

## Q13) Who are the ten horns?

**Question:** The Book of the Revelation chapter 17 describes a harlot woman named *"MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS"*, who is seen riding a beast which has *"seven heads and ten horns"*. This is not the only occasion that John speaks of a beast with *"seven heads and ten horns"*...

In Revelation chapter 12 the *"great red dragon"* is seen with *"seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads"* (Rev.12:3), while in Revelation chapter 13 the first of two beasts which John sees has *"seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns"* (Rev.13:1).

**Answer:** There is much speculation as to what the seven heads and ten horns mean, and who the beast and the harlot woman represent. In recent days some have suggested that America was the harlot woman and the beast with seven heads and ten horns was the UN. One Charismatic preacher even worked out that if you number the letters of the English alphabet in increments of six, then the name New York adds up to 666!

Can we know who the harlot woman and the beast are? Does Scripture indicate their true character? It certainly does.

We must remember that Scripture interprets its own symbols. We do not have the right to attribute our own fanciful meanings to Scriptural symbols. If we cannot find Biblical meanings for symbolic language then we have not *"rightly divided the word of truth"*.

There are three symbolic personages described which we will consider. They are:  
1) The great red dragon with *"seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads"* (Rev.12:3).

2) The beast which rises *"up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy"*( Rev.13:1). He is *"like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power..."*(Rev.13: 2).

3) The harlot woman is described as *"the great whore that sitteth upon many waters"* (Rev.17:1). She is seen riding a *"scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns"*(Rev.17:3).

Identification of the great red dragon is placed beyond doubt when we read:

*"The great dragon was cast out (of heaven), that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world"*(Rev.12:9 ).

The beast which rises up out of the sea is a Satanicly inspired person, for *"the dragon gave him his power, and his seat (throne), and great authority"*

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(Rev.13:2). This person will, during the second half of the 7-year Tribulation, speak awful blasphemy against God (Rev.13:6) and make war with the (Tribulation) saints. He will claim deity for himself and be universally worshipped. He will have incredible military strength and demand that all wear his mark of 666. But who is he?

He is obviously the leader of the fourth Gentile world empire, which is the Roman Empire. He is the culmination of all Gentile world power before him. His body is like a leopard (Grecian Empire), his feet are like a bear (Persian Empire), and his mouth is as the mouth of a lion (Babylon). These are the symbols used and interpreted in Daniel chapter 7. He is therefore the same beast which Daniel saw in his vision as the fourth beast (kingdom) on earth before one

*“like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven”, and set up “a kingdom that all people...should serve him” (Dan.7:13-14).*

There is a difference between Daniel’s fourth beast and John’s beast. Both have ten horns, but John’s beast also has seven heads.

What, then, do the seven heads and ten horns represent? Daniel tells us: *“the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall (future) arise” (Dan.7:24).*

While John agrees:

*“the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet (AD96); but receive power as kings one hour with the beast” (Rev.17:12).*

So the final stage of the Roman Empire, just before Jesus comes, must be divided into ten parts which voluntarily agree to give their authority to the final world leader, the Antichrist. It is amazing that the unification of Europe has been on a **voluntary basis** as each government has agreed to join, eliminating their national boundaries under the Schengen Agreement, the Treaty of Rome and subsequent treaties. That process will continue as the EU is divided into ten states with Antichrist as president.

What, then, do the seven heads of the beast symbolize? We are told:

*“five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast...even he is the eight, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition” (Rev.17:10-11).*

If Rome is the sixth Gentile power that *“now is”* (in AD96), who were the five before it that had already fallen? Obviously they were Greece, Persia, Babylon, Egypt and Assyria. There were no others in relation to Israel.

The seventh head is future (*“yet to come”*) but will appear for just *“a short space”*. This undoubtedly is the final stage of the Roman Empire which we see assembling under the banner of the EU. It is not the Antichrist for

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he is the beast, an individual from the fourth empire, to whom is given the allegiance of the ten kings.

Who, then, is MYSTERY BABYLON, the woman that rides the beast?

It is not America, or the United Nations, for she is attached to the fourth beast which is clearly Rome over which Antichrist will reign. In fact she has the reins of the revived Roman Empire, guiding it. Scripture gives more evidence of the meaning of the symbol of the harlot woman than almost any other.

1) She is a great whore. **She is idolatrous.** Whoredom in Scripture is idolatry. Read Ezekiel chapter 23.

2) She sits on *“many waters”* and John tells us that the *“waters...where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues”*(Rev.17:15). So her influence is **international**.

3) She is **political** for *“the kings of the earth have committed fornication”* with her (Rev.17:2).

4) She is **exceedingly rich** for she is *“decked with gold and precious stones and pearls”* (Rev.17:4).

5) She has a **“golden cup in her hand which is full of abominations”** (idolatry). (Rev.17:4).

6) She is a **religious system** for her name is MYSTERY Babylon. The Roman “mystery religions” existed in John’s day, and even the Church is referred to as *“the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God”*(Eph.3:9).

7) She is **murderous** and drunk with the blood of countless martyrs of Jesus (Rev.17:6).

8) She is **located at Rome**. She sits upon **“seven mountains”** (Rev.17:9). *“She is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth”*- in AD96 (Rev.17:18).

The symbol of the harlot woman is clearly identified as apostate Christendom which is international, political, exceedingly rich, has the idolatrous, blasphemous golden cup of the mass which adores a wafer, is religious, has been guilty of the slaughter of countless numbers of Christians for over a thousand years and is located in that great city, Rome. There can be absolutely no doubt who she is!

The question has been asked, Is Rome REALLY built on seven hills or is that a figment of the imagination of anti-Catholic writers?

I will quote from the Oxford Dictionary:

“Rome....the ancient city was founded by Romulus (after whom it was

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named) in 753BC on **the Palatine Hill**. As it grew it spread to the **other six hills of Rome**: Aventine, Caelian, Capitoline, Esquiline, and Quirinal.”

(Only 5 hills are named- they appear to have missed the sixth, Viminal).

However, in Professor Breasted's book - *Ancient Times - A History of the Early World*, he shows a map with the seven hills named. The missing name from the Oxford dictionary is Viminal Hill. Both the Oxford Dictionary and Breasted are secular sources and so we have to accept that they were not making a theological point in asserting that the seven hills of Rome were identifiable topographic landmarks. The seven hills were well known in ancient times, and certainly when John wrote the Revelation. Breasted shows a map of Rome on page 574 with the seven hills as topographic features.

The Greek word translated “*mountains*” in Rev 17 is **also translated “hill”** in Matthew 5:14; Luke 4:29; Luke 9:37 so there is no conflict whether the mountains were large or small.

In addition, a Penguin book entitled *The Early History of Rome* by Livy, who was born 59BC and wrote for 40 years on the History of Rome till he died in AD17, describes the growth of the city of Rome and how originally the Romans built on the hills and farmed the valleys between. As the city population grew the wall around the city was extended to embrace the SEVEN HILLS one by one. The names of the hills were as given above and are shown on a map at the end of the book. Of Livy's 142 books only 35 survive, and the Penguin book is the translation of his first five books. It covers the earliest days of Rome.

The expression, “the SEVEN HILLS OF ROME”, is an unmistakable historical and Biblical identification of the CITY OF ROME, and the harlot woman is without doubt apostate Christendom located upon them. After the Rapture it is most likely that Orthodox and Protestant Christendom will join with Rome in a “one world Church”. There will be no born-again believers here to object.

At the end of the Tribulation Antichrist and the ten kings will turn on the harlot woman and God will “*put it in their hearts*” to destroy her. Antichrist's intention, of course, will be to exalt himself “*above all that is called God, or that is worshipped*” (2Thess.2:4), and he will occupy the Jewish Temple for that purpose. The ten kings will then **burn the harlot, apostate Christendom**, with fire as described in Revelation 17:16-17; 18:1-24.

Some have agreed that the harlot woman of Revelation 17 is religious Babylon (apostate Christendom) but that Revelation 18 describes the destruction of a rebuilt commercial Babylon. This view cannot be supported from Scripture. Religious, Mystery Babylon is described in **both** chapters

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17 and 18. The fearful conflagration described in chapter 18 describes the destruction of apostate Christendom. There are 33 references to “her” or “she”. Obviously John is still writing about the harlot woman of chapter 17 and SHE is still the subject of chapter 18.

What we need to be aware of, is that apostate religion is materialistic and rich. The last - days Laodicean church is “*rich and increased with goods*”, whereas Peter could say, “*Silver and gold have I none*”(Acts 3:6), and Jesus said, “*...the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*”(Luke 9:58).

The wealth of Christendom would shock us if we knew the full story. The Vatican Bank, the enormous real estate holdings bequeathed or acquired, and the amount of gold and treasure stored, places the Church among the wealthiest institutions in the world. No wonder John sees the “*kings of the earth... bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning...And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her...and every shipmaster...stood afar off, and cried...Alas, alas...*” (Rev.18:9,11,17,19). Nero’s burning of Rome will be nothing compared with this conflagration.

It is claimed that the Vatican owns much that is in the Swiss Banks. If this is the case then, when God destroys the apostate Harlot Woman, the economic disruption and devastation will be so vast it will bring down the world economy. Kings, Governments and merchants will weep and mourn (Rev.18:9-19).

