

The SCROLL  
of REVELATION  
given to the  
Apostle JOHN

explained by  
a servant of God

PART EIGHT:  
The Beast and  
The Rider, Babylon

(17:1-18)  
February, 2003

**Close up:  
Babylon's Description  
(17:1-7, 15-18)**

Scholars have speculated about the **differences in chapters 17 and 18**, theorizing that there must be two different Babylons being described. But careful analysis does not support that notion. There is too much similar. What is different about the two chapters is intent, not geography. The intent of the first angel (chapter 17) is to give a no-doubt identity of the woman who rides the beast. In doing so he also gives some clear clues about the beast whom we first met in chapter 13. The intent of the second angel (chapter 18:1-19:6) is to describe in detail the judgment of Babylon, and the reaction of earth and Heaven to that judgment. This horrendous but justified event takes place just before the return of Jesus.

**First, the description.** I confess here that the identification of "Babylon" still contains mystery for me. Some see the entire book as mystery, but this mystery is labeled such (**17:5**). I spent from 1992-1996 researching and writing about "Babylon", tracing her history from the infamous tower of Genesis 10 to these very chapters in Revelation (*Scarlet Threads*). My conclusion was that there has always been a "Babylon", a holder of the Satanic mysteries, a promulgator of false teaching and man's religion. I further concluded that those mysteries and false-nesses were passed to the institution in Rome that still exists as a world power. I hesitate to speak of the Roman "Church" for the people of God wear that title. "Church" must not be used glibly. The church is the *called out* of God. Yes, even associated with Rome are those who know Jesus Christ. But when we speak of Babylon, we are really speaking of the ongoing **Roman Empire**, the political machine that seized power *by means of* the church, added Babylon's teachings, wielded Babylon's sword, donned Babylon's garb. The 17th chapter identifies a city ruling over the kings of the earth and sitting on seven hills in John's day. There is no question of her identity.

And yet even in the book I wrote I had to honestly admit into evidence a parallel series of facts which are equally viable. The prophecies concerning **physical Babylon** have yet to be fulfilled perfectly. The city now in Iraq never died abruptly as prophesied. It continued on and on. Even in Jesus' day many Jews lived in Babylon. But the record is sure. Babylon is to be extinguished, as prophesied *yet again* in the chapters before us. Let us proceed carefully through these two plus chapters. Every detail counts. Notice just how much space is given to this mystery compared to all the others.

Lest we become content with too general an explanation of this passage, we **follow the text carefully** and listen to the wisdom given by no less than an angel of God. First he invites John to come along and see the following person:

Babylon is a **woman (17:1)**. In Scripture the two best known "women", spiritually speaking, are Israel and Christ's own bride, the church. The woman before us has long lost her virginity and is not married to God at all, but to everyone willing to pay her price. Her description reminds us of another woman in the prophets. Zechariah speaks of a woman sitting inside a basket, carried through the air and deposited in the land of Shinar, old Babylonia, where a house is to be built for her. We say with Zechariah, "This is Wickedness" (Zechariah 5:5-11).

She sits on **many waters**. Interpretation for this is clear from verse 15: The waters stand for all the people over whom she has spiritual authority.

Babylon is a **harlot (17:1-2)**. She has spiritual intercourse with the rulers of the world.

She rises to power on her back, in bed with the powerful. Take away the power of men, and she has nothing. She is not only a fornicator herself, but spreads her wine via the golden cup she carries (17:4). The cup of her fornication brings us back for the first time, but not the last in these chapters, to the prophets who saw Babylon before. Nothing has changed but location. Jeremiah 51:7 reminds us that “Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore the nations are deranged.” They did it then. They did it in John’s day. They are mad still. They are drunk with the wine of her falseness.

Now we are in the “wilderness” (17:3). Why is this woman, later called a city, seen first in a “wilderness”? I believe the tie-in here is to Zechariah’s *Shinar* prophecy, mentioned above. In this wilderness, John is for the first time seeing what the angel was describing. The woman is **riding on an animal**. More of him later. Whoever he is, he is the one responsible for her power, and when he decides to throw her off (17:16), she is history.

More about the woman (17:4). Her **personal colors** are purple and scarlet, the regal colors of Rome’s powerful. She is unquestionably rich. As is Rome. And she has the aforementioned cup in her hand. It is filled with things God hates, poisonous errors of word and lifestyle and worship.

**On the forehead (17:5)**, in her mind and soul is imprinted the title of Babylon. She alone is responsible for all earth’s abominations. Those who preach another Gospel, another God, another Book, another way of salvation, shall bear the blame for all eternity for earth’s woes. God created an earth that was pleasant and manageable by man. It is out of control now because from the beginning man wanted to go his own way. Babylon’s religion is based on this will of man, in direct opposition to the will of God.

This woman is **bloodthirsty (17:6)**. She desires to kill the people of God whether in old Israel, the covenant Jews, or in the church of God. Saints, martyrs, all fall slain before her. The history of Roman religion from the Caesars to our own day is a history of blood. I feel no need to document this fact at present. My book *Scarlet Threads* may be a resource for those who wish to investigate further.

**John is aghast (17:6–7)**. He can’t believe it. Could it be that the reason for his horror is that this woman reminds him of someone he knows well? Is it Christianity without Christ that shocks him so? Oh may it be a shock and a horror to us! The angel offers to solve the mystery. After the following verses then, we ought to come away with a perfect understanding of who is the woman, and who she is riding to power. May the Lord clear away the dullness of our vision so that this outcome truly results.

**A clear statement (17:18)**. Before we begin probing into the mind of the Spirit about the “beast”, let us find yet one more identification of the woman on him: She *is* the city reigning over the kings of the earth in John’s day. She is Rome. Could anything be clearer? Rome rules, in a greater or lesser way, until the end of time. Has any world power since Rome ever dominated the earth? Do not one in every six persons to this very day on the planet claim some sort of allegiance to Rome? Is not the direction of Christendom beginning to go toward that city? Is not European politics dependent on what happens there? May God awaken his people!

But having said all of this, I still reserve the right to look to the prophets for something else. Think me not double minded here. **“Babylon” has worn many faces** and may yet wear another one. More of this Old Testament connection in chapter 18.

**Close-up:**  
**Once more, “the beast from the sea”**  
**17:3, 8-14**

We saw in Part Six that **chapters 13 and 17 might indeed be companion pieces**, both telling of the two entities, beast and rider, that will in harmony do the will of Satan in the last hours of history. Certainly, if this is true, there is added significance to the fact that the woman “sits on many waters” (17:1), and the beast, correspondingly, rises “out of the sea” (13:1). So, though chapter 17 is widely thought of as being about “Babylon”, equal space is given to Babylon’s chief client, “the beast.” Likewise the beast shares chapter 13 with “the false prophet”, quite possibly Babylon’s head.

Antichrist is first mentioned in **17:3** as being a “**scarlet**” beast. The woman herself is clothed with the same color (**17:4**). Only One Other wore scarlet in the New Testament, Jesus Himself, in His humiliation at the hands of Herod’s men (Matthew 27:28). Though He is and was a King, and shall reign forever and ever, how unfitting it seemed for the Christ to be clothed in kingly garb before the Time. How unfitting to see His followers so bedecked. How clearly these excesses of dress and things material identify the professing church as of the beast!

Next in **17:3** comes the indication of the “**names of blasphemy**”, tying him squarely to the beast of 13:5-6. Likewise the reference to seven heads and ten horns takes us to 13:1 and portions of Daniel.

The **description of the beast** then continues in **17:8**. We have explained in Part Six that this passage relates that a man who has already lived on this planet is even now awaiting to be released from the bottomless pit. Paul agrees in II Thessalonians 2, and John’s record of an angel in charge of that pit adds light (Revelation 9:1). He will come back to the earth, do his work, be destroyed and be lost forever.

In **17:9** we are told that the **seven heads** on the beast have a double meaning. First, they stand for seven mountains or hills (the word in the Greek can mean either) on which the woman sits. Tie this to **17:18**, and of course we have located the city of Rome : “The woman whom you saw *is* that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.” Here is established that “heads” represent rule, the present rule being on this seven-hilled city.

But the angel takes it a step forward (**17:10**) : The seven also means seven “kings”. I stated earlier the traditional way that commentaries connect this to world Empires. And it is true that there cannot be a King without a Kingdom. **But the word is “King”, not “Kingdom”**. Perhaps it would be profitable to look closer at these Empires and single out the “King” being considered by the Spirit. It is obvious from even a short study of history that not every ruler of every Empire was dead set against God and God’s plan. It seems to me that there could easily be one man in the major Kingdoms that rose up and fit the description of the man of sin for that generation. One man who from time to time pushed Satan’s agenda until it became the world’s agenda. He would have to be a blasphemer. Anti-God or anti-Christ. He would have to have a serious hatred for Jews and/or Christians. A dictator with all authority over his people. And as we shall see, a King of Babylon. By John’s day, *five such men* had fallen, says the angel. One ruled on the Roman Throne. *One is yet to come in our own future*.

And then one more (**17:11**) . That is eight. The man of sin is **one of those seven** who rules a second time! He *was*, in John’s day. He *is not* on the earth in John’s day. And yet he

*lives*, somewhere. He arises from the Pit, synonym in many Scriptures for the grave, though the angel is restraining him for now, says Paul. He arises in his “resurrection body” like Jesus did. He fools the world. He goes to perdition.

Now we must certainly stop and look back into history to find the other men. If I have discovered the truth about this matter there are surely seven men from whom the Spirit can give us grace to choose the very one being exposed here as number *eight*. Did I say exposed? Oh yes, **we are to know this mystery**. The facts are all out there. John marveled at it all but was mildly rebuked! He was told (**17:7**) that the mystery is solvable! The Book before us is not the Book of unanswered mysteries, but the **Book of Revelation!** Those who seek these answers must surely find them.

**Seven men** I cannot begin my study in Egypt, though I understand the thinking of those who do. The mysteries of the Enemy began at the Tower of Babel, with one “Nimrod.” I have seen him labeled “the first antichrist”. In Genesis 10 we read of his greatness and how he actually founded the cities of Babylon and Nineveh, the two capitals that would rule the world from his day until near the end of Old Testament history. Even Persia, which rounds out the secular history that serves as Old Testament background, has legends of one who “hunted” with dogs and leopards. His fame as a world leader has given rise to myth and fable in many cultures. Should not the founder of nations be considered the first of the “men of sin” ? Josephus, Jewish historian, in his *Antiquities I, 4* says about those early days:

“...the sons of Noah...descended from the mountains into the plains and fixed their habitations there; and persuaded others...who were very loath to come down from the higher place, to venture to follow their example...God commanded them to send colonies abroad, for the thorough peopling of the earth...but they did not obey God [since they had] the suspicion that they were ordered to send out separate colonies, that, being divided asunder, they might the more easily be oppressed. Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such affront and contempt of God....He also gradually changed the government into tyranny...[bringing] them into a constant dependence on his power. He also said he would be revenged on God, if He should have a mind to drown the world again...”

*Fausset's Bible Dictionary* tells more of this historic and legendary figure. Read also Alexander Hislop's *Two Babylons* . I found an excellent history of this man on the Internet at [http://www.dsministries.com/Study\\_Nimrod.htm](http://www.dsministries.com/Study_Nimrod.htm).

Before moving to man number two, let me point out here that since the first man in the chain is the founder of Babylon, and the last one supports Babylon intimately, it is possible to search, I believe, for the **successors of the King of Babylon** only, to find the men we are looking for. I discovered through the “angelfire” website that there are 133 such men. They date from Babylon's early beginnings in the 200's BC to and past the end of Babylon proper, through Assyria, Persia, and *even Greece!* Yes, Alexander the Great *and his successors* all called themselves the “King of Babylon”.

Moreover, Isaiah pinpoints a man with this title in his apocalyptic message recorded in chapter 14. Here one called “King of Babylon” is somehow **related to Lucifer!** He is said to have “weakened the nations” . His pride exalts him to exaggerated thoughts of his own deity. Yet he is brought to the pit. Sounds a lot like Revelation's accounting of the details. Written 800 years before John.

**Man number two.** Historically, the Kingdom of Assyria with Shalmanezar I at the helm, rose up and overpowered Babylonia around 1300 B.C. Nineveh now rules. But Nineveh

is also from Nimrod. And Assyria's men will call themselves **King of Babylon** also. It's in the blood. Babylon is the mother of all abominations and must give her name to them. Historical records assist us with this label through the Grecian Empire. John the Revelator adds Rome to the list.

One of Assyria's most powerful rulers was **Sennacherib**. His reign is mentioned briefly but with great significance in God's Word. Through his men he actually challenged the God of Israel and the Israel of God in the 700's B.C. ( II Kings 18), as he was snatching up real estate all around the Promised Land. In fact he was successful in the overthrow of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and felt he could lay claim to the South (Judah) also. His pride and self-assurance turned him into a blasphemer, one of the prime requisites for Satan's men (II Kings 19:22). His hatred for Israel and plan to destroy them, also revealing his character and its source, was intercepted by God through the intercession of Judah's king Hezekiah and the prophetic utterances of none other than Isaiah (II Chronicles 32).

Both Micah and Isaiah speak of one they call "**the Assyrian**", a true enemy who will be defeated by the Lord. Like Isaiah's words about "the King of Babylon" it seems almost like an end-time statement in both cases, leading some to believe that the man of sin will indeed be an Assyrian. I can almost believe this myself, but of course only in the light of a resurrected King as John predicts, not as a revival of the Assyrian nation today, a notion that seems a bit too far-fetched and that is not demanded by any specific text.

For the record though, Micah does say that the one born in Bethlehem, the Messiah, is going to be the one who **will deliver Israel from "the Assyrian"** (Micah 5:2-6). And Isaiah, in the same chapter that he speaks of the "King of Babylon" and Lucifer (14), later refers to the "Assyrian", who will be broken, removing the yoke from Israel.

Now I have suggested earlier that it is Antiochus Epiphanes waiting in the Pit of revelation **17:8**, and I think I have good reason. But I can understand the reasoning that would lead people to think it is Sennacherib. One other item that points to this Assyrian: To my knowledge he is the only one of the seven who was **slain by the sword**, (II Kings 19:37). Now, the wording of Revelation 13 does not in my opinion *demand* a sword wound to a human, but I still find Sennacherib intriguing and worth more study. I refer interested persons to a helpful book known as *The Assyrian Connection*.

Who then is **third of the five kings** that have already fallen? Babylon returns to power in the early 600's B.C., and of the "Neo-Babylonian" kings, the greatest by far is Nebuchadnezzar. He is so great, and so powerful, and so creative, and so against Israel at times, that our modern ruler Saddam Hussein is convinced that Nebuchadnezzar should be brought back to life in his (Saddam's) own person! To this end he has "rebuilt" Babylon on a miniature scale, and placed his own name on every brick.

**Nebuchadnezzar's reign** is well documented in Biblical and extra-Biblical sources. He is in Kings and Chronicles and Isaiah and Daniel. He besieged Jerusalem, and took King Jehoiachin prisoner, as now backslidden Judah is not even to be protected from the invader. Their sin is just too heavy a burden around their neck, and they must go down. He carries away first much of Jewish treasure and people, leaving only the poor (II Kings 24:13-14). He builds a siege wall around Jerusalem (25:1), kills King Zedekiah's sons, even blinding Zedekiah in the process (25:7). He burns the temple (25:9), captures the rest of the people (25:11) and actually places in the Temple of Marduk at Babylon, the treasures from the Temple of God (II Chroni-

cles 36:7). Marduk is a mythical descendant of Nimrod, and one can even see three letters of Nimrod's name in the later manifestation.

Now it should be seen that, as Jeremiah recounts in chapters 21, 22, and 27 of his prophecy, **Nebuchadnezzar is a "servant" of the Lord**, even though unwittingly and for his own reasons. He is God's whipping-boy for His people. But as Pharaoh was raised up for the purposes of God and later drowned in the Red Sea, so judgment will fall on Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon for their treatment of Israel (Jeremiah 50-51).

Daniel recounts incidents in Nebuchadnezzar's life, subsequent to the fall of Jerusalem. His insights into the varying degrees of **that monarch's devotion to Yahweh** are helpful in our understanding of his heart. Nebuchadnezzar seemed to be pleased with Daniel and his Jewish companions, as he had been with Jeremiah before them, yet he continued on in his idolatry and especially his unbearable pride. The image of gold (Daniel 3) which by the way previews the **image of the beast** (Revelation 13), was erected to remind citizens of the greatness of the King. This statue became the reason for the punishment of the three young Hebrew friends of Daniel. Yet God breaks through into Nebuchadnezzar's life by saving them from the fiery furnace. Earlier, Daniel's revelation of the meaning of a troubling dream had likewise awakened him to the greatness of the God of Israel. His respect grows from *including* the true God with his own gods to honoring that God as supreme, but never to worshipping Yahweh *alone*.

Later in the story (Daniel 4) we see Nebuchadnezzar thinking back on his glory with satisfaction and *pride*. At this point he is humbled before the Empire, but is later restored. Altogether then, a proud, sometimes **blasphemous, idolatrous, anti-semitic** King of Babylon was this Nebuchadnezzar, and for that reason we include him in the list of antichrists.

Babylonia falls again, and is replaced by Persia whose Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon in 536 B.C. Here it becomes more difficult to find a man who fills the bill as "man of sin" of the hour. Yet, judging from the description of the Revelation 13 beast in terms of animals, there is no doubt that the bear, or Persia, must be included in the history of the man of sin. Now, the Persian Emperors were despotic and often cruel, and definitely worshiped the wrong god. However, they were by and large friendly to Israel. Cyrus, who inherited the captive Jews, immediately released them. Succeeding rulers tried to support the growing state of Israel against foreign elements of that day who did not want her to prosper.

And were the **Persian kings also "King of Babylon"**? Yes, until the coming of Xerxes, several Emperors later, this was the honorary title they claimed. And Xerxes? Though he is a "legitimate" King of Babylon, it is said he "illegitimized" several generations of coming rulers by storming the Babylonian Temple of Marduk, aka Nimrod. The idea is that it is Nimrod who gives authority to the King. No Nimrod, no King. Knowing that that was the feeling, even in Persia, lets us believe that we are on the right track in looking only at these Babylonian kings as candidates for the man of sin. Alexander the Great, it is said, restored Marduk to his place, and for many generations the Greek Rulers wore the title again. So, for example, the Bible's Artaxerxes (Ezra 4) is not a King of Babylon, whereas Ahasuerus (Xerxes, Book of Esther) and Cyrus (II Chronicles 36:22-23) are, for the above reason. Could either of them be the "antichrist" of the Persian Empire?

Consider the book of Esther, and the wicked plot of **Haman**, the highest ranking official in the court of Xerxes (if indeed Ahasuerus and Xerxes are the same person, as many believe). Though the Persian ruler was not possessed of hatred for the Jews, he did submit to Haman's Hitler-like plot that all Jews be destroyed. Genocide we call it today. Through the intervention

of Esther, the wickedness of Haman and Xerxes was superceded by a plan for Jewish self-defense. But it would seem that any ruler who, as King of Babylon, decreed the extinction of God's people, whatever his ignorance or motivation, would qualify as a candidate for "beast."

Next the great Alexander storms through the Persian Empire in the name of Macedonia and Greece. The **Greek Empire** follows. Alexander is King of Babylon in name, and yet he favors and spares Israel in his conquests. When he dies, his kingdom is divided four ways, as prophesied by Daniel. **Out of one of these splits (Daniel 8:8-9) comes "the little horn."** Bible "scholars" who are convinced the Bible is not totally true tell us that that horn must be Antiochus Epiphanes, ruler of the largest portion of the Greek domain. **Bible believers**, however, point out that, no, this cannot be Epiphanes, for the passages about what happens are **always** couched in an end-time setting. Perhaps it is time for these two positions to merge and declare that it is possible for **one man to live in two eras**. Of course, he must be resurrected to do that. As you know now, this is what I believe happens.

**Consider the wickedness of Antiochus** and see if he qualifies to be an "antichrist". He was treacherous and deceitful. He wore the title "King of Babylon." He was driven out of Egypt by the Romans and in fury he unleashed evil on Jerusalem. He broke a treaty with that city in order to plunder the Temple for its wealth. He forbade Jewish sacrifices, according to Josephus, for three and one-half years. He slaughtered many Jews. He burned buildings, knocked down city walls. He built an idol altar on God's altar, and sacrificed pigs on it. This is the Old Testament version of the "abomination of desolation." But Jesus in his day said that that abomination was still future. He referred people to the book of Daniel. But it had already happened. But it will happen again. Do you see the confusion regarding this man Antiochus? Is he the "once and future" king?

Antiochus compelled Jews to forsake their worship, making them build temples to his gods. He allowed no circumcision. Many yielded to these pressures. Those who did not were whipped. Or torn to pieces. Or crucified. Or strangled. The Book of Law was destroyed. He was a proud man obsessed with his own worth and deity. On coins you will see his name as *Theos Epiphanes* "**God Manifest**", the very description of the Son of God (I Timothy 3:16).

We mentioned above also **the strange case of Daniel 11**. No one questions that 11:21-35 has to do with the wicked reign of Epiphanes. But 36-45? With hardly a clue we are suddenly in the end times, even on into chapter 12 where history is climaxed. From 11:36 to the end is antichrist, all say. But if you blink you'll think for sure it is Antiochus, though none of these things ever happened in his life! I wonder if the Spirit is saying right here in plain sight that this latter-day figure is *also Antiochus*, raised from the dead?

**Nimrod, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Xerxes, Epiphanes.** These five have fallen. *One is*. Now, since we live in the same Roman era in which John lived there is a sense in which that "one" still is! The Empire that ruled in John's day has never been replaced, only greatly diminished. If we were to use Daniel's statue vision (Daniel 2) as an outline of history, it would begin with Nebuchadnezzar's Neo-Babylonia, according to the interpretation, continue to Medo-Persia, then Greece, and finally Rome, the "two legs" which would attach to the feet kingdom of the last days. We still live in the "legs" days of Rome. When the Spirit opens the eyes to this revelation, my but does one's world view change!

**One is**. But we were saying that up until now there are men who represent these various ages and Empires, through whom Satan revealed seven "heads". If they are indeed the same

as Daniel's seven, there must be bear, lion and leopard components, not to mention the ten-horned beast portion. Put together all the kingdoms of men and Satan's power, and you have this man of sin.

The man chosen to represent the Roman days is the Emperor who placed John on Patmos: **Domitian**. Because of the movies and other knowledge of these days we tend to look at *Nero* as the typical antichrist figure coming out of Rome. Nero was a mad man. But consider this Domitian: To the embarrassment of his peers he was the **first of the Roman Emperors** to suggest, then demand, his own self-deification **while he yet lived**. Prior to Domitian the Emperors had the courtesy to advise their people to wait for their death before allowing them to be called a god.

And, by virtue of the fact that John the Revelator has **equated Rome with "Babylon"** in this very 17th chapter, we must see Domitian as **"King of Babylon"** also, though the phrase was not used by men after the Greek rulers. His hatred of Jews likewise qualifies him. It was so strong that Christianity was persecuted severely because it was considered a *Jewish* cult.

Domitian levied a tax among the Israelites to equal the amount they normally would have given to their Temple, destroyed some 25 years before by the Roman general Titus. He demanded, further, that Christians and Jews alike recognize the Emperor as God, or pay the price. Those who refused either were killed or banished. Even the Emperor's own cousin Flavius Clemens was killed, **charged with "atheism"** for embracing the one true God.

Five have fallen. Domitian is. One is still to come. He will be number seven. It is here that we are struck with a little-recognized revelation in the book: **The next world leader will be neither the Christ or the antichrist**. Number *seven* (17:10) is distinct from number *eight* (17:11) *Seven* rules a "short time". Granted, the antichrist, *eight*, rules a short time also (12:12) but I wish to emphasize that these two men are as distinct from each other as the number seven is from the number eight.

We have established that **number eight is the man of sin**. He is the one (17:11) who is going to perdition after he rises from the pit. He is, further, a resurrected form of one of the first seven. These facts are indisputable. Many who have come this far in their understanding have jumped to the conclusion that number *eight* is simply a resurrected number *seven*. I believe that will not work. Let's do the facts of **17:8** again: The beast *was* (from John's perspective). He is history already in John's day. He cannot therefore be number *seven* or number *six*. He must be somewhere in numbers *one to five*. I have given evidence above that points to *five* or perhaps to *two*. In this regard remember Paul's testimony also, in an already-quoted passage. Paul says that even in his day (II Thessalonians 2:7) **someone is restraining the man of sin**. When that restrainer is taken out of the way, the lawless one will be revealed.

**Who then is number seven?** He must be a "king of Babylon/Rome", a world conqueror, anti Jewish, anti-Christian, very powerful. Perhaps the opening four seals of chapter 6 define this man and the trouble he starts. Those four seals do seem to be disconnected from the other three. It is quite possible that their time span is the first three and one half years of Daniel's "70th week" (Daniel 9). That would be a "short time" equal to the "short time" of antichrist. Here would be the time for Israel to be given all it wants politically, in exchange for all the world wants from it. The masterpiece of all political deals, following a time of world strife. Yet, somehow he brings a measure of peace to the Middle east as Europe rises to power, gradually swallowing up all vulnerable nations in its path, Hitler-like. It seems that America by this

time will be second-rate, *or worse*.

This is the man who could also fill Daniel's description of "**the prince who is to come**" (Daniel 9:26 ff). He seems to have conquered the city of Jerusalem, then brought it to terms, confirming a peace treaty of seven years with Israel. But in the middle of this "week" he is forced to cut the relationship, take away Jewish sacrifices, and *another man* is introduced: "on the wing of abomination shall be one (not the prince!) who makes desolate..."

There are **other clues** in Daniel. 8:11-12 tells us that the little horn is given an army to "oppose the prince of the Host" and the sacrifices. Could it be that "number seven" is here being threatened by "number 8" ? See also 11:31. The "prince", it seems, confirms the treaty but the "little horn" brings it down.

Could it be that **antichrist's appearance will first be in the Temple** itself? Paul says he will be there, claiming to be God. That would certainly put an end to Jewish sacrifices! I believe this is what Jesus means when he says that there will be yet another "abomination of desolation" in the last days. He says it is the one spoken of by the prophet Daniel. It is an abomination so great that neither the former Antiochus who sacrificed pigs on the Temple altar, or the Roman Titus, who raised up idols there, could fulfill it. The final abomination is a **man himself claiming to be the Lord God**.

Another word about "number seven". If Babylon is Rome, and the Pope is the head of Babylon, is it possible that the seventh king is the last Pope, a political master-mind who aggressively spreads religion by the sword in connection with other great religions such as Islam? And rather than killing him, will the antichrist, number eight, ask him merely to join his team? **Will number seven in fact become the false prophet?** We read of no murder. There are two men who rule the world at the end, beast and false prophet. Could they be number seven, and eight together?

**Number eight (17:11)**. He is a composite of all the evil men who have blasphemed God, grabbed authority, ruled from Babylon, and hated God's people. He will have direct infusion of Satanic power, claim to be God, sit in God's temple. He rises from the dead, reigns three and one half years with incredible world-wide power, and is then slain by Christ himself, and dumped in the lake of fire.

**The "ten kings" (17:12)** have been with us since Daniel's prophecy also. Sometimes they are "ten toes", sometimes "ten horns", but always they are the **final world government**. Most have theorized them to be a revived Roman Empire with ten nations, though some see Rome as the capital of a **world divided into ten districts**. In John's day, the entity itself (ten nations) did not exist, only the parent (Roman Empire). This will be a new thing, but somehow connected to and growing out of the old, as feet are connected to ankles, but are not ankles. Ruler *seven* will, I believe, be the first ruler of this domain, but then the short reign of antichrist will follow, as the ten (**17:13**) are either mesmerized or intimidated into turning the kingdom over to him.

Now the narrative moves ahead of the present considerations to that **tragic decision of antichrist**, fed by demon spirits who collect men from all over the world, to oppose Jesus upon His descent from Heaven. (**17:14**. 16:14, 19:19). Notice here John's persistent usage of the term "Lamb" when speaking of Jesus. (5:6-13, 6:1&16, 7:9-17, 12:11, 13:8, 14:1-4, 15:3, **17:14**, 19:7-9, 21:14-23, 22:1-3) Here he also mentions the church that is with Him for by this point in the story, namely the war against Jesus (19:14-19), all the people of God from all time will be with Him in the air. What a formidable army! The Lord of Lords with His redeemed and em-

powered saints! The angels! Oh how “I want to be in that number.”

The angel returns to a description of the “harlot” and her relationship to “the beast” (**17:15-16**). The woman is, for a long time, spiritual head of the planet, all its tongues and divisions. But at the end, as antichrist desires all men to worship him alone, all other religions are destroyed and re-programmed for a more direct channel to himself.

Next we see all of the Empire, totally under the grasp of Satan and his man, turning on Babylon, the former glory of the nations, and burning her (**17:16-17**). All of the next chapter (18) is a description of this tragedy. It is God filling the hearts of these evil men so that they desire to do His will. Pharaoh experienced such a “change of heart”. Part Nine will take us through a study of the fall and funeral of the “great city”, followed immediately by the return of Jesus.