

Some clear and convincing contextual analysis of Revelation chapters 13-19, establishing that the False Prophet is NOT the same entity as the Land Beast but that the False Prophet is one horn of the “two horns” on that Land Beast – the other horn being the Roman civil authority that ruled the land. Together these two entities make up the *two horned* Land Beast.

By Lloyd Dale
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Any thorough study of the various “beasts” in Revelation must begin with the thirteenth chapter as this is the first mention of these beasts in the Revelation. In Revelation 13:1 we are introduced to “a beast that arises out of the sea” (i.e. the sea beast, a composite beast because it has ten horns and seven heads) and another beast that comes up out of the Land (i.e. the land beast, a composite beast because it has “two horns like a lamb). One (1) sea beast plus one (1) land beast equals two beasts, no more and no less. For the immediate purpose of this study we accept that the sea beast is, in fact, the composite Roman Empire. However, we must always keep firmly fixed in our minds that this beast initially consists of “seven heads” as well as “ten horns” and in Revelation 17: 10 we are informed that each of these heads is in fact a king of the Roman Empire and there we are introduced to “an eighth” king who comes up out of the “abyss” to become “an eighth” beast/king of the Roman Empire. So, in toto, *we must understand that the sea beast is a corporate or composite beast that is composed of ten horns and eight kings and that each of these kings is beastly as well because of his position on/in the composite beast.* (More about this later)

The questions that this study answers are who or what is this Land beast (Rev 13:11-18) and what is the composition of this Land beast and how does this relate to Revelation 19:19-21?. According to Revelation 13:11 we are to understand that the composite Land beast “has two horns like a lamb”. What are we to make of these “two horn like a lamb”? And, why does John write the cryptic “like a lamb” (We will return to this later)

Many Revelation commentators, because they think that there is great importance to these ten horns, have striven mightily to ascertain the “ten horns” on the composite sea beast, most with very little success. However, few of these Revelation commentators have even considered, to say nothing about “striven mightily” to determine, the identity of these “two horns like a lamb” on this composite (“two horns”) Land beast. Apparently, this lack of concern about these “two horns like a Lamb” is because they think that these “two horns like a lamb is of very little importance. In this writer’s opinion *that is a grave error.*

It should be understood by all Revelation commentators that the “two horns like a lamb” on the Land beast are just as important, *if not more important* than the ten horns on the sea beast. God and Jesus most certainly had something very special in mind when they had John write the words “two horns ***like a lamb***”. Thus, God has “concealed” in plain sight certain very salient material in this phrase and it is our responsibility to dig it out (Proverbs 25:2).

Ostensibly, most Revelation commentators have just assumed, without merit, that the composite Land beast composed of “two horns” is not a composite and is nothing more or nothing less than “the false prophet” of Revelation 16:13, 19:21, and 20:10 and, of course, that, completely without merit, assumption is preceded by the equally unmeritorious assumption that “the beast” in those same three verses must refer to the sea beast of Revelation 13:1-10. In this writer’s studied opinion *that is a very grave mistaken assumption and one that has produced much misunderstanding of the Revelation.*

When any reasonable student of Revelation 13:11-18 sees the words “***like a lamb***” he (she) should immediately ask himself (herself) “What kind of horns does a lamb have?” Most modern city dwellers would not have a clue! It should be understood that God is trying to communicate something very special which is “hidden in plain sight” in these three little words, “***like a lamb***”!

Every “keeper of sheep” (shepherd) since Abel would immediately recognize that a lamb has “two ***little*** horns”. Thus, every shepherd would immediately recognize that John is using this language to point his readers directly back to the “two little horns” of Daniel 7 and 8. It is impossible to

properly understand Revelation 13:11-18 without a proper understanding of Daniel 7 and 8 where these two little horns are first mentioned.

In Daniel 8, the messenger that interprets Daniel's vision for him directly states:

“And the rough goat *is* the king of Greece: and the great horn that *is* between his eyes *is* the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.” (Daniel 8:21-25)

Historically, Alexander the Great was the “great horn” on this particular beast that arose out of the sea (7:3). When he died, his great kingdom was split into four parts or four smaller kingdoms by four of his generals and the messenger informs Daniel that in the very end of those four kingdoms, as the fourth and final sea beast begins to arise from the sea (7:3, 7-8, 17) “when the transgressors are come to the full”¹ “a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power...” This king is none other than the man that would be known to history as Herod the Great.

Herod (73-4 BCE) was the pro-Roman king of the small Jewish state in the last decades before the common era (sic). He started his career as a general, but the Roman statesman Mark Antony recognized him as the Jewish national leader. During a war against the Parthians, Herod was removed from the scene, but the Roman Senate made him king and gave him soldiers to seize the the (sic) throne. As 'friend and ally of the Romans' he was not a truly independent king; however, Rome allowed him a domestic policy of his own. Although Herod tried to respect the pious feeling of his subjects, many of them were not content with his rule, which ended in terror. He was succeeded by his sons.² (Comments and emphasis added)

¹ In Biblical parlance “the transgressors” can be a reference to none other than the Jews who were the “transgressors” of the Mosaic Marriage Covenant that God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai. As such, this language clearly sets the stage for the entrance of Herod, an Edomite (the son of an Idumean man and an Arabian woman) Jew as this king of fierce countenance.

² Online article by Jona Lendering

Herod was an able, strong and cruel man; as the Jewish civil ruler he increased greatly the splendor of Jerusalem and started construction on the Jewish temple.

Herod's monarchy was based on foreign weapons; the start of his reign had been marked by bloodshed. His first aim was to establish his rule on a more solid base.

Herod kept his father-in-law (Hyrcanus, former Jewish high priest) in high esteem. The support of the old monarch gave an appearance of legality to his own rule.

(Much later) he had Hyrcanus executed, making sure that no one else could claim his throne. Then, he sailed to the island of Rhodes, where he met Octavian. In a brilliant speech, Herod boasted of his loyalty to Mark Antony, and promised the same to the new master of the Roman Empire. Octavian was impressed by the man's audacity, confirmed Herod's monarchy, and even added the coast of [Judaea](#) and [Samaria](#) to his realm.

But Herod's crowning achievement was a splendid new port, called Caesarea in honor of the emperor (the harbor was called *Sebastos*, the Greek translation of 'Augustus'). This magnificent and opulent city, which was dedicated in 9 BCE, was build to rival Alexandria in the land trade to [Arabia](#), from where spices, perfume and incense were imported. It was not an oriental town like Jerusalem; it was laid out on a Greek grid plan, with a market, an aqueduct, government offices, baths, villas, a circus, and pagan temples. (The most important of these was **the temple where the emperor was worshipped**...) (Emphasis added)

However, many of his projects won him the bitter hatred of the orthodox Jews, who disliked Herod's Greek taste - a taste he showed not only in his building projects, but also in several transgressions of the Mosaic Law.

The orthodox were not to (sic, the) only ones who came to hate the new king. The [Sadducees](#) hated him because he had terminated the rule of the old royal house to which many of them were related; their own influence in the Sanhedrin was curtailed. The Pharisees despised any ruler who despised the Law. And probably all his subjects resented his excessive taxation.

It comes as no surprise that Herod sometimes had to revert to violence, employing mercenaries and a secret police to enforce order.

On moments like that, it was clear to anyone that Herod was not a Jewish but a Roman king. He had become the ruler of the Jews with Roman help and he boasted to be *philokaisar* ('the emperor's friend'), entertaining [Agrippa](#), Augustus' right-hand man. On top of the gate of the new Temple, a golden eagle

was erected, a symbol of Roman power in the heart of the holy city resented by all pious believers. Worse, Augustus ordered and paid the priests of the Temple to sacrifice twice a day on behalf of himself, the Roman senate and people. The Jewish populace started to believe rumors that their pagan ruler had violated Jewish tombs, stealing golden objects from the tomb of David and Solomon.

Herod's reign ended in terror.

The story about the slaughter of infants of Bethlehem in the second chapter of the *Gospel of Matthew* is not known from other sources, but it would have been totally in character for the later Herod to commit such a terrible act.³

Herod died of “A horrible disease... Herod was buried in one of the fortresses he had build (sic), Herodion.”

The short review of Herod’s life and death given above clearly demonstrates that he was indeed the:

“...king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.”

Herod fulfilled every aspect of this prophecy. His power came from the Roman Empire, not his own, he was fierce, fearless, and cunning and was willing to kill members of his own family, Jews, and little babies, including the baby Jesus, Prince of princes to maintain his power. He magnified himself and destroyed the peace and died a horrible death “without hand”.

Having now clearly identified the one little horn of the composite Jewish Land beast, we now turn to Daniel chapter 7 for the identity of the other “little horn,” known in Revelation as the false prophet.

According to the messenger that interpreted Daniel’s dream and vision’s, the little horn of Daniel 7 would “speak great words against the most High (clearly the work of a false prophet) and he would wear out (clearly the result of accusations, assaults, and persecutions) the saints of the most High and think to change times and laws (activities of a false prophet) and the

³ Ibid

people of the most high would be given into his hand until⁴ a time and times, and the dividing of time should come” and at that time “the judgment would sit and his dominion would be taken away” and given to the people of the most high.

The most High in the Passage above is Jesus in His Parousia (7:14), and the “saints of the most High” are the followers of the Christ, called Christians who would receive the kingdom (7:18, 22, 27). With these things in mind it should now be obvious that the “little horn” in this chapter is a reference to the apostate Jews, especially their religious leadership; the Sanhedrin, who accused Jesus, had Him crucified and then accused⁵ and persecuted his followers thus wearing them out until the beginning of the 3 ½ year war against the Romans. In the book of Acts and elsewhere, the NT details these accusations, assaults, and persecutions which effectually ended when the war with the Romans commenced.

Remember that Jesus told the Jews that “the kingdom of God (i.e. their dominion) shall be taken from you and given” to His people, “a nation that would bring forth the fruits.”

Thus, we now know that the little horn of Daniel 7 equates to the Jewish system (false prophet) of the Revelation.

Thus, Daniel prophesied two “little” horns on the Jewish Land beast, a pro-Roman king (civil rule) and a Jewish religious hierarchy (religious rule) identified in Revelation 13:11 as “a beast” (civil rule) that spoke as a dragon (religious rule, false prophet) with two “little” horns like a lamb.

As we examine the text of Revelation 13:11-18 shown below:

And I saw another beast coming up out of the Land; and he had **two horns** like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him, and causes the Land and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, which deadly wound being healed. And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the Land in the

⁴ Until, *not through* a time of 3 1/2 years but from the beginning of persecutions etc. up until the beginning of a time of 3 ½ years which historically was the length of the Jews war with the Romans which ended with the destruction of the temple and the city.

⁵ The New Testament clearly identifies the “Jews” as “the accuser of the brethren” (Rev 12:10; et al.) no less than 34 times directly and several other times indirectly.

sight of men, And deceives them that dwell on the Land by *the means of* those wonders which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the Land, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six. (Revelation 13:11-18)

The first thing that we should notice is that no place in this text is the term “false prophet” used. That should have been a definite red flag to those making the erroneous assumptions described in the beginning of this documentation; however, it apparently was not sufficient to keep them from making those erroneous assumptions.

Second, the text states that this composite Land beast “exercises all the authority of the first beast before him, and causes the Land and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, which deadly wound was healed.” The “first beast” must be a clear and certain reference to the composite sea beast described in Revelation 13:1-10 which, within the text, immediately preceded the composite Land beast. So it should be clear to all Revelation commentators that the composite Land beast was, at the very least, a puppet *government* of the composite Roman sea beast as well as being a false prophet. As we shall see, it actually had a Roman appointed and sustained civil ruler, i.e. one “Horn” of the “two horns” which the composite Land beast had and it was also composed of a religious rule which is the second horn of these “two horns”. Thus, the Land beast of Revelation is truly a composite beast composed of a Roman imposed, civil rule and a Jewish imposed, religious rule.

(For this study the writer assumes that the reader has a full and correct knowledge of the historical time period of the last century BC and the first century AD and does in fact understand the relationship between the Romans and the Jews during that time frame. Thus, this writer will not go into the details of that historical content but will primarily stick with the Biblical text in Revelation and its predecessor the book of Daniel with an occasional historical reference.)

The text of Revelation 13:11ff also states that the composite Land beast “causes the Land and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, which deadly wound being healed.” Once again, the “first beast” is a clear and certain reference to the composite Roman sea beast so, in context, this passage is stating that the puppet *government (the civil rule)* of the composite Land beast causes the people of the Land (the Jews) to worship the composite Roman sea beast and in particular the beastly heads (individual beasts) of the composite Roman sea beast who demanded worship as gods. As we have seen and shall continue to see, the religious authorities (the false prophet) of the composite Land beast support this effort of the Roman imposed civil authority.

This beastly worship is specifically referred to in the 4th Gospel 19:15:

But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, **we have no king but Caesar**. (4th Gospel 19:15)

As we read this verse a very salient question should come to our mind. That question is: who is Pilate and what does he have to do with the composite Land beast of this study?

Chapters 18 and 19, of this fourth Gospel, recount the capture, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus all of which took place within the kingdom of the composite Land beast. In this account we are told that the apostate religious leaders of the apostate Jews gave Judas “a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees” and this group “took Jesus and bound Him” and first “took Him to Annas” then later He was “sent bound unto Caiaphas the high priest”. Jesus was then led “from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment” of Pilate for judgment by Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea (i.e. a Roman puppet government).

Pilate was a “typical Roman”... and in the mold of Herod, he was pleasure-loving, imperious, and corrupt. He hated the Jews *whom he ruled*, and in times of irritation freely shed their blood. When in Jerusalem, he stayed in *the palace of Herod the Great*, it being common for the officers sent by Rome into conquered countries to occupy the palaces of the displaced sovereigns.”

After trial and much abuse by *the Roman soldiers under Pilate* the apostate Jews were shown Jesus by Pilate and told to “take Him and crucify.” *Pilate*

had told Jesus that *he had “the power to crucify Him or release Him”* and Pilate sought to release Jesus, but he was afraid of the apostate Jews who were shouting at him *“if you let this man go, then you are not Caesar’s friend, who-so-ever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.”* (See Rev 13:15) So Pilate (i.e. the Roman civil authority “beast” “delivered Jesus to the religious leaders, the “false prophet,” of the apostate Jews to be crucified, and for this the Roman civil authority in the Land beast will be severely judged and punished by the wrath of God.”

And so the apostate Jews led Jesus away and crucified Him and for this ultimate act of rebellion, they too would be very severely dealt with and destroyed by the wrath of God (Rev 19:20-21).

This particular passage of Scripture, as well as several others, very vividly describes the duality, “the two horns” of rule in the Land of Judea during the first century. During that time the Jews were ***ruled by a Roman civil government***, but they were also ***ruled by the apostate religious rulers*** of the Jews. Thus, the composite Land beast had “two horns”, one horn representing the civil rule of the Romans and the other horn representing the religious rulers of the Jews, and it should be understood that this religious rule “horn” is the “false prophet” while the civil rule is usually referred to simply as “the beast” by John. It should also be noted that *the apostate Jewish rulers needed the permission of the Roman procurator* in order to do certain things, including putting Jesus to death.

Before moving on from verse 12 of Revelation 13, there is one more item that needs comment: The verse states, “...the first beast, which deadly wound being healed.” Here again, the “first beast” is a reference to the composite sea beast and the “deadly wound” to that composite sea beast was the death by murder of one of its beastly kings. This wound was “healed” by the next beastly king who built the Roman Empire, composite sea beast, into its greatness and established the Pax Romana which continued for sometime after his long rule had ended.

Thus, upon careful examination, the text of Revelation 13:11 also shows this “two horn” government of the Jewish Land beast. The statement “and he spoke as a dragon, and he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him” in verse 12 identifies this Land beast with the Roman sea beast and indicates that the civil rule over the land of Judea got all of its authority from the Roman sea beast which had first installed it in the Land when the Romans

established Herod the great as the “king of the Jews”. Herod was an Edomite, not a Jew, who was first “recognized as the Jewish national ruler by “the Roman statesman Mark Antony... the Roman [Senate](#) made him king (of the Jews) and gave him soldiers to seize the throne. As 'friend and ally of the Romans' he was not a truly independent king... Although Herod tried to respect the pious feeling of his subjects, many of them were not content with his rule, which ended in terror. He was succeeded by his sons.”⁶

Chapter 14

Moving on to Revelation chapter 14, we find only two brief references to the beasts to which we were introduced in chapter 13. These are:

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man **worship the beast and his image**, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, **who worship the beast and his image**, and whosoever receives the mark of his name. (Revelation 14:9-11)

Both of these references are in essence repeating the same warning. These both refer back to 13:12-16, where as we have noted above, “the beast” is the composite Roman sea beast, and “his image” is the composite land beast. Thus, “his mark/the mark” harkens back to 13:16 where the composite Land beast “causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead.” Again, there is no usage of the term “false prophet” here.

Thus we can now move to chapter 15 which has only one reference to the “beasts” of Revelation 13:

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. (Revelation 15:2 AV)

⁶ Online article by Jona Lendering

Once again, “the beast” in this verse is a reference to the composite Roman sea beast and “his image” is a reference to the composite Land beast; as we saw in chapter 14 above. So “over his mark” is a reference to the mark of the composite Roman sea beast required of the people by the composite Land beast as in chapter 14.

Another phrase appears here that we have not seen since Chapter 13:17-18. In Revelation 15:2, John wrote, “...them that had gotten the victory...over the number of his name.” In the salient portions of chapter 13 we were informed that:

And he (the civil horn of the land beast) had power to give life unto the image (the composite land beast) of the beast (The Roman sea beast), that the image of the beast (the composite land beast) should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he (the composite land beast) causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or **the number of his name**. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast (the composite land beast): for it is the number of a man (the man of sin, 2Thess 2); and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six. (Revelation 13:17-18, emphasis and commentary added)

These verses present a complex of information that requires “wisdom” and “understanding” to “count the number of the beast.” Thus, wisdom and understanding demonstrate that the number of the “Land beast...is the number of a man,” i.e. the man of sin of 2Thessalonians 2 and his number six hundred, 60, and 6. (Not 666 as is often erroneously stated; even though a sum of 600 + 60 + 6 adds to 666 and it takes more understanding and wisdom than this writer currently has to take this any further.)

The above does not use the term “false prophet”.

The pace picks up a little as we move on into chapter 16 where we find some very interesting material. Chapters 15 and 16 deal with the “seven last plagues” that are to be poured out upon the Land of Judea to fulfill “the wrath of God” (15:1 & 8) against the Babylonian whore. Thus, the fifth plague/vial was poured out:

And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon **the state seat of the beast**; and **his kingdom** was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. (Revelation 16:10-11)

Ed Stevens has given intuitive approval to the view expressed herein by his observation that “This did not happen to the Romans *but it did to the Jews*”⁷ (emphasis added). Ed is absolutely right; this verse is describing a plague poured out on the “Jews” not the Romans. Thus, the “seat of the beast” is a reference to the city of Jerusalem, the capitol city and home of the temple⁸ of the Jewish-Roman land beast and “his kingdom” refers to the Roman-Jewish rule over the entirety of the province of Judaea and the totality of the apostate Jews within the Roman Empire.

In Revelation 16:10, still dealing with the plagues to be poured out upon apostate Judea, the sixth plague/vial is poured out upon the great river Euphrates...” that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared” to descend upon Judea:

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of idol worship, working signs, proceeding unto the kings of the Land and of the whole Roman Empire, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. (Revelation 16:13-14)

The phrase “like frogs” in the passage above is there to remind the astute reader of Revelation of the “frog” judgment that God sent on Pharaoh because of his hardhearted disobedience in Exodus 8. In a similar manner these hardhearted, disobedient apostate Jews would experience the judgment of God.

The “dragon” in this passage is a reference to Revelation 13:11 where the composite Land beast “spoke like a dragon”; the “beast” in this passage is a reference to verse 10 above where the fifth plague/vial was poured out on “seat” of the Jewish-Roman Land beast and the Jewish kingdom over which he ruled; and “the false prophet” in this passage is a reference to the second horn of the “two horns” on the composite Land beast from Revelation 13:11.

Finally, the statement, “to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty” in this passage sets the stage for the battle described in Revelation 19 by identifying the Jewish Land beast (civil ruler) and false prophet (religious ruler) as the “beast” (civil ruler) that is seized and destroyed and

⁷ Article “The Beast—Nero or Jewish,” by Ed Stevens in *Fulfilled! Magazine*, Spring 2012, Vol. 7, Issue 1

⁸ It should be noted here (again) that this temple was specifically a Herodian-Jewish temple, often referred to as Herod’s temple because of his great reconstruction of the temple which was not completed until shortly before its destruction in AD 70.

“with him the false prophet” (religious ruler) that is also seized and destroyed in the lake of fire; in verses 20-21.

That all of this takes place in Jerusalem, Judea we only need to note verse 19 of chapter 16:

And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nation fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. (Revelation 16:19)

Here “the great city” is of course Jerusalem and the cities of the nation are the other cities of the Land that were destroyed as a result of God’s wrath being fulfilled upon the composite Jewish-Roman Land beast

Having now properly identified the “beast and false prophet with him that we will see again in Revelation 19:20-21, we now must identify the “beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war in league with the rider on the white horse and His army in Revelation 19:19.

Thus, we turn to Revelation chapter 17; of which, the salient portions are highlighted in the text shown below:

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto you **the judgment of the great harlot** that sits upon many waters: With whom the kings of the land have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the land have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, (Rev 12:3) full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus: and seeing her, I wondered, a great wonder. And the angel said unto me, “why do you wonder”? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carries her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. **The beast that you saw was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and goes unto (the) destruction** (of the harlot): and they that dwell on the Land; whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, shall wonder, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here, the mind having the wisdom. The seven heads... are seven kings: five have fallen, and one is, the other is not yet come; and when he comes, he must continue a short space. And **the beast that was, and is not, he is an eighth (king)**, and is from the seven, and goes unto (the) destruction (of the harlot). And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, which have

received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. **These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.** These, with the Lamb, shall make war and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful. And he said unto me, the waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the harlot and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. **For God has put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.** And the woman which you saw is that great city, which reigns over the kings of the land. (Revelation 17:1-18, emphasis and comments added LD)

Verse one of this text specifically states that the main theme of this chapter is the “judgment of the Harlot” and the balance of the text, especially verse 12-18 deal directly with the destruction of the Harlot, Mystery Babylon, Mother of Harlots; i.e. the city of Jerusalem and the false, apostate religious system of the Jews whose religion was thoroughly polluted by false religions within the Babylonian captivity.

In this chapter we are informed that the “Harlot sits upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.” This, of course, is a reference to the “great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads in chapter 12:3ff who gives “his power, and his seat, and great authority” to the sea beast (12:2).

Revelation 17.

Dating the Book of Revelation by the Proper and True Identities of
“The Abyss,”
“The Beast Who is About to Arise out of the Abyss,”
And
“The Destruction of the Whore”

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I. INTRODUCTION

Thousands, perhaps even millions, of Bible students have read and pondered over the ominous words "THE BOTTOMLESS PIT" in the several passages in which it occurs in the Authorized Version or King James

translation of Revelation. Several modern translations of Revelation translate the Greek word “abussos” as abyss. What is this **BOTTOMLESS PIT** (abyss or abussos in Greek.)? Where is it located? Does it have another, possibly more common, name? If so, what is that name?

Throughout the history of Christianity it has ostensibly been assumed that this “abussos” is hell; the abode of Satan, the demons, and unrepentant sinners. Every commentator to which I have referred has either directly identified this “abussos” of Revelation as hell or something associated with it. Their understanding of these chapters⁹ is controlled by their perception of this “abussos.”

If it could be established that John’s use of “abussos” in Revelation had a much more practical and realistic meaning to his first century audience, it would be demonstrated that these translators and subsequent readers have seriously erred in this matter.

The purpose of this paper is to correctly identify the actual meaning behind John’s use of “abussos” and thus to demonstrate that the true meaning behind this word does in fact control the proper understanding of these chapters and other portions of the Revelation. We will also demonstrate that the establishment of the proper identity of this “abussos” along with the proper identity of the “beast that is about to come out of this abyss” (Rev. 17:8 & 11) and the whorish “Mystery Babylon the Great” (Rev.17:5) provides the reader with precise information for dating the time of the writing of the Revelation. “Neither can be understood apart from the other.”¹⁰

II. ARGUMENT

In New Testament times the apostle Paul and others often spoke and wrote of judgment that was **about to come** upon the first century people:

God...**now** commands all men every where to repent: Because **he has appointed a day**, in which he **is about to judge** the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he has ordained (Jesus Christ); *whereof* he has given assurance unto all *men*, in that he has raised him from the dead. (Acts 17:30-31, emphasis and comment added)

Many partial preterists and all futurists insist that this judgment did not take place in the first century. If it did not, Paul was radically confused, not inspired.

⁹ The Greek word “abussos” occurs in the New Testament nine times. It is found in Revelation chapters 9:1, 2, & 11; 11:17; 17:8; & 20:1 & 3. It also occurs (translated “the deep”) in Luke 8:31 and Romans 10:7, but only in Revelation has it taken on the ominous undertones of “the bottomless pit” (hell) in the minds of the translators of the Authorized Version and thus in the minds of modern Bible students.

¹⁰ Mounce, Robert H. The Book of Revelation, p.313.

And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and **judgment about to come**, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. (Acts 24:24-25)

Why did Felix “tremble”? Certainly not because of righteousness or temperance, but because he clearly understood with Paul that the judgment of Yahweh was **about to come in his life time in that generation!**

Paul told Timothy essentially the same thing:

I charge *thee* therefore before God, and **the Lord Jesus Christ**, who **is about to judge** the living and the dead **at his appearing and his kingdom**; (2 Timothy 4:1)

The above passages and many similar passages in the New Testament make it very clear that the judgment of Jesus Christ and the “wrath of” God was **about to descend** on the people of the first century. This judgment (among other things) was to bring about the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:2 et al.) Thus, we ask ourselves the question – how was this judgment to occur? Who or what was going to carry out this judgment and destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem? For our answers we now turn to the Revelation:

The beast that you saw was, and is not; and **is about to ascend** out of the abyss (abussos), **and go unto destruction**¹¹: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. (Revelation 17:8)

The full context of this passage is one of the very best internal evidences for a late 60’s AD date for the writing of the Revelation! “It is vitally important to see **with the preterist** that the book (Revelation) must be interpreted in light of **the immediate historical crisis** in which the first-century church found itself.”¹² (Emphasis added) In order to recognize this, of course, it is very important to understand what John is really writing about in this and related verses. We submit for the reader’s consideration that very, very few have ever understood this verse and its related context. We think that there is only one Biblical definition of this “**BOTTOMLESS PIT**” (KJV), *and that the Bible itself must supply us with that definition as Yahweh's Holy Spirit enables us to understand what the apostle John was writing about* in Revelation 9, 11, 17 & 20.

¹¹ Not the destruction of the beast as is commonly taught, but the judgment and destruction of the whore/harlot as described in 17:1 and 11-18.

¹² Mounce, Robert H. The Book of Revelation, page 29.

When John wrote this passage, he declared that “the beast” was **about to come up** out of the abyss and go unto the destruction. Of special interest to us in this context is information about the abyss or “bottomless pit.” “Bottomless pit” is the rather loose King James Version (AV) translation of the Greek word:

abussos {ab'-us-sos} Strong's #12 from 1 (as a negative particle) and a variation of 1037; TDNT - 1:9,2;

AV - bottomless pit (5)

- deep (2)

- bottomless (2) [9]

1) the abyss, bottomless pit

2) bottomless, unfathomed: boundless, enormous

3) The rabbinic (Hebrew to Greek) translation of the Hebrew word ת@הוּמ (teh-home') in the Septuagint.

If it may be judged by the literature and many personal conversations with other Christians, it is obvious that many, if not most, Christians are very uncertain about the identity of the bottomless pit or abyss although most ostensibly think it has something to do with their concept of “hell”. Many commentators have stated similar positions. “The abyss...is the realm of demons over which Satan rules...”¹³ “In Revelation...it (the abyss) is the place inhabited by spirits.”¹⁴ “The word (abyss) evidently denotes the deepest depths of hell.”¹⁵ While this seems to be the assumption of most modern Christians, **we think that this is an unwarranted assumption.**

In reference to Revelation 17:8 one commentator wrote, “**Whatever is meant by** the bottomless pit, the text does say that the beast will go to perdition or destruction.”¹⁶ (Emphasis added) That commentator readily admits that he does not know what the “bottomless pit” is, and he obviously assumes (as do most Christians) that John’s statement means the beast will go to his own personal destruction, as he stated, “Even unbelievers will be astonished at **the fall of the beast...**”¹⁷ (Emphasis added)

We can find nothing in the text of Revelation 17:8 about the fall or the destruction of this beast. John wrote:

The beast that you saw was, and is not, and **is about to ascend out of** the abyss, and go unto destruction, and those who dwell on the land (of the abyss) will marvel, whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not and yet is.

¹³ Beale, G. K., *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 493

¹⁴ Morris, Leon, *Revelation* p. 127.

¹⁵ Becker, Siegbert W., *Revelation: The Distant Triumph Song* p. 141.

¹⁶ Bowman, George M., *Revelation 17-22 Re-examined*, p. 29.

¹⁷ Ibid

This verse states that the beast is **about to ascend out of the abyss** and those who live on the land will marvel when they see the beast that was, and is not and yet is. The text is clear the people will marvel when they see the beast! Nothing is said about the destruction of the beast. However, the text does say that “he will go unto destruction.” While it seems that very few have done so, the obvious question that all Bible students should ask themselves here is; **the destruction of whom/what?** It seems that the modern Christian community assumes, without due consideration, that the text is about the destruction of the beast. Mounce wrote, “The beast (of Rev.17:8 & 11-12) is an eighth king. His ten horns represent ten other kings who join with the beast in waging war against¹⁸ the Lamb and are defeated.”¹⁹ We do not think that this is the case. Mounce very clearly demonstrates the absurdity of his own interpretation as in the very next sentence he writes, “The beast and the ten kings turn their hatred on the prostitute and bring her to a gory death.”²⁰ His position, as presented in the two sentences quoted above, is totally incongruous; the beast and his ten kings completely defeated would not be able to destroy the whore. As this verse alone is not clear on this matter, we need to carefully examine the full context of this verse to find the correct answer.

In verse one, of this seventeenth chapter, John is told that he is to be shown the “**judgment of the whore.**” Old²¹ and New Testaments²² speak in unison and conclusively that the “whore” is Jerusalem – the capital city of the southern kingdom of Judah. Thus the full context of this passage is “**the destruction of Jerusalem.**” It is obvious that Bowman (and many others) would agree with this conclusion because he stated repeatedly in his book “that God had targeted Jerusalem for divine judgment.”²³ He even goes so far as to state that “the Roman Empire...was soon to attack and conquer the Jewish nation.”²⁴ He also stated “that the beast is the Roman Empire at the time of the reign of Nero.” Therefore, we conclude that the “destruction” of verse 8 is **the destruction of the whore, not the destruction of the beast** as Bowman and nearly everyone else has mistakenly assumed! There is much more evidence for this in the remaining context of chapter 17.

According to verse 3, John is taken (in the spirit) into the wilderness and shown a vision of the whore and the beast upon which she was riding.

¹⁸ Here Mounce uses and incorrect translation of the Greek word “meta”. See the discussion of the Greek word “meta” on pages 11 & 12.

¹⁹ Mounce, Robert H. The Book of Revelation, p. 313.

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Dale, Lloyd, “Vanquishing the Mosaic Marriage Law by the Death of Israel’s Husband/God: Paul’s Old Testament Reference in Romans 7:1-6”

²² Preston, Don K., Who is this Babylon?

²³ Bowman, George M. Revelation 17-22 Re-examined, p. 23.

²⁴ Ibid, page 27.

Here the whore is identified as “drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” This description can identify none other than the apostate Judaism in Jerusalem.

In addition to the “whore” John is shown a great “scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.” As Bowman has stated,²⁵ and as all Bible students “in the know” agree this beast generically is the Roman Empire. Verse 10 tells John’s first century audience that there are “eight specific kings” of this Empire of which they should be cognizant. We could not help but notice that although Bowman correctly identified the first seven kings²⁶, he made no mention of the eighth king. We could not help but wonder why?

According to verse 11, the “beast” that John described in verse 8 is to be that “eighth” King (Caesar) of the Roman Empire.

As has been noted above, in verse 8 John describes the beast (eighth king of Roman Empire) as “the beast *that... was*, and *is not*, and *is about to come up out of the abyss...*” What is this riddle that John puts forth? Very few modern Bible students have understood this riddle, however Bowman got quite close when he stated, “the beast that was’ as the past Roman persecution, the beast that ‘is not’ as a pause in the Roman persecution, and the beast that ‘yet is’ as a renewal of Roman persecution.”²⁷ He erred because he forgot that the context of this statement is the destruction of the whore, *not the Roman persecution of the Christians*. The reason that most modern Bible students do not understand this riddle is because they fail to put it in the proper context. Remember the context of this whole passage is the “*judgment of the whore*” – *thus the destruction of Jerusalem!* John’s riddle thus means that this man who “**is about to come up...**” and **become the eighth king of the Roman Empire** “was” (previous to his coming up and becoming king) involved in the judgment-destruction of the whore-Jerusalem, but at the time in which John was writing the Revelation he “**is not**” yet the Caesar or king of the Roman Empire, but he “**is about to come up**” into his kingship and in that capacity he will return to the work of the judgment - “**destruction**” of Jerusalem.

Where is this man who is going to be the eighth king of the Roman Empire? John informs us that he “**is about to go up out of the abyss.”** **By this we know that he is presently in the abyss.** What and where is **this abyss?**

²⁵ Bowman, George M., *Revelation 17-22 Re-examined*, p. 29.

²⁶ Ibid, pages 31-32 (Gaius Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius,[have fallen] Nero, [now is] and Galba [yet to come].

²⁷ Ibid, page 28.

As noted above, traditional Christian “*wisdom?*” has associated the abyss with their concept of hell. Thus, it is generally taught that this beast is some strange (Devil possessed?) creature that comes from hell or as Bowman states this abyss “has been interpreted as ‘the invisible demonic habitat’ and ‘the domain of heathenism.’”²⁸

We don’t think that John’s abyss has anything to do with hell, and we think we have clear and strong biblical evidence for our thoughts! First, in context all the kings (Caesars) of the Rome Empire were flesh and blood human men, thus this “an eighth” king must also have been a flesh and blood human being. If hell is what the Christian church has taught that it is, *no man ever did or ever will come out of hell to rule the Roman Empire!* Thus, if this eighth king did not come up out of hell, where was he and from whence did he come? In other words – what and where is John’s **abyss?**

Remember the context here is “*the judgment of the whore!*” Verses 16-17 inform us that the whore was hated, made desolate and naked, her flesh eaten and she was burned with fire. In other words she was “*judged and destroyed!*” This whore was located in the land of Judaea, thus the judgment of the whore would take place in Judaea.

A Hebrew prophet, psalmist informs us:

The transgression of the wicked says...*that there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flatters himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. He devises mischief...O Yahweh...thy judgments [upon these iniquities] are an abyss: (Psalms 36:1-6. LXX, in part, emphasis and comment added)*

The Hebrew word which is translated abyss in the reference above (great deep in KJV) is:

t@howm {teh-home'} or t@hom {teh-home'} Strong's 8415 (usually feminine) from 1949; TWOT - 2495a; n f/m It is defined as:

- 1) deep, depths, deep places, **abyss**, the deep, sea
 - 1a) deep (of subterranean waters)
 - 1b) deep, sea, abysses (of sea)
 - 1c) primeval ocean, deep
 - 1d) deep, depth (of river)
- 2) When the rabbis translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek (the Septuagint) they translated the Hebrew word t@howm (teh-home) into the Greek word abussos.

In Revelation 17, Yahweh/Yahshua God is showing the judgment-destruction which He is about to bring down upon the whore

²⁸ Ibid

(Jerusalem/apostate Judaism). It is established above that the whore is Jerusalem in Judaea. Thus, putting the information from the Hebrew psalmist-prophet with the information from the Hebrew apostle-prophet, **we can now see that John's "abyss" is the first century place of Yahweh's judgment for sin which is *Jerusalem in Judaea!* Thus the land of Judaea of the first century Jews is John's abyss!** This is the place where Yahweh's judgment was to take place, and as a matter of historical fact, did take place in 68-70 AD.

Bowman got very close to this truth when he stated, "the land of Judaea had become a target area for the just and holy judgment of God,"²⁹ "God had singled out Judaea for divine judgment,"³⁰ (Page 46) "...so the mighty angels in this passage really means the Roman soldiers that Christ used as his **messengers of justice** (emphasis added) to punish the Jewish persecutors. The words, 'flaming fire' means the 'flaming fire of war' which Christ used to destroy the harlot city of Jerusalem and its temple," and "the bottomless pit is **symbolic of divine punishment.**" Unfortunately for him and his readers, he did not find the connection to certain Old Testament passages such as Psalm 36:6, Jonah 2:5, Habakkuk 3-10, Ezekiel 26, and did not follow it all the way to its proper biblical conclusion.

Now we must ask – **was there a man in the land of Judaea** (the abyss) *who was involved in the judgment-destruction of Judaea, but at the time Revelation was being circulated, he was not the King of the Roman Empire, and who soon left Judaea to become a Roman Emperor and who as the king of the Roman Empire ordered the judgment-destruction of Judaea?* **There certainly was and his name was Vespasian, the Roman General who had been sent to Judaea by Nero to take over the Roman army which was already in that land, and to prosecute the judgment-destruction war against the Jews in that land.**

There is a very interesting comment in Josephus about a "sacred oracle" that ostensibly applies to this Revelation passage. Josephus states:

But now, what did most elevate them in undertaking this war was an ambiguous oracle (Rev.17:10-11) that was also found in their sacred writings, how, "about that time, **one from their own country** (this shows that the Jews understood John's bottomless pit to be "their own land") should become governor (Caesar) of the habitable earth (Roman Empire)." The (apostate) Jews took this prediction to belong to themselves in particular; and many wise men were thereby deceived in their determination. Now

²⁹ Ibid, p. 41

³⁰ Ibid, p. 46

this oracle certainly denoted **the government of Vespasian, who was appointed emperor in Judea.**³¹ (Emphasis and comments added)

According to Josephus, The Roman army wanted Vespasian to become emperor because of his age, excellent character, experience and military record. They also considered Vespasian and his son Titus as the "dynamic duo" that would be able to salvage the Roman Empire with Vespasian as king and his son Titus leading the army. When Vespasian went to Rome to officially begin his reign, Titus returned to Judaea to continue the prosecution of the war against the Jews and was "sent (by Vespasian) to destroy Jerusalem" which he eventually did. In his writings, Josephus often refers to Titus as "Caesar" even while Vespasian was the ruling monarch.³²

According to the historical accounts, especially Josephus, Vespasian became the general of Nero's army in Judaea and proceeded to prosecute the war against the Jews ("was"), however, while doing that Vespasian and the army heard about the death of Nero. At that time Vespasian placed the war in abeyance pending the placement of the new king. During this time of inaction in Judaea and chaos in the Empire Vespasian "**is not**" prosecuting the war and is not yet king; however, the Roman soldiers began to persuade Vespasian to become the new Caesar. After considerable hesitation Vespasian finally succumbed to the urging of the troops and with the approval of Alexander of Egypt, he agreed to permit them to anoint him "an eighth" Caesar of Rome ("**about to come up out of the abyss**"). Vespasian then proceeded to Rome (came up out of the abyss), dispatching Vitellius' army on the way, and became the "an eighth" king which John described in Revelation 17.

In the clear light of this information let us now take another look at verse 8 and its pertinent context and true meaning as shown below:

The beast (eighth king of the Roman Empire) that you saw was (involved in the war against the Jews), and is not (currently prosecuting the war); and **is about to come up out** (ascend) out of the abyss (Judaea), and lead [the kingdom] unto [the] destruction [of Jerusalem-Judaea (Jews)]: and they that dwell on the land (the apostate Jews) shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, **when they behold the beast** (the "an eighth" Roman Caesar) that was (involved in the war), and is not (currently prosecuting that war), and yet is (in the land). **And here is the mind which hath wisdom.** The seven heads are seven mountains (the reign of the seven kings), on which the woman (Jerusalem) sits. And there are seven kings: five (Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, & Claudius) are fallen, and one is (Nero), and the other (Galba) is not yet come; and when he (Galba) comes, he must continue a short space (seven months). And the beast (Caesar-king) that was (in the abyss prosecuting

³¹ Josephus, Flavius, *Wars of the Jews*, Book VI, chap. V, Sec.4, emphasis and comment added.

³² Ibid, Book III, chap. 1, sec.3 p.502 - chap. 10, p. 546)

the war against the Jews), and is not (yet the king), even he is the “an eighth” (Roman Caesar-king), and is of the seven (as the chief General of the Empire under Nero), and leads unto (presides over) the destruction (of Jerusalem). (Revelation 17:8-11)

The “ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet” of verse 12 receive their kingdom when Vespasian becomes Caesar, and being of “one mind... (They) give their power and strength unto the beast” (Vespasian, v.13).

Verse 14 explains that these ten kings shall make war **with** (Greek: “meta,” this does not mean *against* as erroneously given in many “modern” translations) the Lamb.

If this passage means that the “ten kings” *fight against the Lamb and the Lamb “overcomes them”* as many modern translations render this passage, then it is totally out of context as clearly demonstrated above. Remember the context is “**the judgment of the whore” and her destruction as given in verses 16-17, it is not about the destruction of the Roman Empire or any of its kings.**

The first portion of verse 14 is clear, the beast and the ten kings make war **with the Lamb**, not *against* him. In other words the beast and the ten kings unite, and are brought under the power of the Lamb to do his will to make war against the whore. This is verified in verses 16-17:

And the ten horns which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For **God** (the Lamb) **hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will**, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. (Revelation 17:16-17, emphasis and comment added)

In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul urges the Roman Christians to not attempt to “avenge” themselves against their persecutors (primarily the Jews) but rather to allow the wrath (judgment) of God to do its work (Romans 12:19ff). Then Paul continues:

...the [Roman] powers that be (the beast and the ten kings) are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resists the power resists the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves judgment (Gk. “krima” cf. Rev. 17:1). For rulers are...a terror to...the evil...if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he bears not the sword in vain: for **he is the minister of God, a avenger to execute wrath upon him** (persecutors) **that doeth evil.** (Romans 13:2-4, emphasis and comment added)

In Revelation 17:14, and in greatly expanded form in 19:11-21, John describes the Lamb coming forth as a conquering king:

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness **He doth judge and make war.** His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written,

that no man knew, but He himself. And He *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on *His* vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men, both* free and bond, both small and great. And I **saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war with** (Not against as in AV. Gk. meta, cf. Rev. 17:14) **him that sat on the horse, and with** (Not against as in AV. Gk. meta, cf. Rev. 17:14) **his army.** (Revelation 19:11-19, emphasis and comment added)

The above is John's description of the climax of the destruction of Jerusalem as a result of the Lamb's judgment. The great armies of the beast (Vespasian and the ten kings) in submission to the Lamb do the will of the Lamb and bring destruction to the whore. However, at this point John makes an interesting adjustment in his language. In verse 20 John describes the whore using the words by which he had described her in the 13th chapter of Revelation:

And I beheld another **beast coming up out of the land**; and he had **two horns like a lamb**, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercised all the power of the **first beast** (Roman Empire, the generic form of the beast) before him, and caused the land and them which dwell therein to **worship the first beast**, whose deadly wound (Empire chaos at the death of Nero) was healed (by the reign of Vespasian). And he doeth great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceived them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the [first] beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the [first] beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the [first] beast, that the image of the [first] beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the [first] beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the [first] beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the [first] beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six. (Revelation 13:11-18, emphasis and comments added)

Thus, John describes the fate of the second beast of Revelation 13:11-18 at "the hands" of the armies of the beast (Vespasian) and the ten kings. So "the powers that be" have borne the sword, become the avenger, and

delivered the wrath of God upon Jerusalem and the apostate first century Jews:

And the [second] beast (one of the horns) was taken, and with him the false prophet (the other horn) that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the [first] beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both [the second beast & the false prophet] were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone [Jerusalem in the process of destruction]. And the remnant [of apostate Jews] were slain with the sword (the Roman army) of him that sat upon the horse, which sword [of prophecy fulfilled] proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their (the war dead) flesh. (Revelation 19:11-21, comments added)

Thus, just as John and Paul had declared, in 70 AD the armies of the beast and the ten kings delivered the “wrath of God” by sacking and burning Jerusalem (Apostate Judaism, the “two horned” beast of Rev.13:11-18) to carry out the will of the Lamb.

Much very useful information about the angel (messenger) and the key of the abyss, etc. can be gleaned from Revelation chapter nine, and much more is brought forth in chapter twenty, however, due to space limitations that must be examined in another paper.

III. Summary

In 1985 Becker wrote that “Many attempts have been made to fit these words... ‘there are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come...’ into the pattern of Roman history, but all such attempts end in failure.”³³ This may or may not have been a true statement in 1985. However, this writer acknowledges that he has never found any previous attempt which properly placed these words into the context of Roman history prior to his own recognition of the information presented in this paper.

In this paper we have demonstrated that the abyss of Revelation, properly identified, is the land of Judaea not some imaginative abode of Satan and his demons as is generally erroneously assumed. The recognition of this fact of biblical history then enables us to properly identify the beast that is about to ascend out of the abyss, become Caesar of the Roman Empire and reign through the destruction of Mystery Babylon the Great – the city of apostate Judaism - Jerusalem, the whorish widow of Yahweh. This personage specifically³⁴ identified as “the beast” in Revelation 17:8, as

³³ Becker, Siegbert W., *Revelation: The Distant Triumph Song* p. 265.

³⁴ For a discussion of the beast of Revelation –the generic identity and specific identities see Gentry, Dr. Kenneth L., *The Beast of Revelation*, p.12-14.

“an eighth” king in Revelation 17:11-12, and as the beast that makes war to destroy the whore for the Lamb in Revelation 17:12-17 is Vespasian whose son Titus is the General of the Roman army that finished the destruction of the city and the temple in 70 AD.

We have also demonstrated that the proper identification of “the beast,” “the abyss,” and the “Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the land” fits perfectly with the sequence of history pertaining to the war of the Jews with the Roman army and this provides nearly irrefutable evidence for a late 60’s AD date for the circulation of the Revelation. Thus whether Becker’s 1985 statement was true then or not, it certainly is no longer true in 2003.

A summary of An Exegetical Analysis of Revelation 19:19-21 in its greater context of Revelation 13, 16, & 17

By Lloyd Dale
04-06-2012

A quick review: If we are accurate in our observation of the "**another beast**" (Rev 13:11ff, beast #2, in Rev 13) we should have seen that three terms can be used to designate the "**another beast**" of Rev 13:11ff. These terms are:

1. "**Beast**" (outward expression of kingdom/king civil authority)
2. "**Dragon**" (undergirding authority, expressed as "he spoke as a dragon")
3. "**False Prophet**" (outward expression of improper religious authority)

As we move deeper into Revelation we do see that these three terms appear again in chapter 16. Here they appear in this manner and order:

1. "the seat of the **Beast**" (16:10) "his kingdom" which of course includes the people in his kingdom within his civil authority.
2. "...**the dragon**" (16:13, quasi authority that undergirds all beasts)
3. "**The beast**" (outward expression of kingdom/king civil authority)
4. "...**the False Prophet**" (16:13, outward expression of improper religious authority)

Thus, we should see that in Revelation 16, John is addressing the "**another beast**" (beast #2) of Revelation 13:11ff, **not** the sea beast of Rev 13:1-10!

Ed Stevens, in his article in Fulfilled! magazine³⁵ quoted Rev 16:10-11 and astutely observes, "This did not happen to the Romans, but it did happen to the Jews" which is exactly right, but a fact that far too many students of Revelation either ignore or completely miss. It is so good to see that he did not miss it and that he had the courage to bring it forward.

Now here is the point that I am trying to make; there are clearly two "**beasts**" in Revelation 13 and these two "beasts" both appear at different times and at different places in the later portions of Revelation. The **first beast; the "beast that arises up out of the sea** of Revelation 13:1-10 is in fact the Roman Empire and all of its kings (civil authority). As we read this we need to remember that the term "beast" may refer to the kingdom itself or **it may more specifically refer to a specific king within that "beastly" kingdom at any particular time.** The **second beast; the one that is "coming up out of the land" (Rev 13:11ff) of Judea is, in fact, a "Jewish-Roman beast"!** **These two beasts should never be confused and a discerning student of Revelation will expend great effort to determine exactly which of these two beasts any particular section of Revelation is referencing.**

Within Steven's article, he astutely acknowledged that Revelation 16 does not address the "Romans" but that it does specifically reference the "Jews". Unfortunately the balance of his article does not ostensibly support his point about the "Jewish beast" that he establishes about chapter 16 and the point that I am trying so very hard to make here -- which is -- that **when we read/study Revelation we must never be careless as to exactly which "beast" any and every particular portion of Revelation is referring to!**

Another thing that we must absolutely keep in mind is that the Revelation does not always refer to a beast with the term "beast".

In his article Steven's skipped over Rev 17 and 18 and went directly to chapter 19. I do not know why he chose to do that but I assume that it had something to do with this statement:

"The above three texts do not fit the Romans at all, but they do fit a Jewish beast."

Ostensibly, his commentary about Rev 19:19-21 in his article does not sustain a clear discernment as to the term "beast" within that text. Thus, I recognize several potential problems within that article commentary.

At this point, please permit me to return to the very beginning of his article where he wrote, "The main purpose of this article is to explain why I believe **the Beast** of Revelation was not Nero or the Roman Empire." "The beast of Revelation" there is not the slightest hint in that statement that could lead anyone to think that

³⁵ Fulfilled! Magazine, published quarterly by the Fulfilled Communications Group, 1620 Sequoia St., Napa, Ca. 94558. Email: fcg.brian@yahoo.com Telephone: 1-775-278-1948 Website: www.FulfilledMagazine.com

there was more than one "beast" in Revelation. Does Stevens really think that there is only one beast in Revelation?

It would be very easy to assume from that statement that he has not recognized the very fundamental concept that there is more than "the Beast" of Revelation and his explanation of Rev 19:19-21 directly supports the above assumption.

It is very clear, to me at least, that he does not properly recognize the certain and clear presence of both **the "sea beast"** (Rev 13:1-10 & portions of Rev 17:2, 8-18, and Rev 19:19-20) **and the "land beast"** (Revelation 13:11ff, Rev 16:8-14, and Rev 19:20) in Revelation 19:19-21.

The study of Revelation 17 and related chapters above, properly and firmly establishes this point. Chapter 17, Verse one (1) sets the clear and certain context of this chapter as "***the judgment of the great whore...***" (i.e. the great city Jerusalem) and the final portion of this chapter (17:12-18) clearly supports and sustains that context by vividly but yet succinctly describing the destruction of the great whore by the beast (the Roman empire) and the armies of the ten kings giving "their power and strength unto the Beast" (The Roman Empire under the rule of Vespasian).

As this great whore city certainly existed in the land of the Jewish-Roman beast; it should be obvious to everyone that this great whore city is the central entity of the "**Roman-Jewish Land Beast**" of Revelation 3:11ff. Therefore, the destruction of that great whore city, the home of the false prophet of apostate Judaism, should be seen, at the very least, as a clear and certain parallel to the destruction of the Land beast and the false Prophet in Rev 19:20-21.

In Rev 17:16 the great whore is destroyed by armies of the ten horns/kings (cf. verses 12-13 & 16) which "have given their power and strength unto **sea the beast**" (v 13) to "fulfill the will of God" (v 17)! From the historical record we certainly know that the Romans (the sea beast with the factions of the Zealots doing their part of the destruction) destroyed the Jewish city of Jerusalem (the great whore) in AD 70!

Now turning to Rev 19:19 we see that the very same "**sea Beast**" (#1) that we saw in chapter 17 and the very same ten horns/kings and their armies join with the **sea beast (first beast, #1)** to "take"/capture and destroy **the second (#2) "beast and with him the false prophet.... these both (the land beast of Rev 13:11, 15-16 and the false prophet of Rev 13:13-14 (cf. Rev 19:19-21) were cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."**

Thus, the Roman Sea Beast under the rule of Vespasian brought an end to the Roman-Jewish land beast and the false prophet!!!