on his head because he has conquered, and the name on his thigh is “King of Kings and Lord of Lords”. He issues the commands—“*out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword*”. The war is carried on by his army. They are clothed in “fine linen, white and clean”, and they ride “white horses”. The riders are the saints now in charge of Israel. The fact that Israel is portrayed in symbol as ‘white horses’<sup>1</sup> indicates that the time has come when they are an obedient people. They are responding to the command “*Come out of her my people that ye be not partaker of her sins*”. They are reaching the situation when “*A new heart also I will give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh*” (Ezek. 37:26) .

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<sup>1</sup> For a further consideration of Israel as the white horses, see the later heading “Israel the destroyer of the latter-day Babylon”.

The **second** description is in verses 17–19, calling fowls of the air to eat the sacrifice God has prepared. The flesh to be consumed, we are told, is that of the beast and the ‘kings of the earth’ and their armies. The fowls who eat the flesh fly in ‘mid-heaven’. At this time the nation of Israel under the saints are attaining to this position of authority in the world: they are in mid-heaven.

The **third** description as the “*smoke of her burning*” is the most graphic: “*And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him...These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone*” (Rev. 19:20).

“*Cast alive into a lake of fire*” will result in the “*smoke of her burning*”. A lake of fire expresses terrible judgement on the peoples that make up the body of the beast—those who worship the beast. Judgement also will be on the priest-craft who are the representatives of the false prophet in every country of Europe, where they deceive and intoxicate these peoples.

So the picture of judgement ends with the last words of chapter 19 and the opening verses of chapter 20.

“And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh”

“And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years” (Rev. 19:21; 20:2).

### ***The harlot and the false prophet***

A question may be raised as to whether the great harlot and the false prophet represent the same system. The question arises because the great harlot has already been judged at the first Hallelujah of verse 2 in chapter 19; whereas the false prophet is still alive to be tormented in the “*smoke of her burning*” in verse 3. As we have just considered he is cast alive into the lake of fire.

Our understanding is that the harlot represents the government of the Catholic Church—the rulership at the Vatican plus the national hierarchies. She represents the Roman Catholic system, distinct from the multitude of worshippers that make up the Church. The many office-holders of the system carry on the intoxication and deception of rulers and people, and commit fornication with the “*kings*” of the earth.

How then do we distinguish the false prophet from the harlot? The false prophet emphasizes one aspect of the harlot system. The symbol represents the teaching authority of the Church, that is, the national

hierarchies directed by the Pope and his cardinals; the Pope ‘prophesying infallibly’ as the Vicar of Christ...It is quite understandable that after the Vatican, as the head of the system has been destroyed, the national hierarchies in the various countries of Europe will continue to ‘prophesy’ before the people, and lead their faithful into the final conflict of the beast with the Lamb. In this sense the false prophet is still active. They will carry on their wonder-working and deception to the very last. It is possible they will elect a new Pope, and set up a new Vatican government outside Rome.

### *Israel the destroyer of latter-day Babylon*

In chapter 2 we briefly referred to Israel’s final triumph over Babylon. Let us now enlarge on this, and dovetail what the Old Testament prophets say, with the picture in Revelation 19.

The restoration of Israel is a complex development, which can be analyzed into three phases. In the **first** phase there are those in the land when Christ returns, of which two-thirds perish in the dreadful events associated with Armageddon, and one third are saved:

“and I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It [is] my people: and they shall say, Yahweh [is] my God” (Zech. 13:9).

This is the beginning of the restored Kingdom of God. Jesus Christ having destroyed the assembled armies in the land, establishes his throne in Jerusalem, and these ‘refined’ Jews are the first of the ‘righteous nation’, ready to do battle as ‘white horses’ in the subjugation of the world.

The aionian gospel is then preached before the final warfare begins. The gospel is a simple one—Worship the Creator, you self-centred evolutionists, give glory to Him, for the hour of judgement has come (Rev. 14:7).

At this time the **second** phase of Israel’s restoration takes place. Certain nations respond, and they are commanded to bring the Jews sojourning among them back to the land:

“Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of Yahweh thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee” (Isa. 60:9).

See also Isaiah 66:20 and 18:7. These make up the second group of the nation of Israel, those mostly in the English-speaking nations—those

nations which have sufficient knowledge of the God of the Bible to humble themselves in this time of trouble.

The **third** group of Jews are those held in the North by the unrepentant worshippers of the beast, and are not allowed to return.

### ***Deliver thyself, O Daughter of Zion***

It is to this last class that the prophets address themselves. Thus Zechariah says:

“Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon” (Zech. 2:6, 7).

This command is sent after Jerusalem has been delivered, as the previous verse declares: *“For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her”*.

Isaiah 52 also speaks of this time. Zion is no more to be in bondage to Babylon: *“Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city... Shake thyself from the dust... loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion”* (v. 1-2). To Zion, captive in Babylon, comes the news in verse 7, *“Thy God reigneth”*—Messiah is already King in Jerusalem. So the record continues:

“The LORD hath made bare his holy arm—the power of Christ—in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence<sup>1</sup>, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rear guard” (Isa. 52:10–12).

This will be like their coming out of Egypt in days of old, except they are now protected and guided by Christ and his holy ones, instead of by the Angel of God’s presence and the angelic hosts (Exod. 23:20–22). Israel, after receiving instruction, are made strong for the battle, to deliver themselves from Babylon, and at the same time to destroy the remaining power of Babylon the Great.

Jeremiah in chapters 50 and 51 speaks mainly of the overthrow of Babylon in the time of Cyrus, but certain parts of the prophecy could

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<sup>1</sup> A phrase picked up in Rev. 18.

not then be fulfilled, and must relate to the time of the latter-day Babylon. For example:

“The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things: and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: Yahweh of hosts is his name. Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider... the chariot and his rider...man and woman...young man and the maid...captains and rulers. And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD” (Jer. 51:19-24).

Zechariah in his 9th and 10th chapters sees Israel in this same time of warfare. Jesus returns and releases the “prisoners of hope” by the blood of the covenant—the resurrection (ch. 9-11). Judah becomes his bow and Ephraim his arrow:

“And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet<sup>1</sup>, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones... And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they [shall be as] the stones of a crown, lifted up...” (9:14-15).

The theme continues in chapter 10:

“And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the LORD is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded. And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them” (10:5, 6).

In these passages it appears that those in the land, already reconciled to their King and called Judah, are likened to the bow in his hand; whereas those still in captivity who have to be saved are called Ephraim, and in the figure used, they become the arrow in the bow for they are the striking force against the enemy. It is appropriate to represent those first reconciled by **Judah** and those returning later by **Ephraim**, because this follows the original relationship in Old Testament times. The ten tribes were always apostate and went into

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<sup>1</sup> The trumpet of the Jubilee is blown indicating that Israel shall return to their inheritance in the land.



captivity first, cut off from the land of Israel for many centuries whereas the two tribes were always nearer to the holy things of God and more closely associated with his unfolding purpose.

### ***Another wilderness journey***

Israel, in leaving 'Babylon', does not become instantaneously righteous. They have to go through a probationary discipline, instructed and strengthened by Christ, but at the same time subject to discipline that removes the rebellious, after the pattern of the original journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. The prophet Ezekiel describes this:

“And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel...” (Ezek. 20:34–38).

Then Ezekiel adds:

“For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things” (v. 40).

All Israel will be united and brought into the blessings of the New Covenant.

So a study of the prophets along the lines indicated in this selection of passages, shows how the nation of Israel will become the army of white horses in the vision of Revelation 19. Christ, his immortal princes, and the nation of Israel, are the power that destroys the beast and the false prophet, and sweeps away Babylon the Great so that, like a millstone cast into the sea, it is found no more.

## **Section Four**

# **The rise of the Holy City**

## **Chapter 18**

### **Israel exalted: The New Jerusalem world rulership**

#### ***Jerusalem: The past and the future***

As the great city Babylon ceases to reign over the kings of the earth and is destroyed by the fiery judgements of Christ, so the Holy City, New Jerusalem, rises to power. This is the divine theocracy that comes from heaven, appointed to rule the world for a thousand years in righteousness and peace.

Jerusalem in figure throughout the prophets is regarded as the mother of Israel. Jerusalem and her children have a past and a future. There was Jerusalem under the Old Covenant. She had many blessings from her husband, Yahweh, but because she was not faithful to the covenant she was cast off by God; and in her loss of children she is described as desolate and in widowhood (Isa. 54). Even for the faithful in Israel the Old Covenant was “*a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear*” says Peter (Acts 15:10). Paul in writing to the Galatian believers says of the Old Covenant, from Sinai, that it “*gendereth to bondage*”, and in his allegory this was “*the Jerusalem that now is*” (Gal. 4:26). Such is the past; though an apparent failure it had its place in the developing work of God. There lies ahead the Jerusalem of the new Covenant.

#### ***Jerusalem of the new Covenant***

Isaiah declares, as we have already quoted, that Jerusalem and Zion are to rise from the dust and put on beautiful garments:

“Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean” (52:1).

The beautiful garments with which Jerusalem is to be adorned are her immortal King and princes, and her righteous people. The ‘adorning’ with her children is described in ch. 49:18–21:

“Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate

places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell”.

Jerusalem has ‘beautiful garments’ because she is adorned with a people who are righteous; nothing unclean will be found in her. So Isaiah says a little later:

“Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I Yahweh will hasten it in his time” (Isa. 60:21, 22).

This is Jerusalem of the new Covenant; the gracious covenant declared by Jeremiah:

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jer. 31:33, 34).

This Jerusalem of the new Covenant Paul says is the “*Mother of us all*”, in his allegory in Galatians 4. She is mother of all the nation of Israel—her princes are immortal, her people mortal, but all enjoying the blessings and privileges of being in the new Covenant. This is the new heavens and earth of Peter’s second epistle: “*Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*” (2 Pet. 3:13). Both heavens and earth are righteous. Like ourselves, every Israelite is now ‘in Christ’, having faith in Messiah the Son of God, and walking in the righteous precepts of Yahweh.

### ***The covenant of peace***

We are not told exactly how the new Covenant will be inaugurated with the nation of Israel. There is an initial covenant-making with those who escape from their bondage in the north, and have a wilderness journey of probation back to the land (Ezek. 20:34–38). But we may suppose that there is a national inauguration of the new Covenant in Jerusalem when all Israel have returned. Ezekiel in his 37th chapter infers this. Symbolically they have been in graves in the various countries of their captivity; and God brings them up out of their graves into the land of Israel (v. 12). Then the body of Israel is energized by the Spirit of God, and the ten tribes are united on the mountains of Israel under one King, David the second (vv. 15–24). Finally the covenant of peace is made, and everlasting covenant (v. 26); and God’s sanctuary is set in their midst for ever more: “*My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I*

*will be their God, and they shall be my people*" (v. 27). It is probable the new covenant will be nationally inaugurated when the temple has been built, and the altar cleansed, as described in Ezekiel 43.

As God promised in his covenant with David, Israel will remain settled in their land:

"Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more..." (2 Sam. 7:10).

The permanence of the nation's inheritance of the land under the new Covenant is emphasized by Jeremiah:

"Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever" (Jer. 31:35,36).

### ***Jerusalem the exalted***

In Paul's allegory in Galatians 4, he says of the Jerusalem that she is the mother of us all, that she is 'above', or exalted. She is supreme over the world; she has become the light of the world. So says Isaiah in chapter 60 addressing Zion:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee... And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising... Thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isaiah 60:1, 3, 11–12).

So again in chapter 62:

"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God" (Isaiah 62:1–3).

### ***The new Jerusalem rulership***

The excellence of the 'exalted' Jerusalem and her children that enlightens and governs the world is that her princes are wise, powerful, and immortal, and the constitution of her government is from God. This is what is conveyed to us in Revelation 21. The bride of Christ is revealed in the figure of the Holy City, new Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, and established on a great and high mountain. This, of course is symbolic language; the rulership of the world under Christ is a great and high mountain. The little stone that destroyed Nebuchadnezzar's image "*became a great mountain and filled the whole earth*". So the bride of Christ, in one aspect of her existence is the Holy City from heaven resting on a great and high mountain; or, in literal terms the saints are a municipality or corporation, ruling the world under the constitution set up under the new Covenant, a constitution 'from heaven'. This "new Jerusalem" rulership is the glory of the exalted Jerusalem we have been thinking about. The excellence and perfection of this rulership is described in symbol—a city vast in size, having cubical perfection, twelve foundations of precious stones, twelve gates inscribed with the tribes of Israel; and the city is pure gold, like unto clear glass. This describes the functioning of the princes of Israel in the Coming Age. They direct the nation of Israel in righteousness, and under this direction the nation of Israel ministers to the world. The nation of Israel at last fulfils its appointed task, laid down at the beginning: "*Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*" (Exod. 19:6). Isaiah 61:5–6 pictures the nation in this high office:

"And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But he shall be named the Priests of the LORD; men shall call you the Ministers of our God; ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall you boast yourselves".

This is addressed to the nation as a whole, not just to the saints; the verses that follow in Isaiah make this clear.

### ***All nations blessed in Abraham and his Seed***

The immortal princes of Israel, Jew and Gentile, became the true seed of Abraham by birth or adoption, and by faith in Christ. In this future time the people of Israel also are all the seed of Abraham by birth and by adoption into Christ, through the new Covenant. And now the time has come for the full scope of the Abrahamic Covenant to be realized—"*All nations blessed in Abraham and his seed*". The blessings depend upon the obedience of the nations to God's laws. Righteousness, peace and plenty flow from the throne in Jerusalem to all nations through the iron rule of the saints. It will be a time of progress in divine tuition. It

will take generations for all nations to learn the ways of Yahweh. This is expressed in Revelation 21 in the words *“And the nations of them which are saved (‘being saved’ Bro. Thomas) shall walk in the light of the new Jerusalem.”* It has taken 3,000 years for God to create Israel as a righteous nation. The spiritual development of many other nations who shall be *“joined to the LORD”* (Zech. 2:11), will take time—the period of the millennium. A process of *“healing the nations”* goes on. This is explained as the record continues in the Revelation. At the beginning of chapter 22 there is a river of water of life flowing from the throne in the midst of the city, and this river irrigates a wood of life on either side of the river. We are told that the leaves of the trees are for the healing of the nations. This figurative language is based on the literal of Ezekiel 47:12, where the trees nearby to the temple have medicinal virtue for those who come up to worship. In Revelation 22 the river of water of life flowing from the throne is symbolic for the Spirit of God, and it gives life and quality to the wood of life, each tree of the wood being an individual saint (Psa. 1:3, Isa. 61:3, Song of Solomon 4:12–14). Figuratively, the nations will be healed by feeding on the healing leaves—(as we now are healed by feeding on Christ). Under the saints’ constant teaching, guidance and discipline, the ways of God and the mind of the Spirit are cultivated in all the peoples of the earth. Rebels as they emerge are soon cut off (Isa. 66:24), so that evil things are not allowed to take root, and succeeding generations grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord throughout the whole world. The focal point for this vast and wonderful system is the literal Jerusalem in the land of promise. Nations go up for instruction and worship: *“Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths”*. What a different spirit from the present. It will need all the wisdom and power of the saints to maintain this happy situation, with all nations blessed in Abraham and his seed.

“At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Yahweh, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart” (Jer. 3:17).

### ***The binding of the serpent power***

After the beast and the false prophet have been destroyed in the lake of fire, chapter 20 opens:

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound

him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season" (Rev. 20:1–3).

*"That old serpent"* is the serpent power or thinking from Eden, now described as "the dragon". The serpent had encouraged Adam and Eve to rebel against the moral authority of God, and thus became the symbol for human thinking in revolt against the will of God. Sometimes this thinking has been organized democratically, sometimes despotically, sometimes in other ways: but always following its own lights, rather than submitting to the moral authority of God. In the past God had patiently allowed considerable freedom of action to *"the mind of the flesh"*, but in this latest, hideous, challenge to the authority of the King of Kings, *"the carnal mind"* has shown itself to be incorrigibly an enemy "against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). The time has come to take this dark power in hand. So Christ binds this opposition for 1,000 years so that peace and righteousness prevails during most of the Millennium.

### ***The post-millennial rebellion***

But human nature will not have been radically changed, only kept in check by the powerful restraints exerted by the saints. A thousand years of peace, of righteousness, of prosperity, of instruction in the law of God, have not tempered the innate rebelliousness of human nature. It has not been dead, only suppressed, lying dormant until a moment's freedom allows it to explode in a furious, seething, global revolt! *"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea"* (Rev. 20:7–8). The symbology draws upon earlier events: this rebellion is the counterpart at the end of the millennium to the invasion of Ezekiel 38–39 before the beginning of the millennium. But this last, great, challenge draws together not a bloc of nations, but all *"the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth...the number of whom is as the sand of the sea"*.

Judgement, which is swift and sure, meets the ungrateful rebels: *"fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."* The devil's time has come. He is to be finally destroyed, with all that is bound up in that symbol. *"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet"* (1 Cor. 15:24ff).



## *Epilogue*

### **The exhortation**

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14).

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life” (Rev. 21:27).

To qualify for entry into the City we have to do God's commandments, including keeping the sayings of the book of the Apocalypse, as an earlier verse tells us. There is no half-way house in this matter. In that future time, we are either within the City or without. Either we are found written in the book of life, or we have our part in the second death, which is to be put with the world, to suffer with them; to be classed with those who—in symbolic language—are described as “*dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers*”. To be in the right camp then, we must be in the right camp now. This is what verse 17 tells us: “*He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still*”. There can be no sudden change at the last minute; as we are now, so will we be declared to be then. We may think the word ‘filthy’ is unpleasant and cannot apply to us; but let us remember that there were only a few in Sardis who were not defiled (filthy) in God's eyes. So we must think seriously whether we truly belong to the Holy City in the present time of sojourning in the earth, or whether in the eyes of our Master we allow ourselves to be contaminated by the world. As in the future there is no half-way house, so it is now. Let us ponder the glory that is held out for us, and determine we—by God's grace—will lay hold of this, and forsake the world.

What a prospect for those who are permitted to enter the City—to be part of that glorious administration of the coming Age—to be finally and unchangeably one with the Father and Jesus in Spirit nature. “*I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son*”—thus to joyfully enter the Father's service:

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Rev. 7:15–17).

What can the world offer in comparison?

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“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying” (Isa. 65:17–19).

“The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD” (Isa. 65:25).

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It demonstrates the demise of Babylon the Great at the coming of Christ and its replacement by Zion, the Holy City. May our God bless all who read this book, that they may be rulers with Messiah in that great day.

## Abbreviations

ASV	— The American Standard Version 1901
AV	— The Authorized Version (KJV) 1611
CB	— Companion Bible by Bullinger
cf.	— compare faithfully with
cp.	— compare
Diag.	— Diaglott
<i>et seq.</i>	— = and what follows
GES	— Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon
<i>ibid.</i>	— further reference to the book just cited
JER	— The Jerusalem Bible
LXX	— The Septuagint (Greek O. T.)
mg.	— margin
Moff	— Moffatt's translation
M.T.	— Masoretic Text
NASB	— New American Standard Bible
NEB	— New English Bible
NIV	— New International Version, 1979
NKJV	— New King James Version, 1984
NJV	— A new translation according to the Masoretic text (Jewish Publ. Society) 1978
NT	— New Testament
Roth	— Rotherham's Emphasized Bible
RSV	— Revised Standard Version 1952
RV	— Revised Version 1881
Strong's	— Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
TWOT	— Theological Word Book to the Old Testament
YLT	— Young's Literal Translation
(Y)	— Young's Analytical Concordance

NOTE: Quotation from any of the above translations does not indicate endorsement or agreement with all of its contents.

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