

THAT GREAT CITY

Part II

The Beast and the Harlot

By Arlen L. Chirwood

...and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns...

...I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 17:3b, 7b).

Two central individuals seen throughout Revelation chapter seventeen and continuing through the first six verses of chapter nineteen are *the Beast* and *the Harlot*. And both of these individuals are dealt with extensively in these chapters immediately prior to a *third individual* appearing, coming through an opened heaven on a white charger to take care of matters as they will exist on the earth at that time.

And *conditions on the earth* when this third individual appears — Israel's Messiah, the Deliverer, the One Whom the nation rejected and crucified 2,000 years ago — are quite vividly described in Scripture.

Resulting from famine, various plagues and diseases, and the sword, one-fourth of the earth's population will have died, or will shortly die (over one and one-half billion, by today's count), which will include two-thirds of the earth's Jewish population (some nine million, by today's count). And conditions in general at this time will be of such a nature that "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved" (Matt. 24:22).

This is where things are headed for our so-called enlightened society of today, with all of its changing mores, political correctness, etc. And *that fast-approaching Day* cannot be far removed from the present day.

The Beast & Harlot, Seen in Both Testaments

The Beast — the name used in the Book of Revelation for the man of sin, the Antichrist (Rev. 13:1ff; 17:8-14) — is presented a number of different ways throughout a large section of Scripture in both the Old and New Testaments. Revelation concerning this man (first mentioned in Gen. 3:15) begins with Nimrod, the first king of Babylon, in Genesis chapter ten; and it concludes with the last king of Babylon in the chapters under discussion in the Book of Revelation, chapters seventeen through twenty.

However, throughout Scripture, revelation concerning the Beast is *NEVER* solely about this man alone. Revelation concerning "the Beast" is *ALWAYS* seen in conjunction with revelation concerning Abraham and his lineage through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons, — the nation of Israel and/or Israel's Messiah.

This is the manner in which revelation about the Beast begins in Genesis, continues throughout the Old Testament, continues into the New Testament, and concludes in the Book of Revelation. *When the Beast appears in Scripture, Israel and/or Israel's Messiah appears someplace in the text or context as well* (e.g., Gen. 9-11 [Shem in ch. 9, Nimrod in ch. 10, and Abraham and his lineage in ch. 11ff]; the Books of Exodus, Esther, and Daniel).

The preceding is an axiom in Biblical studies surrounding the Beast — unchangeably set in Gen. 3:15 — which cannot be ignored.

Thus, when an individual arrives at Revelation chapter seventeen and sees *the Beast and a harlot woman* (both spoken of in the same metaphorical fashion) extensively dealt with together at the close of Man's Day, at the close of that part of the Book of Revelation having to do with Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy — knowing that both are referred to as a "mystery," and knowing that the Beast *never* appears in Old Testament Scripture apart from Israel and/or Israel's Messiah — *only one thing concerning the identity of the woman could possibly be uppermost in one's mind.*

In Old Testament history, because of the Jewish people's continued disobedience over centuries of time, God uprooted His people from their land and

drove them out among the nations. And the major part of this disobedience was *harlotry*, which caused God to divorce Israel (Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:8; Hosea 2:2).

Israel, the wife of Jehovah, was having illicit relations — forbidden national relationships — with the surrounding Gentile nations. And when Israel's cup of iniquity became full (*cf.* Gen. 15:16), God divorced Israel, uprooted His people from their land, and drove them out among the nations in order *to effect repentance through persecution at the hands of the harlot's lovers.*

Revelation chapter seventeen through the first part of chapter nineteen presents, in detail, the end of the matter. Israel, in these chapters, is seen *at the height of her degeneracy — enmeshed in and having illicit relations with the most corrupt form of Gentile world power that has ever been or will ever be known by man throughout his 6,000-year history.* And it is within this setting, as Gentile persecution of Israel reaches heights heretofore unknown, that *Israel is brought to the place of repentance and is cleansed of her harlotry* (*cf.* Judges 19:23-30).

The preceding though, as will be shown, is far from the only means of identifying the harlot woman. Attention has been called to this means of identification first in order to show *the unity of all Scripture surrounding revelation concerning the Beast and Israel, from an introduction in Genesis to a conclusion in the Book of Revelation.*

In this respect, note a number of Old Testament references having to do with Israel's harlotry:

"How is the faithful city become an harlot!" (Isa. 1:21a).

"Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers...

Thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed" (Jer. 3:1b, 3b; *cf.* vv. 6-14).

"Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations.

Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians...

Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan..." (Ezek. 16:2, 28a, 29a).

"And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their whoredom..."

So she discovered her whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness..." (Ezek. 23:17a, 18a; cf. vv. 35-37).

"And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand" (Hosea 2:10; cf. vv. 2ff).

Then, viewing the end of the matter in the Book of Revelation, chapter seventeen through the first part of chapter nineteen has to do with *Israel's harlotry seen at its apex and then brought to an end*. And this is the *ONLY PLACE* in the book where this is dealt with.

If "the great whore" in these chapters is other than *Israel*, then a major subject of Old Testament prophecy relating to *Israel is not even dealt with in the Book of Revelation*.

Apart from understanding that the "woman" represents *Israel*, the final seven years of the Jewish dispensation is brought to a close in the Book of Revelation *without this book even dealing with the main purpose for these seven years*.

Apart from seeing *Israel* with the Beast in these chapters, that which could only be uppermost in God's mind concerning *Israel* during the Tribulation — *bringing His people, who have played the harlot over centuries of time, to the place of repentance — is not even mentioned in the book*.

But, as previously stated, the preceding is just one way in which the woman can be identified. As will be shown, this chapter goes on to state, *in so many words*, that "the woman" is *Israel*. Then, other internal proofs are provided in the chapter concerning the same thing.

The Woman Which Thou Sawest Is...

In that part of the Book of Revelation covering events on the earth occurring during and immediately following the last seven years in Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy (chs. 6-19), a woman is used in a metaphorical respect in two different places — in chapter twelve, and in chapters seventeen and eighteen, continuing into the first six verses of chapter nineteen. And, in either instance, as previously seen in the latter section, one is not

left to his own imagination to identify the woman. *In both instances the woman is clearly identified.*

The woman in chapter twelve is easily identified through that stated in the first verse — "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," along with events dealt with in subsequent verses.

Metaphors are used extensively in this "great wonder ['sign']," with the entire matter seen as *regal*. The "sun," "moon," and "stars" have to do with *governmental powers*, from the greater (the sun) to the lesser (the stars), with the woman seen as crowned.

In short, *the woman is seen in possession of all power, though not yet exercising this power* (the latter — yet to exercise this power — is seen in the type crown which the woman has on her head (dealt with in Part III of this series).

"The woman" in the chapter is clearly seen to be *Israel*, with Satan throughout later verses in the chapter seeking to destroy the woman, to destroy *Israel*. And the statement about *the sun, moon, and stars, with regality in view*, is an allusion back to the second of Joseph's two dreams in Genesis chapter thirty-seven (v. 9).

In the type in Genesis, the reference to *the sun, moon, and stars* making "obeisance" to Joseph had to do with Joseph and his immediate family (v. 10). And that being foreshadowed by this type has to do with *Christ and His immediate family — Israel*.

But in Revelation chapter twelve, material drawn from this type has to do with *Israel and the nations* (in like fashion to how the statement in Hosea 11:1 is used of both "Christ" and "Israel").

"Christ" is presently *King*, for He was born King (Matt. 2:2); but He has yet to exercise His kingly office. That awaits the Messianic Era, when Christ exercises the rights of the firstborn.

"Israel" is presently *the rightful possessor of the regality* seen in Rev. 12:1. *Israel* is presently *God's firstborn son* (Ex. 4:22, 23); but the exercise of the rights of the firstborn awaits the Messianic Era.

And *Israel* cannot exercise these rights until *one thing* has been brought to pass — that seen in subsequent chapters in both the Book of Genesis (chs. 37ff) and the Book of Revelation (chs. 12ff).

Israel MUST first be cleansed of her harlotry.

In the Genesis account, the complete story extending from *Israel's* rejection of her Messiah to the nation's acceptance of her Messiah is told in nine chapters (chs. 37-45). And at the very first, following Joseph's rejection by his brethren (foreshadowing Christ's rejection by His brethren, the Jewish people [ch. 37]), an entire chapter dealing with *harlotry* immediately follows (having to do centrally with *Judah* in the account [ch. 38]).

Then chapter thirty-nine picks up at the exact place where chapter thirty-seven left off, leaving the chapter on *harlotry* to seemingly be out of place. But not so! This chapter is exactly where it should be, the subject is correct, and the right brother among the eleven, *Judah*, is the one seen involved in the harlotry.

The reason why *Judah* is singled out in chapter thirty-eight in this respect is seen in chapter forty-four, immediately before Joseph reveals himself to his brethren in chapter forty-five.

In chapter forty-four, Joseph's brothers, though not knowing Joseph's identity, were brought to the place where they had no choice but to acknowledge to Joseph, in his presence, that which they had done years before — their rejection of him, followed by their selling him to the Ishmaelites.

And *Judah* is seen as *the spokesman for his brothers* at this time, exactly as he was the one seen in connection with harlotry back in chapter thirty-eight. "Judah," in both chapters, is seen acting in the place of or on behalf of all his brothers, typifying *Israel*:

1) *The one involved in harlotry between the two times in the type (between the time of the nation's rejection [ch. 37] and the time of the nation's acceptance [ch. 45]).*

2) *And the one driven to the place where there was no choice left other than to confess that which had been done years before to the very one to whom it was done (rejection, crucifixion).*

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