

The Revelation 17:

Reading #442 No crowns

As we move from the twelfth chapter to the thirteenth we will notice that the description of the seven-headed beast (aka the dragon) is slightly different. The crowns that were on the “heads” (the nations) will then be seen on the “horns” (smaller powers). Such a slight change can easily go unnoticed, but the Spirit expects us to be asking for His guidance from verse to verse and even from word to word! If we do this we will become aware of the importance of the details He supplies.

Chapter twelve showed us the beginning of the new controversy between the Son of man and Satan the adversary, and then took us through to the period known as “the time of the end”, which began when the 1,260 day/years (538-1798), finished. Revelation 12:1-12. (The Old Testament is the story of the controversy between the Son of God and Satan.) After a brief mention of the church of God fleeing into the wilderness for the second time at the end of chapter twelve, chapter thirteen begins a picture of the closing events of the future (the reason for the flight), thus leaving a gap of over 200 years between 1798 and today. To understand what’s happening in the background during this period (the time in which we live), we have to bring a chapter of The Revelation forward in our reading.

Let’s do that; let’s go to chapter seventeen to see the significance of the move of the crowns from the heads to the horns.

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

¹ And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying to me, “Come hither; I will show to you the judgment [the end result] of the great whore [Satan’s religious system] that sits upon many waters [nations]: ² with whom the kings of the earth [the politicians] have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication [her manners and doctrines]”.

***** (End Quote)

One of the angels who carried one of the vials (bowls) of God’s “wrath” (these picture His inability to protect during the seven last plagues), came to John and offered to show him what was happening to the “beast” in the “time of the end”. He identifies the animal as “waters” or “peoples” in verse 15, and also explained what was going to happen to its rider. He then concentrated on the church which had been guiding the nations during the middle ages and commented on her actions, so we may see what will happen in the end times

when her image (the copy) is reigning. He did this because “the beast” of The Revelation is made up of the peoples of the world, first in their role as inhabitants of the nations, and then as the supporters of the religions of the world, and they follow the same patterns regardless of century. The devil is clever: we have no choice over our place of birth, or nationality (although we can be “naturalised” into another), but he gives us the illusion that we can choose which religion we support, although that too is often governed by our human nature and circumstance of birth.

(Of course, we can be “born again” into the family of God quite separately.)

John continues:

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

3 So he carried me away in the spirit [in a vision] into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, [the red dragon, which was] full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns [and no crowns].

4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

5 And upon her forehead was a name written,

MYSTERY,
BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration [amazement].

***** (End Quote)

The angel took John into a “wilderness” where he showed him the beast in a state of temporary idleness. It is the same “beast”, i.e. the nations of the world, but there was not a particular one in overall charge at that time! This is signified by the fact that there are no crowns on the heads! As we will see in a later verse it is the age of the sixth “head”, and today neither king nor pope rules the actions of the people of the world. We who live in it might prefer to call it the age of materialism, or the time of “the almighty dollar”, when kings and popes are mainly figureheads who do not wield any great political power. It is

also called “democracy” or “the power of the people”, and we tend to love it. Some even equate it with Christianity, but it is not!

What John found interesting was the fact that now there was a “woman” sitting on the beast and obviously wanting to control it. She is identified as a “mystery” (a Bible truth we are slow to learn), and as Babylon THE GREAT, which has three parts. She has many daughter religions or offshoots, only one of which is Christendom, the others being Islam, Taoism, Hinduism, etc. with all their internal variations. (God sees the Roman Catholic system as both a mother and a daughter INSIDE professed Christianity, but she is not GREAT Babylon.) The character of both Babylon the Great and her daughters is the same, they like many lovers (“gods many”, as with the Pagans, 1 Corinthians 8:5), and they produce all the “abominations” that God “hates” for they lead to the second death. Their other major characteristic is that they love to kill their opposition on behalf of their god! [See note 2.](#)

John was amazed that the true people of God allowed this situation to exist without attempting to warn the people of the world how they were being manipulated, for while the beast is in the “wilderness” (not in control) then that is the time for God’s true people to work. It is the time to explain the Sabbath “rest”; it is the time for the loud cry of the third “angel’s” message.

*****[\(Begin Quote\)](#)

Revelation 17:

⁷ And the angel said to me, “Wherefore [why] did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and ten horns [none of which has a crown].

⁸ The beast [the red dragon] that you saw was [ruling the world in the past],

and is not [in charge right now];

and [yet] shall ascend out of the bottomless pit [to take over again],
and [shall then] go into perdition [annihilation]:

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”.

*****[\(End Quote\)](#)

John’s guide then told him that in God’s providence He had arranged a period in which there was to be a temporary lull before the next storm. Satan had ruled the world through the nations for many centuries, but in John’s vision he could

no longer do so because of their strong spirit of independence. However, the angel warned, Satan would soon be able to fool the people again and get them to accept his governance.

We should note that it is NOT the Roman Catholic religion which will arise in this new manifestation, but the “beast”, working through another power. (The “woman” is a picture of ALL of Satan’s religions and does come with the beast, and therefore the Roman Catholic system will be in the closing work, but it will not be the major player.)

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

9 And here is the mind which has wisdom [one which is led by the Spirit].

The seven heads are [also descriptions of] seven mountains, on which the woman sits.

***** (End Quote)

So that there would be no mistake regarding the power at work here, we are given a series of clues to identify it, for by using the past, the Spirit can show us the future. First, we are directed to see that the seven “heads” are also compatible with the seven mountains on which the evil religion resides. This points us to the seat of the beast which was once based in the city of seven hills. Do you remember how Satan moved his centre of power from Pergamos to Rome? Revelation 2:13.

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

10 And there are seven kings [the heads with the crowns]:

five are fallen [are in the past],
and one is [in charge right now],
and the other is not yet come;

and when he [the 7th] comes, he must continue a short space.

***** (End Quote)

This is the history of the following nations:

- (1) Babylon,
- (2) Medo-Persia,
- (3) Greece, and
- (4) Rome under the emperors,

each having had their turn at being Satan’s prime agent. The fifth head, Rome under the popes (as a nation, not a church) has also fallen into helplessness, and

the world has moved on to chase the god of money as the sixth head. There is one head yet to come which will last for a short time before handing over to Satan's masterpiece, which is ALL the world worshipping him at the same time.

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth [king/head],

and is of the [same character as the] seven, and goes into perdition.

***** (End Quote)

In that last manifestation Satan will show his full strength, but true to his devious character, he will maintain that he is God, that his religious system is the right one, and that any opposition needs to be crushed. But he who uses force will find that it comes back to bite him!

As we have seen in the past, the main doctrine he will use is the sacredness of Sunday, but he will ally it with the state of the dead, for supposed communication with the spirits of the dead will be a strong point in his assault on the Son of God. This two-pronged attack will be enough to convince all those who do not have their names in the Lamb's Book of Life.

The angel continued his explanation:

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

12 And the ten horns which you saw are ten [smaller] kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour [a short space] with the beast [when they get their crowns].

13 These have one mind [are all in one accord], and shall give their power and strength to the beast [the nations].

14 These shall make war with the Lamb [through His people], and the Lamb shall overcome them [through His people]: for He is LORD of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

***** (End Quote)

Satan's masterpiece in the last days is to use the "horns" as his rulers. These TEN powers will take the crowns of persecution and use them against the people of God who have at last done their part in the controversy and "disturbed" the peace of the time. (Note 1.) Thus the beast will return from obscurity and with a great show of harmony take over the reins of the world again, because the people will surrender their independence in favour of his

ways. They will give up many of their hard-earned civil rights because of what they perceive as a common enemy. (Does any of this sound familiar?)

Here's an interesting site! <http://www.ksla.com/Global/story.asp?S=6937987>

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

¹⁵ And he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the whore sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

***** (End Quote)

We are plainly told that that the beast on which the woman sits are really "waters", or the peoples of the nations, shown acting through the heads and the horns. Grouping people by politics and national boundaries instead of family groups (tribes) was Satan's invention soon after the Flood. God describes them to us as wild creatures, lions, bears, leopards and goats etc. (Daniel 7 and 8), for "the beast" represents unsubdued human nature, not just one church or nation. This is a point we should not miss!

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

¹⁶ And the ten horns [the people (the laity) of the religious systems which go with the beast/nations] which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore [the clergy of their wicked religious systems], and shall make her [them] desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree [with each other], and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

***** (End Quote)

Lest we lose heart at all this information, the LORD tells us that these ten "horns" (which are the people of the religions), will eventually turn against the very leaders which have led them into the last conflict. Satan has two prongs to his armoury: the first is the civil powers of the nations; the second is the emotional powers of the religions. He plays one against another to gain what he wants, but at the very end it will be some of his religious section that starts the final rot.

The angel continued:

***** (Begin Quote)

Revelation 17:

¹⁸ And the woman which you saw is [also] that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

***** (End Quote)

The final “nail in the coffin” if you will, is the fact that the woman is identified as the city which has ruled men for a long time, i.e. Rome. In the past, Satan moved the capital of his kingdom from Babylon in Iraq to Pergamos in Turkey, and then on to Rome later. Revelation 2:13.

Let’s sum it up: who sits on who?

Whore	=woman	= Satan’s rulers	= Rome	= city	=religions	=great Babylon
Waters	= beast	=7 heads & 10 horns	=7 mountains	=7kings+1	= nations	= Euphrates

You will doubtless notice that there is not just one religion identified here, for they are all the same in principle, their leaders all want to be the “boss”. The identifiers on top, the clergy, are the rulers whether Christian or infidel, while the ones on the bottom line are those who are led, the laity or common people.

The Roman Catholic system is only one part of Satan’s scheme of attack on the truth, and now that it has been exposed to many by the “deadly wound” of the sword of truth, (Revelation 13:3) he needs to use another weapon in these last days. It is our job to identify that weapon and expose it. That’s why we have been shown the ten “horns” who rule in the very last days.

We were told by Daniel that the nations of the past would stay with us to the end (Daniel 7:12), and so today we have as the seven heads, (1) Babylon (Iraq), (2) Persia (Iran), (3) Greece, (4) Rome (Italy), (5) the Vatican, (6) the present age of democracy, (7) and, soon to come, the United States of America. It is to the ministry of the Protestant churches of the United States that we are to look for the beginning of the end, the 7th head.

Bye for now, Ron

Some of the comments in these readings are adapted from books in my library. No recognition is given because they are not intended as authorities, but are used because they express my understanding clearly. All the ideas expressed in these readings, right or wrong, are my own. Some of these readings are available at http://www.geocities.com/weprotest.geo/BibleReadings/books_index.html

Note 1.

***** (Begin Quote)

1 Kings 18:

17 And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, “Are you he that troubles Israel?” 18 And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel; but you, and your father's house, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and you have followed Baalim [the gods of force]”.

***** (End Quote)

Note 2.

For those who might find it hard to believe that the Protestant church leaders will persecute Bible believers in the last days, here is a quote from my library.

***** (Begin Quote)

Luther and his co-laborers accomplished a noble work for God; but, coming as they did from the Roman Church, having themselves believed and advocated her doctrines, it was not to be expected that they would discern all these errors. It was their work to break the fetters of Rome, and to give the Bible to the world; yet there were important truths which they failed to discover, and grave errors which they did not renounce. Most of them continued to observe the Sunday with other papal festivals. They did not, indeed, regard it as possessing divine authority, but believed that it should be observed as a generally accepted day of worship.

There were some among them, however, who honored the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Such was the belief and practice of Carlstadt, and there were others who united with him ...

A hundred years later, John Trask acknowledged the obligation of the true Sabbath, and employed voice and pen in its defense. He was soon called to account by the persecuting power of the Church of England. He declared the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a guide for religious faith, and maintained that civil authorities should not control the conscience in matters which concern salvation ...

The wife of Trask was also a Sabbath-keeper. She was declared, even by her enemies, to be a woman endowed with many virtues worthy the imitation of all Christians. She was a school-teacher of acknowledged excellence, and was noted for her carefulness in dealing with the poor. "This," said her enemies, "she professed to do out of conscience, as believing she must one day come to be judged for all things done in the flesh. Therefore she resolved to go by the safest rule, rather against than for her private interest." Yet it was declared that she possessed a spirit of strange, unparalleled obstinacy in adhering to her own opinions, which spoiled her. In truth, she chose to obey the word of God in preference to the traditions of men. At last this noble woman was seized and thrust into prison. The charge brought against her was that she taught only five days in the week, and rested on Saturday, it being known that she did it in obedience to the fourth commandment. She was accused of no crime; the motive of her act was the sole ground of complaint.

She was often visited by her persecutors, who employed their most wily arguments to induce her to renounce her faith. In reply, she begged them to show from the Scriptures that she was in error, and urged that if Sunday were really a holy day, the fact must be stated in the word of God. But in vain she asked for Bible testimony. She was exhorted to smother her convictions, and believe what the church declared to be right.

She refused to purchase liberty by renouncing the truth. The promises of God sustained her faith: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison that ye may be tried." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." [REV. 2:10.] For nearly sixteen years this feeble woman remained a prisoner, in privation and great suffering. The book of God alone can testify what she endured during those weary years. Faithfully she witnessed for the truth; her patience and fortitude failed not until she was released by death ...

God has, in his providence, preserved the history of a few of those who suffered for their obedience to the fourth commandment; but there were many, of whom the world knows nothing, who for the same truth endured persecution and martyrdom. Those who oppressed these followers of Christ called themselves Protestants; but they abjured the fundamental principle of Protestantism,--**the Bible and the Bible only as the rule of faith and practice.** The testimony of the Scriptures they thrust from them with disdain. This spirit still lives, and it will increase more and more as we near the close of time. Those who honor the Bible Sabbath are even now pronounced willful and stubborn by a large share of the Christian world, and the time is not far distant when the spirit of persecution will be manifested against them ...

*******(End Quote)**