

The Destruction of the Harlot

By Lloyd Dale

We would like to take this opportunity to share some very interesting “about to” (Gk. mello) passages with you:

And you are **about to** hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that you are not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. (Matthew 24:6)

Audience relevance: Jesus clearly instructed his disciples that **they** (not somebody in the 21 century, 2000 years in the future) were **about to hear of wars and rumors of wars**. This would have been a very unusual occurrence in their day because of the great Pax Romana that had existed throughout their life time!

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; *whereof* he has given assurance unto all *men*, in that he has raised him from the dead. (Acts 17:30-31)

Many partial preterists insist the Matthew 25 has not been fulfilled because the judgment of the nations did not take place in the first century. If it did not Paul was radically confused, not inspired.

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 lifetime - within that first century 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 other similar passages make it very clear that the judgment of the “wrath of” God was **about to descend** on the people of the first century. This judgment was to bring about the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem (among other things, 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 answer to this we now turn to the book of Revelation:

The beast that you saw was, and is not; and **is about to** ascend out of the abyss, **and go unto destruction**: 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)

When John wrote this passage, he declared that “the beast” was **about to come** up out of the abyss and go unto the destruction. The full context of this passage is one of the very best internal evidences for a late 60’s AD dating for the circulation of the Revelation! 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 your consideration that very, very few have ever understood this verse and its related context.

In verse one (1), of this 17th chapter, John is told that he is to be shown the “**judgment (and destruction) of the whore.**” Old¹ and New Testaments² speak in unison and conclusively that the “whore” is Jerusalem – the capitol city of the southern kingdom, Judah. Thus, the full context of this passage is “**the destruction of Jerusalem.**”

John is then taken into the wilderness and shown a vision of the whore and the beast upon which she was riding. 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.” All Bible students “in the know” agree that this beast is the Roman Empire. Verse 10 tells John’s first century audience that there are “eight kings” of this Empire of which they should be cognizant. According to verse 11, the “beast” that John described in verse 8 is to be that “an eighth” King (Caesar) of the Roman Empire.

In verse 8 John describes the beast (“an eighth” king of Roman Empire) as “the beast **that... was, and is not, and is about to come up out of...**” What is this riddle that John puts forth? Very few modern Bible students have understood this riddle 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 (beast) who “**is about to come up out of the abyss...**” **and become the “an eighth” king of the Roman Empire “was”** (previous to his coming up out of and becoming king) involved in the judgment-destruction of the whore-Jerusalem, but at the time in which John was putting forth the 17 chapter of the Revelation he “**is not**” involved in the judgment-destruction of the whore-Jerusalem because the war has been put in abeyance, 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.

¹ For complete OT documentation of this see Dale, Lloyd, The Olive Tree Mystery, self published. Available now on the website: www.lloyddale.com

² For complete NT documentation see Preston, Don, Who is this Babylon, self published.

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.** What and where is **this abyss?**

Traditional Christian “wisdom” has associated the abyss with the concept of hell. Thus it is generally taught that this beast (“an eighth” king) is some strange creature that comes from hell. **We don’t think so**, 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 eighth king must be a flesh and blood human also. 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 “an 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!”***

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 are an abyss:*** (Psalms 36:1-6, emphasis added)

In Revelation 17 Yahweh God is prophesying the judgment-destruction he is about to bring down upon the whore. It is established 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.

Now we must ask – **was there a man in the land of Judaea** (the abyss) who had been involved in the judgment of Judaea, but at the time John established for the fulfillment of the 17th chapter of Revelation was not active, 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-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 this oracle certainly denoted **the government of Vespasian, who was appointed emperor in Judea.** (WOTJ Book VI, ch.V, Sec.4, emphasis and comment 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. (Wars of the Jews, Book III, ch. 1, sec.3 p.502 - ch. 10, P.546)

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 (“**is not**”) in Judaea and chaos in the Empire, 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 as the “an eighth” Caesar of Rome (“**about to come up out of the abyss**”). Vespasian then “ascended up out of the abyss,” proceeded to Rome, dispatching Vitellius’ army on the way, and became the “an eighth” king (Caesar) which John described in Revelation 17.

In a very interesting passage, Josephus, the Jewish historian employed by the Romans to document the “Wars of the Jews” etc. confirms the above:

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 country [Judaea]”) 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 this oracle certainly denoted **the government of Vespasian, who was appointed emperor in Judea.** (WOTJ Book VI, ch.V, sec.4, emphasis and comment added)

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As should now clearly be seen, this internal evidence and historical information conclusively dates this fulfillment of the Revelation into the late 60's AD!

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 ("an 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 rule over [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/kingdoms (the reigns 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 (Nero) is, 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 the war against the Jews), and is not (currently prosecuting the war), even he is the "an eighth" (Roman Caesar-king), and is of the seven (Chief General of the Empire under Nero), and leads unto the destruction (of Jerusalem). (Revelation 17:8-11)

The "ten kings" of verse 12 (not a reference to ten kings of the Roman Empire) receive their power when Vespasian becomes Caesar, and being of "one mind... (they) give their power and strength unto "the beast" (Vespasian/Titus). Verse 14 explains that these ten kings shall make war **with** (Greek: "meta," this word 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. Remember the context is **"the judgment of the whore" and her destruction as given in verses 16-17.**

The first portion of verse 14 is clear, the beast and the ten kings make war **with the Lamb as the agents of vengeance**, 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)

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 revenger to execute wrath upon him** (persecutors) **that doeth evil**. (Romans 13:2-4)

In Chapter 19 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**.

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 will of the Lamb, 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 Revelation³:

³ In Revelation 13 John states that the beast that “comes out of the land” has “two horns.” This beast has “two horns” because of its status under Rome. Rome gave the authority to rule (one horn) over the Judean province to Herod and continued it in his sons. However, the Jews also had their rule (the other horn, the false prophet) in the form of the Jewish Sanhedrin or priests and elders of Judea. Collectively this beast

And I beheld *another beast* (*The Herod dynasty-[the beast] and apostate Judaism-[the false prophet]*) **coming up out of the land**; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he (The beast with two horns, i.e. the Herod dynasty with his false prophet, apostate Judaism) exercised all the power of the **first beast** (the Roman Empire) before him, and caused the land and them which dwell therein to **worship the first beast** (“we have no God but Caesar”), whose deadly wound was healed (by the reign of Vespasian). And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven (War from Rome) on the earth in the sight of men (apostate Jews), And deceived them that dwell on the land (of Judea) by *the means* of those wonders 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 (the sword that killed Nero and caused the near collapse of the Empire), and did live (the Empire survived the death of Nero). 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 AV)

Thus, John describes the fate of the second beast of Revelation 13:11ff at “the hands” of the armies of the beast (Vespasian) and the ten kings. Thus, “the powers that be” (i.e. the Roman Empire) have borne the sword, become the avenger, and delivered the wrath of God upon Jerusalem and the apostate first century Jews:

And the beast⁴ (The Herodian dynasty) was taken, and with him the false prophet (apostate Judaism) that wrought wonders 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 Herodian dynasty & his 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) was slain with the sword 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 flesh. (Revelation 19:11-21)

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 the Jerusalem of the Herodian

“spoke as a dragon” against the Christ and His followers and demanded Caesar worship in Judaea. This “beast and false prophet” was destroyed in the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman Armies led by Titus.

⁴ For a detailed and extensive study of the identity of this “beast see my paper “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 which was destroyed in Revelation 19:20 by the armies of the sea beast.”

dynasty and the false prophet [apostate Judaism], the second beast of Rev.13:11-18) to carry out the will of the Lamb.

We would really appreciate your consideration and evaluation of the above material. Comments and questions are most welcome.

That TRUTH may prevail!

In the service of the reigning King,

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