

Theory #12

The Beasts, the Ten Horns, the Seven Heads, and Mystery Babylon

This is a complex subject for one chapter, but it deserves to be examined in a book that purports to deal with controversial prophecies. So we'll take a stab at it. These figures—the Beast, the False Prophet, the ten horns, the seven heads and mystery, Babylon the Great—comprise some of the major elements of God's revelation about the end times. They appear in the book of Daniel in the Old Testament and/or in the book of the Revelation in the New Testament. Expositors over the years have attempted to discern the specific meaning of each of these entities, and this chapter represents our own effort in that direction.

ISRAEL: GOD'S FOCUS

The Bible is almost entirely about Israel,¹ God's chosen people and land, so it should not surprise us that God centers His communication almost entirely around what happens to her. We do not get much information about other countries or cultures except as they impact Israel. We need to keep that in mind when we are researching prophetic scriptures, because if we don't, we can get far afield of God's true message. The nations that dominated Israel, and particularly Jerusalem after it became Jewish territory, then, figure most prominently in endtimes' revelation. With that caveat, let's look at the some of the major prophecies regarding this "apple of God's eye."

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S STATUE

In the book of Daniel we are told that the king of Babylon had a troubling dream. The dream depicted a great and magnificent statue with a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, and feet partly of iron and partly of common clay. Then a stone "cut out without hands"² struck the statue *on its feet* of iron and clay and crushed them. The iron, clay, bronze, silver and gold were all crushed together and blew away with the wind like chaff and "not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." (Daniel 2:35)

¹ Literal Israel and spiritual Israel. God chose a people and a land through which to bring His revelation to the world. He gave that people a distinct culture (body of laws, ceremonies, feast days, rituals) and religion, forbidding intermarriage with other cultures and worship of other gods, in order to preserve His message to mankind in all its purity and power. It was not Israel's strength or size or prowess or virtue that led to God's choice. It was God's sovereign decision, knowing that He could be magnified through this small and insignificant people.

² The stone is Christ and He was not the work of human hands or human will. (John 1:13)

The king was very disturbed by this dream and threatened to execute all of his wise men if they couldn't tell him both the dream and its interpretation. None of them were able and their lives hung in the balance. Daniel, one of the young men who had been captured in Judah in 605 BC and groomed for leadership in Babylonia, heard of this situation and asked the king if he might be given the opportunity to interpret the dream. The king agreed, so Daniel and his friends prayed and God answered. Both the dream and its interpretation were given to Daniel in a night vision and he was able to reveal to the king the answer to his question, saving the lives of all of the wise men of Babylon, including his own. "There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries," he told the king, "and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days."³ So this vision would reveal not just imminent events, but distant future events as well.

Here is the interpretation Daniel was given: Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold. His kingdom would be followed by another kingdom inferior to his (silver), and then by a third kingdom of bronze. Then there would be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron that would "break all these (previous kingdoms) in pieces. And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay....so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle....And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in (or with) the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.'" (Daniel 2:40-43)

This statue with its various parts represents, according to many eschatologists, the ancient successive kingdoms of:

- 1) Neo-Babylonia, the head of gold,⁴ which was not a divided kingdom. It had control over Judah and took many of her people captive in 605 AD⁵ for 70 years. (The ten northern tribes had already been taken captive by the Assyrians much earlier.) It also had control over much of

³ Daniel 2:28. It is clear that "the feet of iron and clay" represent the last earthly empire before the return of Christ in power and glory, because the "stone cut without hands" strikes the feet of this statue and it becomes a great mountain (kingdom) and fills the whole earth and endures forever. This is the kingdom of the returning Messiah.

⁴ Daniel himself tells us this. This is Neo-Babylonia, or Chaldea, ruled by Nebuchadnezzar II.

⁵ I've also heard the date 607 BC. The temple was destroyed in 587 BC.

present-day Iraq, all of Kuwait and Lebanon, all of present-day Israel/Palestine, a large part of Syria, and small parts of Turkey and Jordan.

- 2) Medo-Persia, which is represented by the chest and two arms of silver. It eventually defeated Babylonia and became the dominant power in the region. The two arms (Media and Persia) had control of Jerusalem at different times. This empire also controlled present-day Egypt, Israel, a small part of Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, Armenia, Iran and Afghanistan and at its height extended to Libya and Macedonia in the west, the Caucasus Mountains and Aral Sea in the north, the Persian Gulf in the south and the Beas River in the east.
- 3) The Alexandrian Greek (or Macedonian) Empire which was represented by the belly and thighs of bronze. It was the third major kingdom to dominate Israel (after the Jews settled there). Alexander the Great conquered the known world in the fourth century BC, defeating Medo-Persia and country after country in quick succession. But his conquest was short-lived due to his sudden death from unknown causes.⁶ After Alexander died at the age of 33, his empire was divided into four sub-kingdoms, only two of which (Syria and Egypt) impacted Jerusalem; thus the two thighs of bronze represented in the statue. This empire at its height extended over present-day Iran, Iraq, parts of India, Afghanistan, Armenia, Syria, Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Israel, Sinai and Egypt.
- 4) The Roman Empire, which was represented by the two legs of iron. Rome eventually divided into an eastern and a western empire, both of which had control of Israel at various times. The combined empire also encompassed at its height the territories of present-day Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, a small part of Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Armenia, as well as Spain, Portugal, France, England, part of Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Sicily, Austria, Yugoslavia, Albania, Greece, Crete, Cyprus, Malta, Bulgaria and part of Romania. This empire trampled down all the others in that it conquered most of the territory previously held by Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece. But it also went way beyond that.

⁶ There are various theories as to how he died (alcohol, sabotage), but none can be proven.

5) And a final kingdom that arises *out of* the fourth kingdom, represented by the feet of iron mixed with common clay. This final iron/clay kingdom is a divided kingdom, comprising two different *and fundamentally incompatible* ethnicities or nationalities or cultures or tribes or factions or federations, one strong and one weak. These two political entities will apparently make an alliance or pact to rule together over a common area or to share common governing documents, or to partner in world or regional government. This divided kingdom will be destroyed utterly at the Second Coming of Christ (who is the stone⁷ that crushed the feet and became a great mountain that filled the whole earth).⁸ Daniel says: “And in the days of those (final ten) kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.” (v.44)

MAN'S FINAL KINGDOM

We believe that the *iron* of the final iron/clay kingdom represents, in essence, a revived European or Roman Empire (as that was the entity that was previously symbolized by the iron in the statue), probably in the guise of the European Union (EU).⁹ The other entity (the clay) has not yet been fully revealed but is on the horizon. All we know for certain is that this final kingdom has ten toes, representing ten countries or political entities or rulers, or possibly ten royal families.¹⁰ Intermarriage among royals may be a factor, although the mingling “in (or “with”) the seed of men, but not adhering to one another” that Daniel mentions may simply indicate that they live somewhat inharmoniously amongst each other via immigration and that they are not, generally speaking, compatible.

If we had to speculate what this final kingdom is going to be, we would suggest that it is a league or shared-power arrangement between 1) the current incarnation of the Roman Empire (the EU) comprising 27 countries (the iron of Nebuchadnezzar's statue), and 2) certain primarily Islamic countries of the

⁷ Christ is called the “Rock” or the chief cornerstone.

⁸ Mountains often symbolize kings or kingdoms in the Scriptures.

⁹ The fourth kingdom (Roman Empire) is also the territory out of which the ten horns of the final kingdom arise.

¹⁰ There are still 10 royal families ruling in Europe who have intermarried extensively; or these ten toes may represent some other group of ten, such as ten governors or presidents or countries or regions. Or it may represent the fact that Muslims have mingled “in the seed of men” by moving into Europe in droves, but that they “do not adhere” to the Europeans in any way, shape or form. They have a different culture, ethnicity, religion, governmental structure, and political values. We will give our perspective on this shortly.

Middle East and North Africa, probably numbering ten, all of whom were originally part of the Roman Empire, but many of whom were also part of the Greek Empire, and a few of whom were also part of the Babylonian and Medo-Persian Empires. This latter group would constitute the clay apparently, probably because they are, by-and-large, Muslim nations, at odds with European culture and religion at their core¹¹ and are of lesser influence or strength in the world.

Suffice it to say, whatever kingdom the feet and toes represent, it will most certainly be a confederation that dominates or controls Jerusalem, as all the previous empires in this dream did. In every one of the previous empires, Israel was a vassal state, so it will be in this final empire also.

ANOTHER VISION: DANIEL'S BEASTS

Later Daniel had his own prophetic dream. This dream, reported in Daniel 7, features a series of beasts that “came up out of the sea.”¹² (If you are not familiar with this passage of Scripture, please read Daniel 7:1-28 in the Old Testament.) These beasts are believed by most eschatologists to represent the same four sequential Gentile empires as are depicted in Nebuchadnezzar's statue discussed earlier:

- 1) Babylon is depicted as a beast resembling a lion with the wings of an eagle;¹³
- 2) Medo-Persia is depicted as a bear raised up on one side with three ribs in its mouth;¹⁴
- 3) Greece is depicted as a leopard with four wings on its back and four heads;¹⁵ and finally,
- 4) Rome is depicted as a dreadful beast, terrifying and extremely strong, with large iron teeth and claws of bronze.

¹¹ At its core Europe is nominally Christian, but with a degraded culture, thus at odds with Islam on both counts (in that Islam prides itself on its scrupulous and merciless prosecution of particular forms of immorality). Not that the Roman Empire, represented by the iron, was originally Christian, but it became so during Constantine's reign (even if in a state-sponsored ecclesiastical form). Christianity and Islam are fundamentally incompatible, so this explains the iron and clay analogy. Why are they incompatible? Because in Islam, Allah emphatically has no son; in Christianity, Jesus is the incarnation of Yahweh, and is called God's Son.

¹² The “sea” is a figure for the Gentile nations.

¹³ Probably a reference to Nebuchadnezzar's seven years of being cursed in which he wandered around like a beast of the field and grew claws like an eagle, but then was returned to his sanity (his wings were plucked) and gave glory to the God of Daniel.

¹⁴ Persia was the stronger side of the Medo-Persian conquest, and the three ribs represent Lydia, Egypt and Babylon that Persia conquered.

¹⁵ Alexander the Great had four generals (the wings) who helped him conquer vast territory. After Alexander's death, his kingdom was divided between these four rather than being given to his offspring. These are also represented by the four heads, (two of whom took turns oppressing Israel) to depict their subsequent ruling authority.

This fourth beast is said to devour and crush and trample down the remainder (of the beasts) with its feet.¹⁶ It was different than all the beasts that were before it¹⁷ and it had ten horns.

This fourth beast is again present and accounted shortly before the return of Christ,¹⁸ but in a somewhat different form. It is no longer entirely “different than all the beasts that were before it,” at least in appearance, but in fact incorporates them into itself. It also has seven heads. We’ll call this iteration in Revelation “the fifth beast” for the sake of clarity, even though it is clear that the fourth beast of Daniel’s vision (Rome) is the political ground or empire from which the fifth beast arises and they are definitely equated in Scripture.¹⁹ (See Daniel 7:23-24 for support.) Keep in mind that there are often-times double fulfillments of prophetic scriptures. So, this fourth beast (and all the beasts) appear again, although in an altered arrangement, at the end of time. This reappearance is what we are calling “the fifth beast.”

THE FIFTH BEAST

So, in **Revelation** 13 and 17 we see a physical description of this fifth beast. Though it still has the ten horns coming out of its dreadful head, it now has the body of a leopard, feet of a bear, and a mouth like a lion. (Remember that the leopard represented Greece, the bear represented Medo-Persia; and the lion represented Babylon.) It also has seven heads, which are not mentioned in the first description of this beast in Daniel 7.

Now, who or what exactly is this fifth and final Beast in concrete terms? Can we describe it? Is it a person or an empire or both? We are told in Rev. 17:8 that this beast “was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder...when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.” This indicates that this entity, whatever it is, was not operational in John’s day but was formerly, and that it would come back again in the future. It further tells

¹⁶ Rome conquered far more territory than any of the three previous kingdoms, but part of that territory included the lands formerly ruled by Babylonia, Persia and Greece.

¹⁷ This seems to indicate that there was no political, social or religious connection to the other beast kingdoms (even though this fourth beast occupied much of the territory of the previous three beasts).

¹⁸ Rev. 13:2

¹⁹ In that Scripture never uses the term “fifth beast.” But it is clear that this fourth beast appears again in an altered form at the end of time.

The Book of **Revelation** was written by the apostle John toward the end of the first century AD. The book is replete with symbolism and has been reputed to be beyond comprehension by many. Some say that virtually all of the book of Revelation is figurative. But this is not true. The Bible generally lets us know if it is speaking poetically, or allegorically. And it will often give us the interpretation of the symbolic language if it is. As in other passages of the Revelation, the interpretations are given in Rev. 17 for “the seven heads,” which are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; the “many waters” are tongues and tribes and nations and peoples; “the ten horns” are ten kings; and “the woman” is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth. Other terms, such as fire, plagues, famine, intense heat, pestilence, mourning, the smoke of her burning, ships, merchants, etc., are not interpreted. Therefore they can be assumed, fairly safely, to be literal.

us that, when it comes back to life, the whole world will be astonished. Keep that in mind, because it's significant. There are a couple of likely explanations for this description, and they both appear to be true.

- 1) The fifth Beast represents the final earthly empire to dominate Jerusalem and in this case, possibly the world or at least the near world (that is, near to Israel). It appears to be a confederation of powers headed up by the European Union (as illustrated by the head of the fourth beast),²⁰ a formidable and ultimately indomitable political and economic force in the modern world. The description of its various body parts (body of leopard, mouth of lion, feet of bear) indicates that it will include portions of the territories of the old Greek Empire, a smaller part of the Medo-Persian Empire and a significant part or aspect of the Babylonian Empire. (Since the mouth of the beast represents Babylon, so perhaps the ruler of this final beast-empire will also come from or represent the area of the old Babylonian Empire). This fifth Beast, then, will apparently be some kind of demonically energized²¹ empire or system, with great power and authority, centered in the Middle East and greater Europe.
- 2) The “Beast” is also apparently a man,²² and is symbolized by the 11th horn of Daniel 7 (which we will discuss in more detail a little later). He is also described in Rev. 13:3 as one of the heads on this seven-headed final beast. This particular head is slain

²⁰ Because it has the same 10-horned head as the fourth beast of Daniel 7, which represented Rome.

²¹ Rev. 13:2b says “And the dragon (Satan) gave him his power and his throne and great authority.”

²² We know this because Scripture says that he will open his mouth in blasphemies against God, among other things. See Rev. 13:5-6.

and apparently comes back to life as an eighth head,²³ to the amazement of the world. (We'll discuss this more later also.) He rises to power after the ten kings (or horns) are already in place and is apparently of Middle Eastern heritage ("the Assyrian") according to Isaiah. It is not impossible that this personage that "had the fatal wound and was healed" will at some point be assassinated and experience a resurrection of sorts (in imitation of Christ), to the amazement of all.²⁴ If this is a correct interpretation of the reference to the fatal wound (i.e., if it refers to the Anti-Christ himself as well as his kingdom), this will apparently be Satan's own handiwork.²⁵

And though we do not think this is the primary meaning of the implied resurrection, it's also possible, in keeping with the prophetic Law of Double Fulfillment, that he will be the second of two official Anti-Christ, an early "type" and a later fuller fulfillment. The first incidence of this prophesied beast "who was *and is not*" is most likely the Syrian/Seleucid king, Antiochus Epiphanes, who defiled the Temple in Jerusalem and profaned the holy altar in the second century BC.²⁶ This was the first "abomination of desolation." The final Anti-Christ, the one "who will come," will also defile a rebuilt Temple and will probably be possessed by Satan²⁷ or another demonic prince, which is said to come up out of the Abyss. And since he will be defeated by Jesus at His

²³ See Rev. 17:11

²⁴ I have even gone so far, in moments of speculative overindulgence, as to entertain the idea that John F. Kennedy would reappear in the end days as the Beast who amazed the whole world by his resurrection. Given all the mystery and controversy surrounding his death, the rumors of a missing brain, altered autopsy photos, etc., might he be brought back by some cryogenic leap of technology or robotics? But should this flight of fancy occur, he would have to have converted to Islam or, more likely, sanction the reunion of Catholicism with Protestantism and Islam and ultimately Judaism and moved to the Middle East. "And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast." (Rev. 13:3) JFK was so beloved the world over, he is one of the few leaders whose reappearance would provoke worldwide amazement, reverence and awe. Especially if he returned before the 60s generation died out. Okay, don't throw out the whole book now. Ha! A more realistic option, of course, is that the resurrected head is a reborn Babylonian Empire or perhaps Assyrian Empire, which would also astound people

²⁵ Interestingly, Satan is also described as having seven heads and ten horns, with seven crowns on his heads, but he is described as a red dragon rather than a scarlet beast. In Rev. 13, verses 2 and 4, both the dragon and the beast are mentioned and they are obviously separate entities, but the beast is given his power and position and authority *by* the dragon (the god of this world). It is said that the world worships the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast. Whenever we "come under" the rule of one who is energized by Satan, we actually "come under" Satan's authority as well.

²⁶ Hanukkah celebrates the cleansing of the Temple after this debacle.

²⁷ Because the dragon gives his power and authority to the Beast.

Second Coming at the battle of Armageddon and thrown into the lake of fire, “he goes to destruction.” Thus it was true that, in John’s day, the beast “*is not*” (as Antiochus had long since expired), but it’s also true that he “will come” again in the form of this final Anti-Christ. In a sense, this is Satan’s own “Second Coming.” It may also represent an empire that was and “is not” in John’s day, such as Assyria or Babylon, but that would come again.

So, in short, we think the final or fifth “Beast” refers both to the last world Empire (that tramples down all the others) and to a ruler of that Empire who ultimately exalts himself to the level of messiah and is promoted by a contemporaneous false prophet. He himself is illustrated by the eighth head of Rev. 17 and the 11th horn of Daniel 7 and is most likely a Muslim, energized by a demonic entity of great power, probably Satan or Gog.²⁸

SPECULATION AS TO THE ACTUAL IDENTITY OF THE BEAST

The actual identity of this final Beast has been the subject of much speculation throughout history. Modern prophecy watchers have suggested such individuals as Henry Kissinger, Mikhail Gorbachev (Soviet Union), Javier Solana (Spain), the Pope (any), George W. Bush, Nicolas Sarkozy (France), Juan Carlos (Spain), Prince Charles (England), Bill Clinton, John F. Kennedy, and others. Many base these speculations on Rev. 13:18 which states: “*Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.*” Many names have been proposed because they add up to this mystical number, using Hebrew or Greek number systems. We may mock those who engage in such efforts, but this verse, frankly, indicates both that we should actually *try* to figure out the identity of this person, and that his name, when converted to numeric value, will equal 666 (although there could be another explanation for this enigmatic statement).

²⁸ The identity of Gog is uncertain.

One possible candidate being watched for this role of the Beast Anti-Christ by prophecy buffs is Prince El Hassan bin Talal,²⁹ brother of the late King Hussein of Jordan, a direct descendant (42nd generation) of Mohammed through Mohammed's daughter Fatima and son-in-law Ali and a member of the Hashemite dynasty, thus a literal "prince" as Gabriel describes the Anti-Christ in Daniel 9:26. This pedigree enables him to qualify for the role of Caliph for both major branches of Islam (Sunni and Shi'ite).³⁰ He is also a recent president (since 1999) of the Club of Rome (a globalist think-tank) among other outstanding credits, including international board member of the Council on Foreign Relations and member of the Trilateral Commission, as well as recipient of the UN Environmental Programme award, "2007 UN Champion of the Earth." Countless other credits grace his bio, including many honorary doctorates, degrees and awards from institutions throughout the world. He has started numerous foundations, some focused on inter-faith dialogue and cooperation. He is engaged in active dialogue with the Pope on the issue of Muslim-Christian-Jewish relations, as is his nephew, King Abdullah II of Jordan. They were responsible for the recent outreach by 138 Muslim clerics, intellectuals and leaders to the Christian Community. You can read about this overture at www.acommonword.com³¹ as well as find links there to the Catholic/Christian and Jewish responses. Though a Jordanian by birth, he is really a world citizen, serving on the boards of even American colleges. Highly educated, an author, environmentalist, philanthropist, diplomat, patron, international leader and negotiator, he qualifies in every respect for such a lofty role.³² And as an aside, the Koran describes the Muslim messiah as having a broad forehead and a prominent nose, which El Hassan has. You can see his photo and read his bio on his website at www.elhassan.org. It also says that he will appear at a time of worldwide chaos and destruction. This is why President Ahmadinejad of Iran feels it is his mission to foment such a situation, in order to bring on Satan's version of the world's savior.

²⁹ He was slated to be King Hussein's successor until just before his death when the King conferred that honor on his eldest son, leaving El Hassan without a kingdom. Hussein told him that he knew he would understand, that he had a much bigger role to play on the world stage, and that one day, "the world would be his kingdom."

³⁰ Sunni Muslims follow Caliphs descended from four different lines of descent from Mohammed including his son-in-law Ali. Shi'ites will only follow Caliphs descended from Mohammed's son-in-law Ali.

³¹ The goal of this document is to bring Catholics, Christians and Muslims to the table to find common ground, and to avert religious conflict, even possibly war, in Europe over this issue and to prevent a re-Christianizing of Europe.

³² And since Scripture tells us that the Anti-Christ will not be revealed until "the restrainer" is taken out of the way, it is not curious that he is so relatively unknown. One day he will burst upon the scene in a time of crisis, perhaps on the heels of the worldwide Rapture of the Church. Some have also suggested his nephew, King Abdullah II of Jordan for this role of Anti-Christ.

A question: Have you ever found it curious that the Bible gives us the following little factoid?

“Therefore all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon until Christ fourteen generations.” (Matthew 1:17)

What is that all about? Why is it divvied up like this? And of what use is this information really? Why is it relevant to Jesus’ genealogy?

Good question. Until you note that $14 + 14 + 14 = 42$. Jesus was the 42nd generation from Abraham according to God’s calculations and Abraham is Israel’s patriarch. El Hassan is the 42nd generation from Mohammed and Mohammed is Islam’s patriarch. Hmmm. Very interesting. Does this seem too esoteric to be credible? Again, I think it’s a divine hint as to the identity of the Anti-Christ. That’s all. But it’s a good one.

But why the double reference to Babylon?

Perhaps El Hassan will also be a prime candidate for King of Iraq (which is former Hashemite territory after all) once the efforts at Middle Eastern democracy are seen to be what they are: futile; which would make him a redux of the ancient King of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold). Or perhaps Iraq will be divided, with a new Kurdistan in the north and a Sunni/Shi’ite south, with El Hassan appointed or installed as king or de facto president by the UN, or by a consortium of Arab leaders with European, U.S. and perhaps papal sanction. Hassan qualifies religiously to lead both Sunnis and Shi’ites (as he meets requirements of both sects for successor caliphs) and consequently may be able to forge a truce between them as they unite under his headship as king of a resurrected Babylonian Empire. This would qualify the new Babylon, then, as the eighth head of the Beast: a kingdom that existed before, was defeated in the distant past and then came back to life with the Anti-Christ as its king. This would certainly astound the world, would it not, to see the kingdom of Babylon revived? Scripture says, “And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,³³ when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.” (Rev. 17:8b) Since only those whose

³³ Those are surprised by this development are primarily unbelievers who are not reading their Bibles. Their names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life because they are not saved.

names are not written in the Lamb's book of life are astounded, it may be that the Church has already been raptured when this development occurs. In fact, the eighth head on the beast does not occur until the Anti-Christ is revealed, or so it appears from Rev. 17:11. We will discuss this potential development again later.

Another interesting thought with regard to El Hassan: Ha Shem in Hebrew means literally "the name." It is the term Messianic Jews use for Jesus. The Ha-shem-ite dynasty will ultimately yield a pretender to "the Name that is above every name," (i.e., the false Messiah) inhabited by the greatest pretender, Satan himself.

And though we mentioned this earlier, it bears repeating. The Bible states that: "...the people of the *prince* who is to come will destroy the city (Jerusalem) and the sanctuary (the Temple)." This prophecy, in Daniel 9:27, was first fulfilled in 70 AD when Titus and the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem and took the Temple apart stone by stone. Because Titus was a Roman (a general and later Caesar), it has long been thought that the "prince" or Anti-Christ "who is to come" had to be Roman or at least a European from Europe proper. But an interesting tidbit from history dispels this notion. Apparently the Romans used conscripts to fight most of their battles, and in this case, the conscripts or mercenaries happen to have been Syrian. So if the Anti-Christ is "the Assyrian" as the Bible says, once again Scripture proves itself inviolable. The "people of the prince who is to come" were actually Syrians. (The Assyrian Empire occupied much of the same territory as the Babylonian Empire.)

THE FALSE PROPHET

Here is what the Bible says about the False Prophet: "And I saw another beast coming up out the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first Beast (Anti-Christ) in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first Beast, whose fatal wound was healed. And he (still speaking of the False Prophet) performs great signs, so that he (False Prophet) even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform by the authority of the Beast (Anti-Christ), telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the Beast

(Anti-Christ) who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And there was given to him (the False Prophet) to give breath to the image of the Beast (Anti-Christ), that the image of the Beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the Beast to be killed. And he (the False Prophet) causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, the name of the Beast (Anti-Christ) or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the Beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six.” (Rev. 13:11-18)

From this passage it sounds like the False Prophet is the more active and visible of the two beasts and the one who really is directing the world to respond in worship to the first Beast. He is apparently a spiritual leader of some type. The Anti-Christ is, initially, more of a political figure than religious, but later he becomes so enamored with his own prowess and press that he begins to fancy himself a god. At some point he begins boasting, and blaspheming the true God in favor of an unknown god (unknown in John’s day), whom he eventually claims to be.

Who might fill the role of this False Prophet? Let’s examine a few possibilities.

The Pope

Clearly Pope Benedict is one to watch for this end-time role of False Prophet. The fact that he is not Jewish, however, is a strong deterrent to this hypothesis, given the typology of Jason, the illegitimate Jewish high priest during the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Plus it is difficult to imagine that “the vicar of Christ” on earth would be willing to promote another political leader over himself as Messiah. But it is clearly the first Beast who is worshipped, not the False Prophet. And it is the False Prophet who promotes this worship.

Could the Pope be the Anti-Christ? After all, if he already sees himself (as all popes do) as the authoritative representative of Christ on earth, is it that much of a leap to claim that he actually *is* the Christ? It would seem much easier for the Pope than for anyone else. Past popes have floated the idea of

an embassy or seat in Jerusalem and the Pope is called the Prince of Rome,³⁴ so perhaps it's not entirely impossible. But the current Pope is German, not Assyrian. Yet there are those who say that the Germans are actually the ancient warlike Assyrians who migrated north to escape the advancing Babylonian armies. There may be some merit to this theory.

And some German leaders are indeed calling for a "fully federal Europe." This shocked France's interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, to declare: "We are in the presence of a German tendency to imagine for Europe a federal structure based on its own model. At the bottom of this, Germany is still dreaming of the German Holy Roman Empire." If the resurrected eighth head were to be the *Holy Roman Empire* and the Pope were again installed as its titular head with ten member countries, one could speculate that this might be possible. But remember, John tells us that the Beast "was" prior to John's day, but "was not" in John's day. The Holy Roman Empire did not exist before John's day, nor did the Catholic Church. This is one major strike against this theory. And unless the Pope becomes Islamic, or conjoins Roman Catholicism with Islam, it would not fit the prophecy I received that "the Anti-Christ will be a Muslim." And if he *became* Muslim or some syncretistic form of Christian Muslim, whom would he destroy as "mystery, Babylon the Great"? Not Babylon if he's linked arms with Islam. Not Israel, because she has to survive to the battle of Armageddon. Not Europe because that would be the seat of his political power and the head of the Beast. So that leaves basically the U.S., not such a likely recipient of the Pope's ire unless the U.S. opposes him.

Oddly enough, during the Reformation, Martin Luther noted that "Benediktos" added up to 666 in Greek gematria³⁵ and thought it might refer to a future Pope named Benedict. (Luther made many comments and propounded many theories against the papacy in the footnotes to his translation of the book of Revelation.) Pope Benedict XVI, the current Pope, has made no secret of his desire to reunite Christendom and to restore Europe to its Christian roots, a tall order and one that, if successful, could lead to immense power for this "vicar of Christ." The Papacy considers itself the direct descendant of the apostle Peter and thus recipient of the "keys to the kingdom of heaven" and thus the supreme

³⁴ Daniel 9:26 "The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary."

³⁵ Gematria is the word for the Hebrew method of assigning numbers to letters. The book of Revelation was written in Greek.

representative of Christ and the only true, legal, spiritual authority on earth.³⁶ Thus, in times of political ascendancy, the popes were wont to enforce their religious edicts on the rest of Christendom (and at times Jews) without mercy, requiring rigid adherence to papal doctrine on pain of death. In effect, this equates to the denial of the right to individual conscience in matters of faith, just as Islam does.³⁷

Interestingly as we've said before, Islam has its own messianic prophecies. If Satan is the author of false religion, but knows the Scriptures enough to know that there will be a future Messiah, he would incorporate that scenario into any religion of which he were the inventor. Thus a Muslim messiah is on the horizon. Shall we have two competing messiahs then? One Roman Catholic and one Muslim. Or will these two religions find a way to lock arms and embrace one another before the false messiah must make his appearance? If the Pope is to be the False Prophet, his role would have to be a substantial one to satisfy his own sense of mission and preeminence, and we see the description of the False Prophet fills the bill nicely. He is a key player in the endtimes drama. So perhaps he will settle for that though we see some conflict inherent in this scenario.

On the other hand, it seems *more* likely to us that a Muslim Anti-Christ would see the Pope as an intrusive usurper/competitor and would want to eliminate him. Bombing the Vatican and destroying all her artifacts, edifices, libraries, hierarchical and organizational structures and killing many of her top dignitaries would have such a devastating effect on the Catholic power structure as to all but eliminate it as an operational force in the world, opening the way for Islam to assert itself without anyone to stand in its way (assuming the true Christians were already raptured). I can see the Anti-Christ easily convincing the other ten (mostly Islamic) kings to go along with this, and having the means to do so since the Vatican is not far from the reach of Middle Eastern or North African rockets, and doing it without consulting the rest of the world. Then, if Israel continues on her path of Arab appeasement, I can see the Beast linking arms with a Jewish high priest to take control of Jerusalem and make it his seat of power.

³⁶ This is a false claim as Jesus did not establish an exalted ecclesiastical hierarchy for His Church. See Matt. 23:1-12, especially v.9. And though Paul appointed elders and overseers, they were not titular positions but servant roles. The "keys to the kingdom" were the inherited authority that all true believers share over the kingdom of darkness, but Peter did play a key role in opening the Gentile world to the faith.

³⁷ True Christianity does not impose its beliefs on others. It invites others to receive the good news of salvation and is an entirely voluntary company of believers.

Could the Vatican, then be “mystery, Babylon the Great” that Scripture says will ride the Beast (and later be destroyed) and could the Pope be perceived, in time, as a competitor for the role of messiah?

Perhaps. Supposedly there is artwork in the Vatican picturing the woman riding the beast with the golden cup in her hand. Interesting. For me, this is a better interpretation of all of the prophetic material in Daniel and Revelation.

The Jewish High Priest

Another option for the False Prophet, as we discussed in Theory #9, is a future Jewish high priest. Of course this cannot come about until the Temple is rebuilt, or is in process, but we think this is a better fit for the role of False Prophet. 1) The typology in Scripture points to this. A previous high priest, one who purchased his office, colluded with a previous type of the Anti-Christ, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, against his own religion. 2) Islam and Judaism are the only two monotheistic faiths that deny the existence of a divine incarnate Son of God, and thus might conclude that they worship the same God. This commonality might cause them to see themselves as repositories of the truth over and against Catholicism and Christianity (Trinitarians) and lead to a locking of spiritual arms. True Christians are not going to deny the divinity of Christ, although that *is* happening in liberal circles in the Church today. Immediately after the Rapture, those with strict adherence to the divinity of Christ will no longer be present.³⁸ So any serious hindrance to the development of a world religion will be gone.

THE TEN TOES/HORNS

As we said earlier, the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s statue and the ten horns that sprout from the head of the fourth beast of Daniel 7 both appear to represent ten political leaders (rather than actual kings,³⁹ despite their crowns) because Scripture tells us they have not yet received a kingdom. The fact that they appear on the head of the fourth beast of Daniel 7 (and are still there when the fifth Beast appears) tells us that they come to power before the Rapture.⁴⁰ So we can be looking for this development in the world.

³⁸ Although during the Tribulation, many will come to this belief.

³⁹ Rev. 17 tells us that they have not yet received a kingdom.

⁴⁰ We have to ask ourselves why the ten horns appear on the fourth beast, which represented Rome, if they are only applicable to the end times. Our conclusion is that this is God’s way of telling us that they will be present before the final Beast arises. Perhaps only shortly before the Rapture, but that we will see them.

Who are these ten horns? Many theories have gone out over the centuries to try to identify them. But as has been well said, prophecy is written for those who will see its fulfillment, so most of these speculations have inevitably been in error.

Some of the more contemporary proposals include:

1. They are ten elite member-nations of the EU;⁴¹
2. They are ten permanent members of the UN Security Council;
3. They are ten super-regions comprising all the countries of the world;
4. They comprise the ten royal families still ruling in Europe.

Let's look at these four options.

1) **Ten elite member-nations of the EU:** There are currently 27 member-states of the European Union and more are being considered. This used to be thought the likely source of the ten kings back when the EU was just getting going, but no more, unless a new ruling elite is eventually formed out of the whole, comprising ten states. This is unlikely in today's egalitarian society.

2) **Ten permanent members of the UN Security Council:** There are currently 15 members of the UN Security Council. Five are permanent. Ten are on a rotating scheme. Unless the five permanent members become ten, this is also an unlikely source for the ten kings. But it is conceivable that this could happen. It would be an easy leap to see a ten-member Security Council "giving their power and authority to the Beast" by voting in agreement with him to destroy Mystery Babylon. ⁴² These ten kings have not yet received a kingdom personally, but they *represent* ten countries or political entities. But this idea is not even being considered (to our knowledge) at this time.

⁴¹ Originally it was believed that there would only be 10 nations in the EU, but those numbers quickly swelled to 15, and now 27.

⁴² Thus "she" cannot be one of the ten kings. So if the U.S. is Mystery Babylon, we would have to either be kicked off the Security Council or lose our veto power. Or both. If the Vatican is Mystery Babylon, no problem.

3) **Ten super-regions comprising all the countries of the world:** Some have suggested that the ten toes and horns indicate that the world will be divided into ten super-regions and that global government will be conducted on the basis of these ten kingdoms. One objection to this theory is that many of the world's countries had no part in the original Beast they are supposed to come out of (i.e., Rome),⁴³ and two, it might be more difficult than imagined to get particular countries to work together, surrendering their unique national interests and sovereignty to those of a regional government. Especially those with historic conflicts. Without a global crisis, this is highly unlikely, but a global crisis is, perhaps, *quite* likely, so...time will tell. It is not inconceivable that, even if these supra-national regions do not constitute the ten horns of prophecy, they might arise anyway more or less naturally as momentum toward global government increases. The incentive to band together with other like-minded or mutually dependent neighbors in an unstable world grows as globalism advances. Other writers have suggested various arrangements or groupings, such as: 1) Canada (probably including Greenland), United States, Mexico; 2) Central and South America; 3) Eastern and Western Europe, British Isles, Iceland; 4) Sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa, Madagascar; 5) Middle East and North Africa; 6) Scandinavia, Latvia, Russia, Ukraine, Siberia, the Caucasus; 7) Southeast Asia, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines; 8) India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar; 9) China, Mongolia, Bhutan, Burma, Korea, Japan, Taiwan; 10) Australia, New Zealand, South Pacific Islands, New Guinea. Any number of other scenarios might be more workable. Nonetheless, this scenario, though possible, does not seem to fit with the description of the iron/clay kingdom. Which groupings would constitute the clay? And which the iron? There is no biblical rationale for how to assign these values to countries that have not figured into biblical prophecy. It is more likely, in our opinion, that the concept of ten supra-national regions is an invention of man (Club of Rome, etc.) rather than God's plan and thus may never come to fruition. God has His own timetable and His own plan for these end days and man may not have any part to play other than as God's unwitting instrument.

4) **Ten royal families still ruling in Europe:** Interestingly, there *are* currently ten countries in Europe over which royal families still rule. These are: Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Sweden. However, it is hard to conceive of these particular ten countries as having enough geopolitical influence or clout to merit this kind of role in today's

⁴³ Daniel 7 tells us that the ten horns come out of the head of the fourth empire, Rome.

world, especially over countries like Germany. (But perhaps we don't comprehend the power of royalty today.) But there is another reason to doubt this option. Scripture says that these kings "have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast." (Rev. 17:12-13) So that seems to eliminate these ten royal families who *are* actually still ruling in Europe, since they have already "received a kingdom."

ANOTHER POSSIBILITY: THE MEDITERRANEAN UNION

Interestingly enough, the president of France and last EU president, Nicolas Sarkozy, recently floated an idea that has the potential to upstage US peace negotiation efforts between Israel, the PLO and Arab nations. The proposal, called the Mediterranean Union (MU) or the Union of the Mediterranean, links the countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region with Europe proper without actually bringing them into the EU. This league basically includes the remaining territory of the old Roman Empire that lies outside of the EU (or the majority of it): Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Syria and Turkey (Libya has opted out of this alliance⁴⁴). Some of these nations were also part of the Greek, Medo-Persian and/or Babylonian Empires, as required by the fifth Beast illustration.

This list just happens to constitute ten countries,⁴⁵ all but one of whom are Muslim-dominated (clay).

These countries met together in July of 2008, along with current members of the EU, to iron out differences and finalize plans for this union. This gets around the sticky issue of what to do with Turkey, which has applied for membership in the EU but whose Islamic orientation makes it a risky addition to the

⁴⁴ And interestingly, Libya is one of the players in the Ezekiel 38 war against Israel, but none of these other countries are mentioned.

⁴⁵ These horns must be in place before the "little horn," the Anti-Christ, shows up on the scene according to Daniel 7:8. If this list of 10 nations stands, then we would expect that the three horns that the Anti-Christ plucks up might include Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Lebanon, merging them into Jordan (as he makes his headquarters in Jerusalem); or possibly Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority. The ten horns or kings eventually agree together with the Anti-Christ to destroy Babylon the Great, potentially the USA, what they call the Great Satan. (Hard to imagine Israel agreeing to such a pact at this juncture, but perhaps majority rules or perhaps Israel is taken over or replaced with another Muslim nation.) Note that the ten horns were originally on Daniel's fourth beast that represented the Roman Empire, but clearly refer to its second appearance. Interestingly, various members of the proposed MU states *were* part of the Greek, Roman, Babylonian and Persian Empires, though they do not represent the entirety of their territories. The beast that is most fully represented, besides Rome, is the leopard, the emblem of Greece, and more of these ten nations were part of the Greek Empire than were of the Babylonian or Persian Empires, so it is fitting that the largest part of the animal should represent Greece and Rome, and only small parts (mouth and feet) represent Babylon and Medo-Persia.

traditionally Christian democratic countries of the European federation. Could this MU be the incarnation of the ten toes of Daniel 2 as well as the ten horns of Daniel 7?

Though it is likely that there will be much wrangling over the governing terms, final membership and funding of this union, it is interesting to speculate what may be the final outcome. Clearly this proposal fills the prophetic bill nicely. The ten kings (horns) or leaders who would represent these ten countries or kingdoms of the Mediterranean region would indeed be rising from the ground of the old Roman Empire at the behest of the then-current President of the EU.⁴⁶ Several years may pass before this union becomes stable and operational, but it does appear that there will be a rotating presidency as there is in the EU. Or perhaps a co-presidency. Right now the provisional president is Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. We expect that he will be succeeded by a more suitable candidate for world domination.⁴⁷ That office may constitute the 11th horn, or the “little horn” of Daniel 7:8, our anticipated final Beast Anti-Christ.

A few different scenarios along these lines, then, can be anticipated:

- 1) If Damascus is destroyed at some point as Scripture (Isaiah 17) indicates, perhaps what is left of this Hezbollah terrorist haven (in Syria) will be subsumed into a new Iraqi/Babylonian kingdom, bringing it more in line with its original geographic extent. This might be one way to tame the radical elements within these two wayward states, giving this region some hope for legitimacy. In that case, perhaps El Hassan will be chosen to lead the newly amalgamated state, in which case he would become the de facto emperor of a revived Babylonian Empire. If this conjoined country were, then, permitted to join the MU in place of a vanquished Syria, it would qualify as one of the 10 horns. And if El Hassan were appointed President of this MU federation, it would also qualify him personally as the 11th horn, which has “eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts” (clearly representing a man, not a country).
- 2) Once the new Babylonian Kingdom was duly constituted and added to the MU with Hassan as MU president, he could decide to also pull into his kingdom the countries of Lebanon,

⁴⁶ Again, God is a stickler for legalities. Note that He uses the current head of the EU (Roman Empire) to promote this idea to the rest of the region rather than using some less legitimate upstart. Since it is God who sets up kings and takes them down, it is fitting that He would honor the duly constituted authorities of His own making. And He does.

⁴⁷ In our opinion, El Hassan bin Talal will be given some kind of oversight function, possibly initially as president of the MU representing Jordan.

Israel and Palestinian Authority, to further approximate the original Babylonian Empire, thus plucking up three horns as Scripture prophesies he will do. After all, he apparently makes his throne in Jerusalem at the mid-Trib.

- 3) Or Hassan could initially be appointed as a representative to the MU from Jordan, and later elected as MU president, qualifying him as the 11th horn. King Abdullah II, his nephew, would surely see him as the most suitable candidate for this important role. Later he could make conquest of Iraq, Syria, Israel, Lebanon and Palestine, though this does not comport so well with the prophesied three-horns pickup scheme. Perhaps Israel will be taken by conquest later. Interestingly, the Bible tells us that the Anti-Christ will spare Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon from his assaults. Would these latter regions perhaps constitute his royal relatives and his own country? We know Ammon is Jordan (note its capital city, Amman), and Edom and Moab are both situated on the east side of the Jordan River, so in Jordanian territory also. This is another argument for the identity of the Anti-Christ as El Hassan. But since he is also referred to as “the Assyrian,” one would expect that his territory would also include Syria and probably Iraq.⁴⁸

These are all reasonable scenarios. Time will tell how it all plays out.

Some suggest that King Abdullah II of Jordan will be the Anti-Christ based on several factors, one of which includes his recent overtures toward Iraq, agreeing to reopen the Jordanian embassy in that war-torn country and to stand beside them in their quest for peace. Should *he* become the next president of the MU, it is not a far stretch to imagine him exerting his influence to reclaim the formerly Hashemite territory of Iraq and extending his Jordanian kingdom into Babylonia, then subsequently making conquest of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine for, initially perhaps, ostensibly peaceful reasons. It would seem a simple matter to persuade the world to go along with the argument that Jordan is a much better friend of the west and a much more stable country, thus eminently qualified to tame the radical ambitions of the ruling elite in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq. What could appeal more to the world than to have those troublesome nations subdued by one of their own, without the west having to lift a finger? And who better

⁴⁸ Unless it's true that the ancient Assyrians moved north into Allemania (later Germany) and thus are no longer represented by those living in their original homeland.

but a moderate half-Arab half-British monarch with a record for reasonable relations with his foes? He is also ambitious, younger than his uncle (El Hassan), deeply involved in international politics (especially in the Middle East), and a legitimate leader in his own right. But Abdullah is a 43rd generation descendant from Mohammed, not 42nd, so that, in our opinion, is a strike against him. In addition, King Hussein, Abdullah's father, appointed him Crown Prince on his deathbed for the express purpose of freeing up his uncle, El Hassan (*formerly* the Crown Prince), for greater things, politically speaking. And the Scripture is very specific: the Anti-Christ is described as the "prince" who is to come, not a "king." Time will tell how this plays out, but we are on the edge of our seats.

What we do know at this point is that the little horn (Anti-Christ) will pluck up three of the ten horns some time after he comes to power, probably after the middle of the Tribulation.⁴⁹ It appears from Scripture that it is at the mid-point of the Trib that the Anti-Christ becomes the vicious adversary of Jews and Christians and begins to assert his hatred of them. So it is probably after the mid-point that he becomes aggressive toward the ten horns as well and incorporates three of the ten kingdoms into his own. But prior to the plucking up of the three horns by the Anti-Christ, the ten kings will agree with him to destroy Mystery Babylon, this harlot "woman"⁵⁰ who has been riding their back like an unwelcome boarder. They will finally tire of her sufficiently, her demands, her control, her manipulation, and they will decide that the only way to be free of her is to destroy her once and for all. This they will do, together.⁵¹

THE SEVEN HEADS

As we said, the fifth and final Beast described in Rev. 13 has ten horns just like the fourth beast in Daniel 7, but it also has seven heads *not* mentioned in Daniel's description, "which are seven kings." I had to ask God a question today about the seven heads. Something had been bothering me for awhile. Why are we told that this fifth Beast has seven heads, but the fourth beast, described in Daniel 7, apparently did not, and yet Daniel's fourth beast clearly figures in last-days events as out of its head arise the ten horns of

⁴⁹ Since this appears to be when the Anti-Christ takes his throne in Jerusalem and also when he begins to persecute the Jews and Christians who won't take the mark.

⁵⁰ Rev. 17:1-7, 9, 18: If the "harlot woman," called "a mystery, Babylon the Great," is the Vatican, it is conceivable that Israel could concur on her destruction. If she is the U.S. however, this becomes more difficult to believe (that Israel as part of the MU would agree to the U.S.' destruction) and would lead one to think that Israel must not end up as one of the ten horns, but that she will be rejected by the remaining nine Muslim countries and replaced with another, such as a revived Babylon comprising all or part of Iraq, which was part of the eastern Roman Empire.

⁵¹ Rev. 17 and 18

Rev. 13?⁵² Why is that information about the seven heads left out of the earlier description but included in the later one? I asked God for wisdom on this and this is what I believe He showed me:

God wants to give us a clue regarding the ten horns. Since the seven heads are not mentioned in Daniel 7, we can safely assume that the ten horns that he *does* mention arise directly from the single head of the fourth beast, the Roman Empire, politically and geographically, rather than from one or more of the seven heads in the later image in Revelation. Though some artists picture the ten horns as protruding from the beast's back and body, Daniel 7 clearly tells us that the horns are on its head: "Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, *which was different from all the others*, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet, and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance than its associates."⁵³ This tells us that the horns are not on the body nor on any of the seven heads (since the seven heads are not mentioned), thus they are not on the body of the fifth Beast either. They are still on the main head.

If the seven heads *had* been reported in Daniel, we might have been confused as to which head the horns sprouted from, and thus not be able to discern when the ten kings were in place. Since we are assured that they arise from the *head* of the fourth beast (Rome), we know that the revived Roman Empire (the EU) will figure prominently in endtimes' prophecy and that the ten horns or rulers will be authorized by the EU. And this is exactly what we see happening. Again, God is a stickler for legalities. Note that He used the then-current president of the EU (France's president Nicolas Sarkozy) to promote this idea of an MU to the rest of the region rather than using some illegitimate upstart. Since it is God who sets up kings and takes them down, it is fitting that He would honor the duly constituted authorities of His own making. And He does. Sarkozy

⁵² How do we know that these ten horns appear at the end of time? Because the little horn (Anti-Christ) comes up among the ten horns of the fourth beast. And Daniel tells us that "I kept looking, and that horn (the 11th one) was waging war with the saints and overpowering them *until the Ancient of Days came*, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom." (Dan. 7:21-22)

⁵³ Dan. 7:19-20

not only floated this idea of the MU but spearheaded its implementation and, by his doing so, we can say that these 10 horns sprout officially from the head of the revived Roman Empire.

SO WHAT ARE THE SEVEN HEADS?

The seven heads, in our opinion, represent seven successive empires (mountains), each of whose territories included Jerusalem. Five of those empires were already in the past when the book of Revelations was written (circa 90-95 AD) because the angel tells us “five have fallen”; one was currently in power (Rome), and one had not yet come to power.⁵⁴ One of the seven heads or kingdoms is described as having been “smitten to death,” but comes back to life in the end days to the amazement of the world. This second appearance, or “resurrection” of one of the empires constitutes an eighth head on the Beast. Listen: “The beast which was and is not (whose fatal wound was healed⁵⁵), is himself also an eighth (head), and is *of the seven*,” indicating common territories and/or characteristics with one or more of the previous seven kingdoms. If the Beast (who is also the eighth head) “was not” in John’s day, but used to “be” *before* John’s day, then the eighth head cannot be Rome (because Rome was *in* power in John’s day) and cannot be the Vatican because the Vatican didn’t exist before John’s day. It must be one of the previous empires: the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek (Alexandrian), Syrian (Seleucid) or Egyptian (Ptolemaic) kingdom⁵⁶ or a combination of these that is resurrected, because these are the beasts that were already past at the time John wrote this prophetic book and who had jurisdiction over Jerusalem when it was in Jewish hands.

We can speculate that these seven heads sprout from the body rather than the head of the fifth beast (which already bears the ten horns), implying that these seven heads were actual kingdoms that existed in the same region as the old Greek, Medo-Persian, Babylonian and/or Roman Empires out of which they arise. This rules out any involvement of nations such as the United States, China, Japan, etc., in these beasts, though they may figure in prophecy peripherally in other ways.

⁵⁴ Rev. 17:10: “Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.”

⁵⁵ Rev.13:3

⁵⁶ Some assert that we should start counting these empires with Assyria, since it predates Babylon. But Assyria only laid siege to Jerusalem. It did not actually capture it. The heads are those kingdoms that took possession of God’s city.

Again, the Bible describes these kings or kingdoms this way: “Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven, and he goes to destruction.”⁵⁷ (I know, it’s confusing to say the least.) Those eight kings/kingdoms, we believe, are as follows:

Five that have fallen:

- 1) Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar),⁵⁸
 - 2) Medo-Persia (Darius/Cyrus);
 - 3) Greece⁵⁹ (Alexander the Great);
 - 4) Egypt (Ptolemy);
 - 5) Syria (Seleucus);
- \ divisions of Alexander’s Empire
/ that took turns oppressing Judah;

One that “is” (during John’s day):

- 6) Rome;

One that is “not yet come”:

- 7) The Islamic Empire.^{60 61}

⁵⁷ Rev. 17:10

⁵⁸ Someone might ask, why didn’t God start with Egypt or Assyria in Nebuchadnezzar’s statue or Daniel’s Beast vision? They both predated Nebuchadnezzar II’s Babylon as empires. But we need to keep in mind that this is all about Israel. Or more precisely, Judah. All of these former empires listed above oppressed Judah *after* it was in Jewish hands and that is why, we believe, God starts with Babylon in these prophecies. Though kingdoms that predated the Neo-Babylonian Kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar II may have held this Canaanite territory before he did, Israel was not established there yet and so these conquests were not prophetically significant. Kingdoms that did not dominate Jerusalem are not included.

⁵⁹ Greece is represented by the belly and thighs of bronze (in Nebuchadnezzar’s statue). One might speculate that the belly represents the kingdom under Alexander and the two thighs represent the two strongest of the four divisions that arose from the Greek Empire after Alexander died that have significance for Israel’s history: Syria and Egypt. These are prophesied of at length in Daniel 11.

⁶⁰ From Wikipedia: Saladin captured Jerusalem in 1189. “The Mamluk Sultanate would survive until 1517, when it was conquered by the Ottoman Empire...The **Ottoman Empire** was the only Islamic power to seriously challenge the rising power of Western Europe between the 15th and 19th centuries. *With Istanbul (or Constantinople) as its capital, the Empire was in some respects an Islamic successor of earlier Mediterranean empires - the Roman and Byzantine empires.* The history of the Ottoman Empire spans more than six centuries...one of the longest lasting empires in recorded history.”

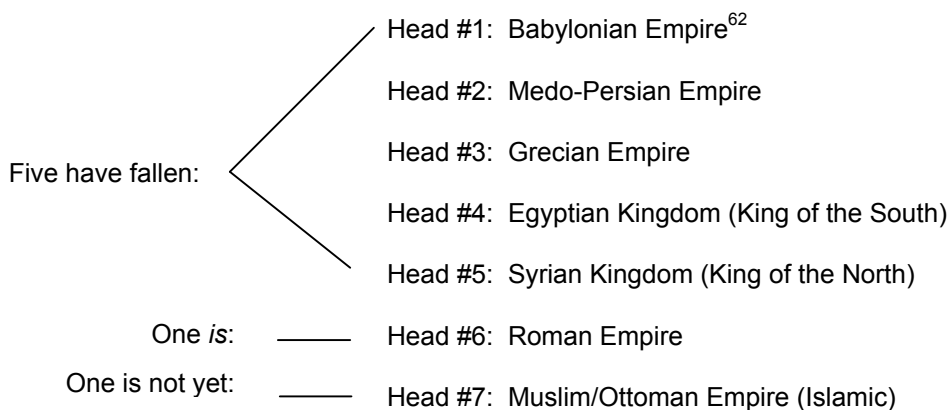
Speaking of Israel: “Under Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and (briefly) Sassanian rule, Jewish presence in the region (of Palestine) dwindled because of mass expulsions...The land was conquered from the Byzantine Empire in 638 CE during the initial Muslim conquests...The area was ruled by the Omayyads, then by the Abbasids, Crusaders, the Kharezmians and Mongols, before becoming part of the empire of the Mamluks (1260-1516) and the Ottoman Empire in 1517.”

And an eighth: “the Beast which was and is not (during John’s day), is himself also an eighth (kingdom) and is of the seven”:

- 8) A revived Babylonian Kingdom headed by Anti-Christ that appears after the Rapture. In one sense the Islamic Empire is also represented in this eighth head, as the Anti-Christ will be Islamic. So he is “of the seven,” meaning that he has elements in common with the seven previous kingdoms. And because the Greek and Medo-Persian Empires also encompassed Iraq and Syria, we can say he also represents them as well, just as he does Rome. A revived Babylon will astound the world.

KEEPING IT STRAIGHT

Even though the eighth head and 11th horn apparently represent the same person, they do not refer to the same role. The eighth head is a sovereign ruler over a revived kingdom (Babylon?) and also represents the revived kingdom itself, but the 11th horn is a political leader with authority over the ten horns (that probably represent the mainly Islamic countries of the MU). In order for the Anti-Christ to play these two roles, the kingdom over which he rules as head must also be part of the ten-nation confederacy (MU?) unless he is appointed to represent Jordan in the MU (which is less likely if he becomes king of Babylon, but not impossible). Here is an easy chart to show how all of these empires fit the biblical scheme:



⁶¹ Why do I choose this as the seventh king/kingdom? Because it ruled over Palestine from 638 AD to 1917 AD in one form or another. The Ottoman Empire alone lasted exactly 400 years and followed on the heels of the Roman/Byzantine Empire.

⁶² The reason we start with Babylon is 1) that’s where God started in the visions in Daniel, and 2) Assyrian captured the 10 northern tribes but not Judah; Egypt in its early days did not rule over a Jewish Jerusalem, but only over Canaan and then briefly. Even though the Anti-Christ is referred to as the Assyrian, we have to remember that many kingdoms ruled over the territory known as Assyria.

Also an eighth: ——— Head #8: Revived Babylonian/Syrian Empire⁶³ (with elements of the other seven previous empires represented in it)

Scripture tells us that this Anti-Christ will exalt and magnify himself above every god and that “authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation” will be given to him. This may allude to his jurisdiction over, or implementation of, some kind of world constitution or international body of law or international court to which all nations will submit, and we can see this on the horizon already. As former president of the Club of Rome, this would be a natural outgrowth of El Hassan’s ascent to power. In fact, he has already proposed a “New International Humanitarian Order,” to be implemented by the UN. This would take the United Nations to a new level of sovereignty over the earth and perhaps eventually with an Islamic twist. Perhaps other nations will come under the authority of the Beast voluntarily because they join the rest of the world in ratification of an international constitution or “new world order” polity over which he rules.

BEAST SUMMARY

The prince or Anti-Christ, though he will be a Muslim, will be ruling over a worldwide empire (or at least a Europe- and Middle East-wide empire) that includes parts of the territories of these previous seven empires and possibly more (as Scripture⁶⁴ says he will tread down the whole earth⁶⁴) and will be the fulfillment of which Nebuchadnezzar (Babylonian) and Antiochus IV Epiphanes (Syrian) were types. I believe this “king” will join up with the EU (and possibly the U.S. or the Pope and Roman Catholic Church at first) to carry out his goals of globalism: global unity, global religion, global economic equality, global government, global environmental standards, global education and global peace. Our “common brotherhood.” Eventually he will join hands with a Jewish high priest to complete his bid for messiahship. Ultimately his goals include global Islamization under his divine headship (though this may not be his initial conscious motivation nor will he state this publicly. Once he is indwelt by Satan, he will be used for Satan’s ends.)

⁶³ We think these are the most likely options as both Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus Epiphanes were types of the Anti-Christ.

⁶⁴ Although “the whole earth” in Scripture often refers only to the area that has a direct relation to or bearing on Israel.

Note this quote: "Perhaps the only ways to achieve peace in the Middle East would be for Jerusalem to be de-politicized. It should not be a political capital of either Israel or Palestine, but be given a unique status as a spiritually sovereign entity under a theocracy of the traditional representatives of the Abrahamic religions...(taken from "The Economics of Terrorism," in *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition*, ed. JEB Lumbard, Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2004, p.216).

This is exactly what we expect to happen: that Israel will be stripped of its sovereignty over Jerusalem by international decree (probably by the UN who originally gave Israel its mandate⁶⁵) and the city will be given to the nations as a religious and cultural center for all to enjoy. We are expecting this in the next few years, perhaps sooner than later given the danger of impending war. Or perhaps it will come on the heels of a devastating war that awakens the world to the reality of this "burdensome stone." (Zech. 12:3)

A MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT

Now the big question. Who is this mysterious Babylon the Great?

Mystery Babylon is a catch-phrase, a short-hand way of expressing a concept revealed most fully in Revelation 17 and 18. The originating passage follows:

"And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls (of God's wrath) came and spoke with me (John), saying, 'Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters (the "waters" are tongues and tribes and nations and peoples, most likely Gentiles), with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.' And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and upon her forehead a name

⁶⁵ In fact, the current president of the UN, Ban Ki Moon, has stated recently that Israel should be stripped of its membership in the UN because the resolution that gave her a homeland required that she allow Palestinians the right of return and compensate them for damage to their homes and businesses, which he says was not complied with. Therefore her occupation of the territory is illegitimate and should be revoked.

was written, a mystery, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

A little later in Rev.18:2-11 and 15-24, the description continues:

“And he (another angel) cried out with a mighty voice, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.’⁶⁶ For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.’ And I heard another voice from heaven saying ‘Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her. To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit as a queen and I am not a widow, and I will never see mourning.’ For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong. And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying ‘Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’ And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more...The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls; for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!’ And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What city is like the great city?’ And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich

⁶⁶ Unclean and hateful birds symbolize false doctrine.

by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste! ...And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of a bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery. And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.”

Okay, now that we've read the passage, let's talk about it.

The key points that identify this “woman” are:

- 1) She is a harlot⁶⁷ (spiritual adulteress);
- 2) She is filthy rich;
- 3) She is full of immorality and sensuality;
- 4) She persecutes the saints and the prophets;
- 5) She is carried by, or rides, the scarlet Beast which has seven heads and ten horns;
- 6) She comprises or rules over many peoples, nations, tribes and tongues;
- 7) She has much in common with Babylonian paganism;
- 8) She sits on seven literal mountains (possibly);
- 9) She is demon-infested;
- 10) She has corrupted the entire world with her sensuality;
- 11) She has enriched the merchants of the earth with her wealth;
- 12) She has corrupted the kings of the earth;
- 13) Her sins have piled up to heaven;
- 14) She glorified herself;
- 15) She lived sensuously;
- 16) She thinks she is invincible;
- 17) She will be destroyed in one hour;
- 18) The merchants of the earth will mourn her loss as a trading partner;

⁶⁷ Indicating that she has been unfaithful to her God, to her vows, to her calling. She has perverted her way.

- 19) She will no longer be able to conduct even a marginal economy;
- 20) She will be burned with fire;
- 21) In one day her plagues will come: famine, pestilence and mourning; and finally,
- 22) God's people are told to come out of her.

There are several theories usually put forth to explain who or what is this "mystery, Babylon the Great." (Remember, we are not talking about the Beast now, only the woman who rides or is carried by the Beast.) Some people believe there are two separate entities, a religious "mystery, Babylon the Great" (Rev.17) and a secular or political or economic "Babylon the Great" (Rev. 18). In this theory's favor, one does have difficulty finding one entity that meets all of the above criteria. Here are the most commonly suggested candidates:

- 1) Rome:** Rome was referred to as "Babylon" in Bible times and has been thought by some to be Babylon the Great. She certainly was wealthy at one time; certainly controlled the western world; certainly was filled with evil; certainly influenced the culture of the world; clearly was arrogant; and certainly was guilty of the blood of the saints. And she sits on seven literal hills. Rome indeed was burned with fire during Nero's reign (in 64 AD, prior to the writing of the book of Revelation, however) and ultimately destroyed from within and without (but not in one hour). Despite its strengths, Rome became a very immoral culture in many respects, had a hand in the crucifixion of Christ, was responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in 70 AD, as well as for the death and brutal persecution of countless Christians. It is believed that Paul was killed there, and legend has it that Peter was crucified there upside down. However, Rome is not presently seen as a world *commercial* power. We don't quickly think of Rome today when we think of merchants who might be getting rich off of trade with this mysterious entity. The leadership of the European Union rotates from country to country nowadays so Rome is not technically its head. (Brussels now fills that role.) Rome itself does not now comprise a multitude of people and nations and tribes and tongues. And it seems unlikely that God would require people to come out of Rome to avoid some future judgment. Why now? Why destroy Rome now after so many centuries have intervened between her and

her past sins and glory? Seem a little “after the fact,” doesn’t it? We discount this possibility for this reason.

2) Europe or the European Union: Some have put forth this idea because Europe comprises many nations, tongues, tribes and peoples as required by the definition of “many waters” in Rev. 17:15. It has also been the scene for much persecution of believers. In one sense, this is the same as saying the Woman is Rome and *certainly* is the same as saying it is the revived Roman Empire. However, it is not true that Europe is the primary *cultural* or immoral influence in the world at this writing. Europe does not even *have* a single unified culture, but reflects the diverse cultures of many nations. The world is not imitating her en masse nor getting rich off of her, and though she may be as corrupt as the United States, she is not actively exporting that corruption to the degree that the U.S. is, especially as relates to immoral movies, TV, music, internet porn and magazines. Though Europe is the mother of America and certainly might be more advanced in decadence, she is not as influential, culturally speaking. And, *if* Europe is to be the seat of end-times economics and the ground from which the Anti-Christ springs, it hardly seems likely that she would be destroyed by the Anti-Christ. Nor is Europe (the great appeaser) roundly hated today, as the U.S. is increasingly becoming, and as Revelation 17 seems to indicate “the Woman” (Mystery Babylon) will be (at least by the Anti-Christ and the ten horns). Clearly America is falling in terms of political influence, favor and power, and Europe is rising. If she were destroyed, who would take over leadership in the world? And Europe is rapidly becoming more and more Islamic (via immigration, birth rate and religious intimidation) as the radical factions exert their will on a timid and naïve public and on a misguided public policy.⁶⁸ It seems clear that formal denominational Christianity is on its way out in Europe, making way for the rise of Islam (or at least parity between Islam and Catholicism) and ultimately the heralding of the Islamic Messiah. (If America elects a president with Islamic ties or leanings in 2008, this will only speed the process of Islam’s ascension.)⁶⁹ The world is so dedicated to comfort and peace

⁶⁸ There are supposedly more mosques in London now than churches.

⁶⁹ They did. Obama has ties to Muslim culture through his father and step-father and his early upbringing in Indonesia. He is rapidly altering the long-standing US/Israel alliance and favoring the Arab Middle East. He himself is ethnically Arab/American

these days that it won't have the stomach required for resisting Islam with its penchant for violent world conquest. And an attack on Europe orchestrated by the Anti-Christ would adversely impact millions of Muslims, so it seems unlikely that Europe would be destroyed by the Anti-Christ in league with these ten authority figures. What would be their motivation? There is not a substantial or unique degree of hatred or jealousy toward Europe, such as there is against the United States (the Great Satan). Nor does Europe feel invulnerable, as the passage indicates. ("I am not a widow and I will never see mourning.") Europe has been the site of two world wars. It would be an untenable position for her to hold. She is also not yet the economic and cultural powerhouse that Revelation 18 indicates. Many Europeans don't even have central heating. The standard of living can't be said to quite approximate that of the United States. That could change, but it seems unlikely that Europe could become this entity in our day, especially in the next 10-20 years, and particularly in terms of worldwide cultural influence.

On the other hand, if the ten kings are leaders of ten Muslim countries, they may find Europe sufficiently corrupt and domineering to warrant destroying her. If the Pope successfully persuades Europe to return to its Christian roots as well, it indeed might spark the ire of a ten-king Islamic federation. But it is more likely that the Pope, seeing his church weakening from scandal and insolvency, will find a way to join forces with the Anti-Christ in creating some sort of inter-faith alliance. Efforts are already well underway on that front. The Foundation for Inter-religious and Intercultural Research and Dialogue, founded by El Hassan bin Talal (among others) is one such effort. The World Catholic-Muslim Forum another. We think this is the more likely direction Europe and the Catholic Church will go, recognizing that averting religious war in Europe and the Middle East is an imperative no one can afford to ignore.⁷⁰ Still, one can envision a Muslim Anti-Christ growing weary of kowtowing to European patronage, and deciding to "go it alone" with his ten kings. Destroying Europe, however, would be like cutting off one's nose to spite one's face and a daunting task as well.

with a little black thrown in for good measure. Though he promotes himself as black, it is clearly for political expediency. America is not ready for an Arab president.

⁷⁰ For more on this, go to www.riifs.org/index_misc/Holy%20Books_Set%20for%20Peace.htm
This is the site for the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies, founded by El Hassan bin Talal.

Europe certainly has a lot to offer the Middle East and seems the most disposed to entertain such alliances. And since the ten horns rise from the head of Daniel's fourth beast (almost certainly the Roman Empire) it is likely that this empire is making its reappearance for the last days' finale. Besides, it will be the iron of the iron/clay kingdom, which would seem to indicate that it is stronger than the clay. So if Europe, a revived Roman Empire, is the head of the final Beast, it cannot also be the Woman who rides the Beast. We discount this option for these reasons.

3) Babylon (ancient city in Iraq): Some have put forth the idea that ancient Babylon will be resurrected as a modern metropolis and will become a thriving cultural and economic center with worldwide influence, but not for good. And despite our concurrence in the likelihood of the Hashemites retaking control of Iraq and establishing a redux of the ancient kingdom of Babylon, we do not think this places Babylon in contention for this role as "mystery Babylon the Great." It is too far-fetched, too much of a stretch for us personally, to think that this long-vanquished city will rise from the ashes to become anything but a cultural curiosity from antiquity. True, efforts are rising for a world-wide campaign to rebuild this ancient wonder of the world, and the US recently, under Obama, made a substantial contribution to that enterprise despite our current economic downturn. But we think it unlikely that this goal will be fully realized as anything but a tourist attraction, and that is only if the fractious Iraqis get it together enough to have a tourist industry at all. God cursed Babylon and that curse still stands. According to Wikipedia,

"After ancient Babylon fell to Cyrus the Persian in 539 B.C.E., it lost its position as a dominant world power, its captives, including the Jews, being freed.

Although the city continued to exist even beyond the days of the apostles, and hence existed in John's day, it was no longer a city of world importance, and it eventually fell into decay and utter ruin."

Yes, Nimrod did foment his rebellion here and the religion of Babel did spawn an entire lineage of false gods, becoming the fountainhead of paganism throughout the near world.

And Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon's most famous king, did prefigure the Anti-Christ in his demand to be worshipped. He built a huge statue of himself out of gold (a type of the image that the Anti-Christ will demand that all men worship), so one can see why some people conclude this. Babylonian religious and cultural influence has saturated the history of earth as no other, and in that sense it can claim profound power and enduring significance. But the city itself has taken on a symbolic rather than strategic role in our world. The Sunnis and Shiites have so much trouble getting along that it is nearly inconceivable that they could cooperate enough to bring Babylon into the modern world, let alone to a place of political or economic preeminence. (Unless, of course, El Hassan is able to mend old wounds and bring the two parties together, which he indeed may.) In addition, it hardly seems likely that the world would become morally corrupted by a culture that requires women to be covered in black from head to toe, even if that represents its own form of perversion. And, why use the appellation "Mystery" Babylon if it's the real Babylon we're talking about? Doesn't make sense. And, if a Muslim Anti-Christ *did* try to build his palace or headquarters on the grounds of the original Babylon as many speculate, why would the entity he rules over (the ten horns) agree with him to destroy his own seat of power? And finally, it's hard to imagine the world mourning its destruction for economic reasons as Rev. 18 indicates. We discount this possibility for these reasons.

- 4) Jerusalem:** Some have put forth this idea because Israel is spoken of as a "woman" in other passages in Revelations, as "the great city" and as "Sodom and Egypt," and she did consort with the pagan and Babylonian religions that surrounded her in biblical times, abandoning her God-given role as light to the nations. And she has, in a sense, risen from the ashes to become something of a modern-day phenomenon, as prophesied. But, to our knowledge, she hasn't become a powerful worldwide influence in terms of immorality (as in "all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality"⁷¹), nor has she become an economic and cultural powerhouse on the order of the United States, so far anyway (though one *can* say that Jews in general are highly influential in banking, medicine, gems and many other

⁷¹ Though some would dispute this, particularly regarding the banking industry and the development of WMDs.

enterprises). She cannot be said to fit the description given in Revelation 18, except to a very limited degree. Yes, she sits on seven mountains: Mt. Goath, Mt. Gareb, Mt. Acra, Mt. Bezetha, Mt. Zion, Mt. Ophel, and Mt. Moriah, and comprises a myriad of language and cultural groups who have reconvened from a multitude of nations, but she has a long way to go before she can claim preeminent worldwide economic and cultural influence (though she one day will). It's hard to imagine the *merchants* of the earth mourning her destruction. (She can hardly be called a trading giant though she supplies most of Europe's fruit.) For what reason would merchants mourn over her? Nor does she qualify as having corrupted the kings of the earth at any point in her history. She was corrupted *by* them more than the other way around. Nor does she feel invincible, or like a queen who will never see mourning. Mourning is her chief occupation.

Israel *is* indeed roundly hated though and condemned from nearly every quarter and much of the world would rejoice to see her destroyed. In this one sense, she fits the description of the woman who is hated by the ten kings. But if Israel is *one* of the 10 kings (given the MU scenario discussed earlier), then will she agree (as the ten kings do) to destroy her own kingdom? Scripture is clear that Jerusalem is intact until the end of the Tribulation, when Jesus returns and rescues her from annihilation. And since it's the ten kings, not the remaining seven, who agree to destroy Mystery Babylon, this prophesied destruction apparently occurs in the early part or first half of the Tribulation, before the Anti-Christ plucks up three of the horns. This alone seems to rule out Jerusalem as the Woman who rides the Beast as she must survive until Christ returns.

One verse, in Rev. 18:24, may particularly apply, however. It says: "And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth. She has killed many of her own prophets, and she persecuted and killed many of the early Jewish Christians.

(Some teach that this passage in Revelation 18 was fulfilled in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem, and if the book of Revelation were written earlier in the first century that would be conceivable, but most scholars place the writing of this letter in the last decade of the first century, too late to apply these passages to an already destroyed Jerusalem.)

5) The Catholic Church or the Vatican: This idea has been put forth, perhaps most notably and persuasively, by Dave Hunt in his book, [A Woman Rides the Beast](#).⁷² He makes a compelling case for it given the history of this organization in its past rabid persecution of Jews and of non-conforming Christians⁷³ (the Inquisition) throughout history and its silence or some say, complicity, with Hitler during the Holocaust. The Catholic Church also has had tremendous power over kings and kingdoms, and has influenced these with corruption to a great degree (i.e., during the Holy Roman Empire). It also possesses fabulous wealth even today, and is one of the largest landowners in the world. The Vatican has been involved in scandals, intrigue, high crimes and misdemeanors throughout the centuries that would qualify it for some of these descriptors, and it is still highly influential around the world, quickly becoming more so as time passes. Some say it sits on seven hills, but it is actually Rome that encompasses the seven hills. But the Vatican has held sway over Rome at various times in its history, and so one might say it sits on Rome, as Italy is largely Catholic. It is the only religion with ambassadors at most courts of state and at the United Nations, a singular honor. And she comprises members from many cultures, languages, nations and peoples, qualifying as the “many waters” of Rev. 17. But it is hard to understand how she (other than the Vatican itself) can be burned with fire in one hour, or why the merchants of the earth would be dismayed over her destruction. The merchants of the earth are not getting rich off of the Catholic Church for the most part, though she does have a hand in European politics and has used her influence to manipulate the economy from time to time (such as mandating the eating of fish on Friday to help the ailing Italian fishing industry). There are no mills operating

⁷² ©1994, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR 97402. This is a painful read, especially for Catholics or ex-Catholics.

⁷³ That is, not conforming to Catholic doctrine and authority.

in the Vatican that we're aware of, and to say 'your merchants were the great men of the earth' just doesn't seem to fit.

She does seem to see herself as a queen, however, above the fray, and a bit indestructible given her long and glorious history. These are apt descriptions of her flagrant pretensions to royalty, clothed with purple and scarlet (royal colors) and bedecked with gold and precious gems. The Catholic Church *could* easily be described as arrogant, and has seen (and likely still sees) herself as Master over the earth and more or less invincible. The pomp and ceremony accompanying her every move is proof-positive that she has an inflated view of herself. The Pope, or Supreme Pontiff (related to the Latin word for "bridge"), is called "the Vicar of Jesus Christ" in Catholic teaching, which means the authoritative representative of Christ on earth. This betrays a fundamental, institutional mindset that has ominous implications (which will be imitated by the Anti-Christ when he declares himself God personified). It also qualifies as blasphemy. In the past it has asserted its supremacy even over individual conscience, and still does for its members. If this religious organization were to somehow reassert its authority politically, socially, and morally in Europe (and around the world) as it is beginning to do with alarming alacrity, it would be easy to make this leap because she could be said to be riding the Beast in that case.

If the Anti-Christ is Islamic, he may ultimately chafe at the control exerted by the Pope over his doings and may wish to offload this entity as excess political baggage. After all, we can't have two leaders, both claiming to represent God, unless one is willing to take a supportive role, which would fall to the Pope in this case. Of course Scripture indicates that the Anti-Christ *will be* supported by another beast, apparently a religious leader called the False Prophet as we discussed earlier (Rev. 16:13), and perhaps the Pope would consent to take this role (although there are reasons to suggest that this is not the proper interpretation as we already said).

There is an huge element of the Babylonian mysteries incorporated into Catholic practices⁷⁴ and organizational structure and these connections are hidden from or unknown to the vast majority of adherents to Romanism. But how appropriate for an organization with ties to spiritual Babylon to be in cahoots with a Babylonian or Assyrian Anti-Christ.

The Vatican also has an interest (and holdings) in the Holy Land and it is not hard to conceive of her putting her weight behind a revived European proposal (or even instigating it) to make Jerusalem an international city with a Catholic Church installed on the Temple Mount, along with a rebuilt Temple. In fact, if I remember correctly, a past Pope already proposed this in 1912. This suggestion is coming up more and more frequently and may, in fact, be imminent.

Since the Bible exhorts God's people to "come out of her" (Mystery Babylon) one has to ask what this means. In this case it would have to mean to come out of the Catholic Church, because it's not likely it means come out of the Vatican since hardly anyone lives there (population 900), let alone many true believers, or you will be singled out for destruction (fire, plagues, famine). Since Catholics are sifted throughout the world, it hardly seems conceivable that they could be singled out for special torments without impacting those around them who are not Catholic and besides, this is an unlikely interpretation given that so many Catholics are completely unaware of their own church's history and are arguably biblically illiterate. (I know because I was one.) The likelihood of them ever even seeing this scriptural exhortation to "come out of her" is remote. Seems a very untenable concept. And at this writing, the Catholic Church can hardly be described as a cultural and *economic* powerhouse that brings wealth, immorality and corruption to the rest of the world, though it does hold many countries captive doctrinally (which is certainly significant in God's eyes, if not paramount). Despite its many acknowledged, hidden and historic failures, though, the Catholic church also contributes much to the world's understanding of moral issues and stands firmly for the sanctity of life and other conservative values.

⁷⁴ For a thorough treatment of this, see Hislop's, The Two Babylons, 1959, pub. by Loizeaux Brothers, Inc.

On the other hand, I don't think I would be hanging around in the Catholic Church either. Having been raised Catholic and having discovered how thoroughly corrupt it has been during much of its history on a multitude of levels, how clearly anti-biblical it is in some of its most foundational doctrines such as the perpetual virginity, sinless perfection and exalted mediatorial position of Mary,⁷⁵ praying to and for the dead and the need for continual sacrifices (i.e., the Mass) to expiate sin,⁷⁶ and how syncretistic with paganism in some respects, it seems foolhardy to remain connected to it. Especially if it is going to continue working toward the reunification of all monotheistic religions (ecumenism), which is a goal that requires much doctrinal compromise, or else coercion. Neither of which is compatible with true Christianity.

Nevertheless, an Anti-Christ bent on world conquest and top-dog status might see destruction of the Vatican as one route to his (Islam-promoting) ends. Surely the Pope would not be content taking a backseat to a Moslem Caliph or Imam (though an Islam-touting last-days "Jesus" as predicted by Ahmadinejad, might be a hard one to buck), so one could expect a showdown if he is not given his due. And it is conceivable that the Anti-Christ's intentions to "change times and laws," presumably in line with the Muslim calendar and Shari'ah Law, would be frowned upon by a Catholic Pope.⁷⁷ Thus more incentive for the Anti-Christ to "take him out."

⁷⁵ Matthew 13:55, for example, names four of Mary's other sons and mentions Jesus' sisters (thus at least two).

⁷⁶ As contradicted by Hebrews 7:26-27 and 9:11-26.

⁷⁷ "Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, said in mid-February (2008) that implementation of elements of Islamic Shariah law was 'unavoidable' if social cohesion was to be fostered in Britain. Coming under heavy fire for the remarks, Williams stood by them." (The Philadelphia Trumpet, April 2008) This statement by Williams, a prominent member of the Protestant Church, has ominous implications. Could the Pope saddle up with this viewpoint regarding Shariah law? Time alone will tell, but it's not likely given that the Catholic Church has long claimed preeminence in matters of faith and morals. The Pope is seen in Catholic doctrine as the ultimate moral and religious authority (worldwide) and represents God to the world, not just to the Catholic Church. Considering past history when the Popes anointed and appointed world leaders, and present history where they are consulted on world affairs, have ambassadors at state and a seat at the UN, one can almost understand the mindset. In that light, one can easily imagine a contest arising between the Pope and an ascending Anti-Christ over whose authority will emerge victorious. Will the Pope, so used to the adulation of the world, be willing to take a secondary role for the sake of religious and perhaps political unity? But, if the Catholic Church and Islam lock arms (which is not impossible considering developments that followed the "A Common Word Between Us and You" conference last September (2007), which included a World Catholic-Muslim Forum to foster greater understanding and unity between the faiths), then maybe some form of co-rulership could be implemented which allows Islam to see itself as preeminent, but also allows the Pope to see *himself* as preeminent. Catholicism considers Islam to be one of the three branches of Abrahamic faith along with Protestants (whom they call separated brethren), so it's not as far of a leap as it seems to those unfamiliar with Catholic theology.

Pope Benedict XVI, despite his lack of charm, certainly gets high marks for making a convincing show of loyalty to the Christian gospel. So the time may come for his demise. Get rid of popery in all its glory and there's one less impediment to the Anti-Christ's messianic goals, assuming of course that the Pope is not the False Prophet. Scripture describes the False Prophet as coming up out of the earth, generally believed to be a figure for Israel, so that is a strong indicator that the Pope, unless of Jewish extraction, is not this two-horned lamb beast. ("And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon." Rev.13:11) So if the Pope is not the False Prophet, but rather figures into endtimes symbolism as the icon of the Vatican, and if the Vatican is the religious version of Mystery Babylon, and if the Anti-Christ disposes of her in a fit of jealous ire, this opens the door for a politically appointed Jewish High Priest to somehow lock arms with the Muslim Anti-Christ in an attempt to foist a false peace on the world and on Israel, whose eradication is the ultimate object of the devil's machinations. Getting rid of the Pope and the entire Catholic infrastructure and hierarchy would be a coup worth pursuing in that case, especially if the Pope has attempted to dominate the Anti-Christ or to use his clout and influence to insinuate himself into Israeli politics or Temple Mount claims in a way that runs counter to the Anti-Christ's will. If the Rapture has happened and the world has moved forward into the one-world/one-religion paradigm focused around the Anti-Christ, the Pope's prestige and usefulness may fall enough to make his mid-Trib removal politically palatable.

- 6) The global economic and political system and/or the worldwide apostate church (one-world religion):** Some say the Woman is the end-times global economic and political system run by the power elite, because she *rides* the beast. The Club of Rome, the Illuminati, World Bankers, the Tri-Lateralists, the Council on Foreign Relations and so forth. It's pretty clear these groups exist and wield enormous and unprecedented power. They are like a shadow government that rules over the visible governments of the world. Many writers have attempted to expose their doings over the last few decades. However, if the one-world globalist system, with its political, economic and religious structures *were* Mystery Babylon, then it appears that the Beast, in one sense, turns against itself. Because the most likely

candidate we can find for the Anti-Christ is himself the current past president of the Club of Rome. This seems highly contradictory. To suggest that “Come out of her, My people” means to come out of the global economic system, or out of the ruling elite (as if God’s people would be involved in such things to begin with), or the false end-times church that we may not reap of her plagues brings up the same dilemma as the suggestion that she is the Roman Catholic Church: How do you burn an economic system with fire, or a political system, or an apostate church that is spread over the entire globe, or a group of ruling elites? I agree that we should not be involved in these structures, but I can’t reconcile this interpretation with the description given in Revelation 18 of her destruction. It seems more likely that these structures are tools of the Beast’s empire and help to further his agenda. Why would he then hate these structures and try to destroy them? How would that profit him?

However, if the 10 kings are Islamic and bent ultimately on world domination, perhaps turning against the controlling elements in Europe makes sense. But still, the destruction prophesied is so graphic and sounds utterly physical, so once again, destroying an economic system, a group of elite bankers or diplomats, or an apostate church seems an unlikely interpretation.

7) The United States:

Aside from Israel, America is the only country on the face of the earth that has ever been dedicated to the God of the Bible. Our first settlers knelt on the beaches of Jamestown and declared their intent to dedicate this new land to Almighty God.⁷⁸ This early dedication set the stage for more of the same. Throughout America’s early history, speeches extolled the virtues of this God; deliberations were convened under His blessing; documents were framed in deference to His authority; meetings commenced with the reading of Scripture and prayer;

⁷⁸ According to the Christian Law Association website: “The first permanent settlement in America was dedicated to God and to the expansion of the Christian faith. When a company of English settlers reached what is now called Jamestown, Virginia, (in 1607) one of their first acts was to plant a cross in the sand and claim this new land, not for England, but for God....Upon landing on the Tidewater beach, Pastor Hunt called for three days of prayer and fasting in repentance for sins and in preparation for dedicating this new land to God...Kneeling in humility, Pastor Hunt prayed and dedicated this New World to God. He prayed that the gospel would be preached from these shores to the uttermost parts of the earth. This colony, beset as it was with ongoing difficulties, nevertheless established a monumental covenant with God there in the sands of Virginia, one that laid the foundation for the birth of a new nation founded on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

anthems acknowledged His providence. And for decade upon decade, America described itself a Christian nation.

Today all that has changed. America no longer officially reckons its allegiance to the God of the Bible. Efforts are underway to remove His mention from every vestige of our national existence. The Bible has been removed from schools. The Ten Commandments have been all but banned from courtrooms. Prayers in Jesus' name have been silenced in the military and in government. National monuments to biblical models have been ignored or stripped from memory. References to God have been challenged in mottos, coinage and pledges. America is on the brink of atheistic socialism in all its hideous and failed permutations. She (and she alone among nations, aside from Israel) can truly be called a harlot, having abandoned her first love for the tawdry purse of political and material self-sufficiency. This once humble God-fearing nation, willing to acknowledge, lean upon and credit "the God who is" for her many blessings, has now turned a blind eye to His very existence. This unique experiment in the annals of government is going the way of all human institutions: decline, debauchery and death. And it is her abandonment of her calling, as the Gentile version of the chosen nation, that has paved the way for her demise.

Despite her early Christian beginnings, America also has a history of mixture. The god of this world cannot allow anything pure to survive untainted. It must be diluted, desecrated, or defiled. It must be mixed with the evil elements of Satan's kingdom and brought low, morally and spiritually. Many of our founders were Bible-believing Christians, some were deists or theists, but many were also Freemasons, an organization known for its deep Babylonian pagan roots. Our country has become an odd mix of biblical and pagan philosophies and influences, much like the Catholic Church is.⁷⁹

⁷⁹Some, given to conspiracy theories, have postulated that the great seal of the United States, duplicated on the obverse of our dollar bill, reflects this, with the pyramid and all-seeing eye of Providence as the capstone, and "New World (Secular) Order" or "New Order of the Ages" engraved in Latin under it and "(He) favors all our endeavors" above. Unfortunately no confirmed Masons were involved in the final design of the seal (though one is suspected), and while we concur that it appears to be oddly coincidental with Masonic symbolism, the seal may have legitimately been designed strictly with the good-hearted intention of depicting our nation's origins and values. However, this does not mean that the "god of this world" was not involved in its ultimate design, seeking to establish in every God-honoring establishment, his own diabolical stamp of lordship. See

Consequently, the America of today, though arguably still the “leader of the free world,” is no longer the moral beacon of goodness and right conduct it once was. Though millions still flock to our shores, they come primarily to improve their economic status, rather than for religious freedom or political asylum. They come for the “better life” portrayed around the world on TV and cinema. And we do have a significantly higher standard of living and significantly more opportunity for advancement than other nations. But are we a happier people? No. Despite our wealth, we reek of discontent. And all because we have forgotten our roots and left God out of the equation.

Can anyone say with a straight face that we are still a righteous nation? On the contrary, though we are the only nation that can be said to have literally worldwide cultural influence, it is, for the most part, *immoral* influence. The pornography industry in the US alone generates 14 billion in annual revenue, more than the combined income of all of the major professional sports teams in the country (baseball, football, basketball). Youth in just about every country of the world are imitating American clothing styles,⁸⁰ hairstyles, fads and music, watching American music videos, TV, soaps and movies; getting tattoos, piercings,⁸¹ purple Mohawks, etc. (A friend who lives in Mexico says that’s definitely the case. He says our culture, with its emphasis on material success, competition, and outward appearance rather than on relationships and character, is *ruining* their culture.)

America indeed exerts tremendous influence, not just morally, but politically, culturally and economically in the world, largely because of money. She uses money to control and influence other countries to do her bidding. It is easy to conceive of her as riding the Beast, exerting gentle (or not so gentle) pressure to direct its course. In this case (of Mystery Babylon) she would be exerting pressure on the EU/MU (as the revived Roman Empire). America was not known in John’s day, so it *could be* described as a mystery, an unknown future power of the caliber and influence of Babylon, the head of gold. It has also been

<http://209.85.173.104/search?q=cache:43WqROsHdfAJ:watch.pair.com/mason.html> and download a document called The Great Seal of the United States or visit www.masonicinfo.com/greatseal.htm for more on this subject.

⁸⁰ (i.e., sagging pants, bare midriffs, exposed lingerie and underwear, lower and lower waistlines and higher and higher hemlines)

⁸¹ (i.e., nose rings, eyebrow rings, tongue rings, multiple earrings and plugs, belly rings, nipple rings, genitalia rings)

influenced *by* Babylon. And in one sense, we could be described as the *daughter* of Europe or of the Roman Empire—almost an extension of Europe. Founded by Europeans and still largely controlled by European bankers (who hold our debt and may someday pull the plug on the American economy⁸²), we are perhaps in God's mind, of one entity.

We are also the one country in the world that can be said to be any kind of an actual ethnic melting pot. A place where people from every tongue, tribe, nation and people have come together to form a new polity, throwing aside their national identity in favor of a corporate one and intermarrying to seal the deal. (At least up until recent times that was the case. Now it's more of a mosaic.) And we do sit on many *literal* waters as well.

In addition, America dominates the web. English *is* the international language, after all. The language of business and commerce especially. The language of the internet. It's the one language you can speak almost anywhere in the world and get by. It is **Babel** revisited in many respects, bringing the world back together in service of our common interest: making money. We are also the world's largest economy, the largest trading partner, the biggest buyer of foreign goods. We are a debt economy with an unmanageable trade deficit that supports our extravagant lifestyle.

Despite our corruption, we are admired or at least envied the world over for our standard of living and our military prowess. But perhaps not for long if this interpretation is correct. We are fast becoming more and more hated the world over (especially the last thirty years or so), increasingly soft, complacent, corrupt, mentally dull, narcissistic, historically ignorant and more and more socially fragmented and isolated. As Europe rises in power and influence, the desire to see us beaten back or defeated grows. The world is turning against us in droves. No longer do they see us as a model to emulate, but more as a fountain to siphon. Though they still want our money and our help, they are beginning to see it as a right, not a gift. An entitlement. And we are being lured into a relationship in which we lose regardless of how we respond. We are either taken advantage of and taken for granted, or we are castigated for

⁸² And in fact already are beginning to do.

not doing enough. We can't win. This very fact is indicative of the now worldwide perception that we are a global community in which equality of opportunity (and in some quarters, lifestyle) is a right. "You owe us" seems to be the prevailing sentiment. This growing worldwide hostility is going to result eventually in a concerted effort to destroy us. It's just a matter of time and opportunity coming together. The resistance to America's leadership throughout Europe during the Gulf and Iraq Wars is a case in point.

Babel (the Hebrew word for Babylon which means "confusion") was the city built by the disobedient descendants of Noah after the flood, a city they intended to reduce their dependence on God. The "tower of Babel" was a literal monument to human pride and ingenuity, in which they attempted to make a name for themselves in the earth. At that time, all men, having descended from the offspring of Noah, still spoke one language according to the Bible. God found their motives and actions repugnant, and so confused their language so that they could no longer communicate with one another, and thus no longer work together. They fled and from there, the various language groups are supposed to have developed.

But destroying us is not an easy feat, at least conventionally. We are protected by miles of ocean and relatively friendly neighbors. Foreign dictators have long recognized this and have hinted at infiltration and subterfuge, implying they will foment destruction from within. We are clearly cooperating with that plan and the country is fulfilling the biblical injunction, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." We are the epitome of a double-minded man,⁸³ unstable in all his ways. Our schizophrenic policies, at once self-protective and self-sabotaging, are sure to be our undoing.

It seems clear that, in addition to being defeated by our own hand though, we will also suffer some kind of serious nuclear attack, either by suitcase nukes smuggled into the country through our porous borders, an **electro-magnetic pulse bomb** (EMP) high in our atmosphere, or nukes shot from submarines or launched from ships offshore. A combination of nukes and EMPs may be the most likely scenario. The description of the destruction awaiting Mystery Babylon is stunning, and all in one hour: burned with fire, devastated by

⁸³ James 1:8

plagues, food shortages, and mourning, and no longer able to conduct even a marginal economy (no sound of a mill or light of a lamp). Daily life itself seems to have permanently ceased, at least any positive aspects of it (weddings, music, art, business or craftsmanship).

Ahmandinejad, president of Iran, speaking at the “World without Zionism” conference in fall 2005 said: “Is it possible for us to witness a world without America and Zionism?...[You] had best know that this slogan and this goal are attainable, and surely can be achieved.” This is a man who has every intention of making America the victim of his imperialistic aims for Allah.

Electro-magnetic pulse bomb devices are basically nuclear weapons detonated high in the atmosphere over a given territory. The wave generation, like a shock wave, destroys or interrupts all electro-magnetic devices within its field of impact. A country as large as ours is difficult to destroy with conventional bombs alone though it could definitely be crippled on a multitude of levels by hitting even a handful of cities simultaneously. Just the effects of 9/11 were devastating to the economy. But a pulse bomb would take out virtually all communication, stall cars, trains and trucking and completely ground air travel. Our entire distribution system would be knocked out. It would put a stop to manufacturing, mills and other industries that rely on computerized mechanisms. It would halt most office functions and all international and local communication, TV, radio, internet, phones, cell towers, power generation, traffic and bridge controls, banking, insurance and almost all sales transactions. It would knock out water purification and sewage systems, as well as water and fuel delivery systems that run on electronically controlled pumps. Even a lot of farm and dairy equipment is computerized. It would even disable many everyday home appliances, heating systems, and computerized lighting and sprinkler systems. And virtually all emergency communication and response technologies would be silenced. No more 911. Many of us hardly know how to survive without these technical innovations anymore. Just the last 20 years has produced an entire generation that hasn't the foggiest notion of how to do things the “old-fashioned” way. The natural way. This scenario would leave the country in a state of complete paralysis, followed by anarchy. Neighborhoods would have to become their own defenders with 24-hr armed patrols, especially in the cities. And all of this could happen in one hour. A worse nightmare one can hardly imagine. This fits the descriptions of Mystery Babylon's destruction best, in our opinion.

Or is it just New York?

Some say the “woman” is just the city of New York. That New York is the hub of world trade, and really represents all the ills of America's worst values. New York specifically is the home of Wall Street, the United Nations and Broadway. It is also affectionately known as “Babylon

on the Hudson,” a symbol of all things prosperous and American. It is a premier destination for world travelers and American travelers alike. It is the center of international business, finance, commerce and trade, publishing, fashion and the arts.

Would that it were only New York that is so corrupt. What about Hollywood, New Orleans, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Miami? Lot going on there, too. Time will tell, but nevertheless, it's not going to be pretty, or a walk in the park.

On 9/11, as I sat in front of the TV watching the second plane hit the tower, I had my Bible open to Rev. 18, and as I listened in amazement, I heard the commentators nearly quoting the verses I was reading. I can't quote the newscasters verbatim, but they were saying things very similar to: "It's unbelievable. The great city! The great city of New York. How could this happen? The boats offshore are watching in amazement as the smoke rises, just keeps on rising from the rubble. People are watching in disbelief. In one hour, so much destruction." I felt like I was watching prophecy unfold before my eyes. Is it just a coincidence that what was destroyed that fateful day were also known as "towers" (as in, the tower of Babel) and were situated in a city known as "Babylon"? Those towers, like their predecessor, were also a monument to human achievement. Those who are paying attention (biblically-speaking) probably had the same reaction I did. I think 9/11 was a shot across America's bow. A warning shot. One that we should be heeding but we're not.

We are clearly the most advanced, most wealthy country that has ever graced the globe. The average person lives like a king of antiquity. Better even, in some ways. Hot and cold running water, refrigeration, electricity, automobiles, central heating and air conditioning, air travel, universal education, unprecedented technology (internet access, TV, radio, portable music and video devices, cell phones), adequate food, year-round access to exotic fruits and vegetables, advanced medical and dental care, freedom, you name it. And we are also influencing the world like no other. We fit the description in Rev. 18 to a tee. At this stage in history, we are the only ones who fit it.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Except for one thing: we have not yet been the site or agent of much Jewish or Christian persecution. Perhaps that will change or maybe it simply validates the proposition that there are two mystery Babylons, a religious one and a secular one.

This is not a pretty picture that Revelation paints of the death of Mystery Babylon, that arrogant one who thought she was impervious to destruction or attack. (“I sit as a Queen and I am not a widow and will never see mourning.”) This attitude is endemic to America. We feel invincible, never having been attacked on our own soil (before 9/11). But suddenly, she is completely undone, completely helpless and completely destroyed, in a day, an hour. Once the U.S. is cleared out of the way as a world power, the road is open for the next tier of power-mad monarchs (or naïve humanitarians) to take center stage.

Let’s look at the key points that identify this “mystery woman” again and see how many of them could be said to fit America:

- YES: She is a harlot⁸⁵ (spiritual adulteress);
- YES: She is filthy rich (or at least projects that image though it’s now an illusion);
- YES: She is full of immorality and sensuality;
- NO: She persecutes the saints and the prophets (at least not yet, but it’s beginning);
- YES: She is carried by, or rides, the scarlet Beast which has seven heads and ten horns;
- YES: She comprises or rules over many peoples, nations, tribes and tongues;
- YES: She has much in common with Babylonian paganism;
- NO: She sits on seven literal mountains (but mountains in scripture often mean kings or kingdoms, and America does dominate the former kingdoms of the world);
- YES: She is demon-infested;
- YES: She has corrupted the entire world with her sensuality;
- YES: She has enriched the merchants of the earth with her wealth;
- YES: She has corrupted the kings of the earth;
- YES: Her sins have piled up to heaven;
- YES: She glorified herself;
- YES: She lived sensuously;
- YES: She thinks she is invincible;

The following items remain to be seen:

⁸⁵ Indicating that she has been unfaithful to her God, to her vows, to her calling. She has perverted her way.

TO COME:

She will be destroyed in one hour;

The merchants of the earth will mourn her loss as a trading partner;

She will no longer be able to conduct even a marginal economy;

She will be burned with fire;

In one day her plagues will come: famine, pestilence and mourning; and finally,

God's people are told to come out of her.

8) The United States and the Vatican:

If there are indeed two Mystery Babylons as some suspect, we would suggest the Vatican as the spiritual version of this woman who sits on the last-days' Beast, and the U.S. or New York as the secular version.

It is conceivable that a Muslim consortium of kings might find their hearts bent on destroying both entities. If we go with the two separate entities theory: a spiritual and an economic Mystery Babylon, then we find that all the descriptors in Revelation are satisfied. It is likely that a conciliatory Anti-Christ figure will attempt to "make nice" with the Vatican and the U.S. to expedite his rise to power, eventually turning on both with a vengeance, for one purpose: to pave his way to worldwide power and authority.

COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE

Whoever she is, God's people are exhorted to "Come out of her," that they may not participate in her sins or reap of her plagues. (Rev.18:4) If the woman is America, what does this mean, "come out of her"? Does it mean to leave the country? Where would we go, all 25 million of us (born-again Christians or Messianic Jews)? Does it mean to become a survivalist and move to the remotest woods and prepare to grow your own food, along with all the not-so-savory sorts (and their saner counterparts) who populate the hinterlands armed-to-the-teeth with guns and ammo? Does it mean to stop watching TV and movies, reading questionable material and listening to secular music? Does it mean to stop using credit cards and debit cards and not go along with future measures to identify, track, or control your

movements? Does it mean save yourself somehow? To, in effect, get out of town, leave Sodom, before the fire and brimstone fall on her?

ANOTHER OPTION:

Or are these words actually directed primarily at the Jews, Jesus' literal "people," exhorting them to come out of New York (which, it is said, has a larger Jewish population than Israel) and return to Israel before God,⁸⁶ via the ten kings, destroys New York (or the U.S.)? The timing of these events may fit this interpretation best. It is clear that the 10 kings have already risen to power and the Anti-Christ has risen among them when Mystery Babylon is destroyed, so obviously the Tribulation has commenced and most likely the Rapture has already happened.⁸⁷

The Tribulation apparently begins with the confirming of some kind of peace treaty or covenant for seven years, perhaps an agreement to permit the rebuilding of the Temple and reinstatement of animal sacrifices, thus confirming the Mosaic covenant. Or it may be the internationalization of Jerusalem, since this covenant, Daniel tells us, is "with the many." This agreement may lead to the time of peace in Israel that is later disrupted by the Ezekiel 38 war after the mid-Trib (or the Ez.38 war may be the catalyst for the coming peace initiative). In fact, it appears that Israel is living at peace, secure in her own land for some time before forces aimed at her undoing decide to break the covenant at the mid-Trib.⁸⁸

In any case, this is Scripture and it will come to pass. Any hopes we have of maintaining our current lifestyle during or after this prophetic fulfillment are folly.⁸⁹ Our only hope is to cast ourselves on the

⁸⁶ Why do I say God? Rev.17:17 says, "For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled."

⁸⁷ 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8 indicates that whatever (or whoever) is restraining the appearance of the Anti-Christ will be removed prior to his appearance. This reference to "he who now restrains" is often interpreted to be the Holy Spirit who indwells true followers of Jesus. Since He will never leave us or forsake us, the reasoning goes, we will have to be removed with Him. Thus a pre-Trib Rapture.

⁸⁸ Based on Ezekiel 38:8,11,14

⁸⁹ In addition, the Bible prophesies the loosing of myriad demonic creatures that torment men for five months in Rev. 9. This might also represent biological warfare.

mercies of God and the testimony of Jesus and pray that we will be counted worthy to escape the wrath that is coming. For some *will* be counted worthy.⁹⁰

I'll leave you to ponder these questions. I don't know the answer. All I know for sure is, we better be ready. That is, we better have made our choice whom we will seek and whom we will love and whom we will obey. In actuality, we've already made that choice. It shows in our deeds.⁹¹ We all might want to look closely at our lives about now and see what it says about us and whom we adore. Whether we are delivered from the wrath to come by the Rapture or have to endure the Tribulation until the end, we must be ready when the Bridegroom returns. This means having oil in our lamps and the Holy Spirit manifesting in our hearts.⁹² Which leads us to Theory #13.

⁹⁰ More on this in the next chapter.

⁹¹ Jesus said in John 14:23: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word...he who does not love Me does not keep My words..." This doesn't mean you will be perfect, but that you will be trying to live in such a way as to please God.

⁹² "Oil" is symbolic of the Holy Spirit and believers are the lamps. True believers have oil.