

PREVIEW

THE BLOODY WOMAN
A N D
THE SEVEN-HEADED BEAST

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DEDICATED TO ALL
SINCERE SEEKERS
AFTER TRUTH

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FOREWORD

When I first opened up the book of Revelation as a teenager, I was utterly mystified by its contents. Dragons, beasts, and strange events—what were these things all about? I prayed that one day God would help me to understand these mysteries. I realize that the same desire to know the message of the final book of holy Scripture, so filled with wondrous mystery and symbolism, lives in the hearts and minds of many Bible students today, as it did in mine.

I first met Steve in 1985 at Weimar College in Northern California. I was a college student, and he was a teacher of religion at the high school. We soon became jogging partners and have since formed a bond of friendship that has lasted till today. I even had the privilege of being his Best Man when he married his lovely wife, Kristin.

Since those early days, Pastor Steve has written nearly forty books on a wide variety

of Bible topics and has become an in-demand speaker. Some time ago I texted Steve regarding a verse in Revelation 17 that puzzled me. Shortly thereafter we talked by phone and had quite a Bible study on that specific chapter. It was very enlightening. I am so thankful that Steve was led to delve further into this amazing chapter, and to finally write this book.

In his usual straightforward and understandable writing style, *The Bloody Woman and the Seven-Headed Beast* unpacks biblical mysteries with clarity and fascination for both the beginner and the long-time student. Steve has a wonderful ability to think deep and yet express his knowledge on a level that all can easily understand.

Today, as we watch prophetic events unfold with rapidity, this new book on Revelation 17 gives evidence of divine timing. Our loving Creator shines special light upon truths in His Word when it is time for such truths to be brought to the front in the hearts and minds of His people.

So, get ready for an amazing journey as you enjoy this latest work from Pastor Steve Wohlberg but, most importantly, may this

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information help *you* to prepare for the momentous events that lie just before us.

Brian McMahon
Prophecy Unsealed Seminar Speaker
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INTRODUCTION

The Book of Revelation is the last book of The Holy Bible. In its final chapter, Jesus Christ speaks to us, saying: “Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book” (Revelation 22:7). These words teach us two things: 1) that Jesus Christ will soon return to this earth, and 2) that we are blessed if we cling tightly to “the words of the prophecy of this book [the Book of Revelation].”

The Book of Revelation contains twenty-two chapters. The primary focus of *The Bloody Woman and the Seven-Headed Beast* is chapter 17, which contains a stirring warning of pending doom slated to fall on a seductive prostitute named “Mystery Babylon” (verse 5) who rides “a scarlet beast” with “seven heads and ten horns” (verse 3) and who is “drunk with the blood of the saints” (verse 6). Shortly before King Jesus returns, this strange seven-headed, ten-horned monster “will

ascend out of the bottomless pit. . . . And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is” (verse 8).

Who is this mysterious woman who is represented as being drunk with the blood of God’s people? And what does that seven-headed, ten-horned creature she is riding represent? And what does it mean that this monster “*was, and is not, and yet is*”? Other mysteries must be solved. “There are also seven kings,” declares verse 10. “Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.” Who are these “seven kings”? And who is the seventh king who appears only for “a short time”?

Is that “short time” close at hand?

What does this prophecy mean to us?

The vast majority of planet Earth’s nearly eight billion human occupants have *no clue*. Even those familiar with the Book of Revelation usually have no idea. Are these mysterious prophecies talking about America? Europe? A revived Roman Empire? Russia? China? Iran? The Antichrist?

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Most Bible-believing Christians are stumped.

Or, they're just guessing.

Personally, I've been reading and contemplating the Book of Revelation for over forty years. I confess freely that I, too, have never fully understood chapter 17. Parts of it have always baffled me. Yet for some reason, in recent days, I can hardly get that chapter out of my head. Again and again, I've read its eighteen verses from top to bottom. ". . . he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness," wrote John, "And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast . . . having seven heads and ten horns. . . . There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time." I've wrestled, searched, pondered, and prayed that the same "Spirit" that whisked John into the wilderness would help me understand these deep truths of God.

It's been quite a journey. I've also looked at many different views and given up ideas I thought at first were right. Slowly the pieces have come together. Click . . . click . . . click. *Aha, that's it*, I've thought to myself many times, *that makes sense*. Step by step, my spiritual eyes have been enlightened, and I now

believe that the Babylonian Harlot, the seven-headed monster, and those “seven kings” represent specific, identifiable powers, many of which are often mentioned on The History Channel, CNN, and Fox News. From what I have discovered, Revelation 17 pinpoints major apocalyptic developments in these end times. Above all, its stunning prophecy concerns you, me, our relationship with Jesus, and our eternal destinies.

As this sacred information has slowly become organized inside my brain, a deep conviction has grown within me that I *must* write this book and sound the warning. But let me clarify something. My interest isn’t in spouting off merely my own opinions—for man’s ideas are often worthless. Instead, I hope to sensibly reveal what God Himself says and to explain how His words fit perfectly into real history and current events. God’s words also reveal the future—to those with eyes to see and ears to hear.

Notice carefully. Revelation 17 says, “*until the words of God are fulfilled*” (verse 17). “The words of God” are infinitely more valuable than speculative theories. Thus my goal in writing this book is to teach “the words of God” and to show how they will soon be

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“fulfilled.” I promise I’ll try to make things simple and easy to grasp. I have also written this book to help you become better prepared for that predicted time when the majority of planet Earth’s inhabitants will be deceived by the harlot and follow the beast, all without knowing it. “Father, forgive them,” Jesus prayed as misguided men nailed Him to a cruel cross, “for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34). Similar ignorance will occur again. While sincerely believing they are doing *right*, billions will do *wrong* under the devil’s influence. Tragically, the majority will settle into a state where they are “of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast” (Revelation 17:13).

“Here is the mind which has wisdom,” declared a holy angel in Revelation 17:9. I want such wisdom, don’t you? We definitely need wisdom to understand Revelation 17. Therefore I suggest that you pray for wisdom and discernment before you continue reading this book. As you will soon see, its contents are shocking, but needed. Ask God to help you.

Jesus said,

When He, the Spirit of truth, has come,

He will guide you into all truth. John
16:13

I sincerely hope “the Spirit of truth” will teach you through these pages, that your soul will be richly blessed, and that reading *The Bloody Woman and the Seven-Headed Beast* will aid your personal preparation for the glorious Day when Jesus Christ returns.

A Carpenter's Child

Beneath a star He came to earth,
In a tiny Eastern land;
A carpenter's Child, humbly born,
With salvation in His hand.

No earthly kingdom did He rule,
Nor conquering army lead;
No blaring trumpets tolled His birth,
Nor angels intercede.

A simple childhood did He live,
But grew without a sin;
Spotless was the carpenter's Child,
The pattern for all men.

In manhood soon, His message came,
He told of man's salvation;
And still today His message goes
To plead for every nation.

The hope of all this sinful world
Was nailed upon the tree,
And mankind was held within the balance
For days that numbered three.

And then He rose, defeating death,
And promised to return,
But left His message to all men
Who wish to grow and learn.

The Holy Spirit roams this world
In search of all His sheep;
Who grow by faith in Jesus' word,
And His commandments keep.

The love He taught, the peace He gives
Are yours right now to claim;
This humble Man of Galilee,
Christ Jesus is His name.

Though Son of Man, He was our God,
For mankind He descended;
He conquered sin and conquered death,
And Satan's rule has ended.

We must grow within His strength
Till He returns again;
The Son of God, a carpenter's Child,
The Saviour of all men.

—Written by Jerry Yocom

CHAPTER 1

IDENTIFYING THE BLOODY WOMAN

*The high-minded man must care more
for the truth than for what people think.*

—Aristotle, Greek philosopher

As we begin our journey seeking to decode Revelation 17, the best place to start is at the beginning. The first verse opens with these sober words:

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters . . .” Revelation 17:1

Significantly, the angel who talked to John at the beginning of Revelation 17 was “one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls” of God’s wrath that will eventually be poured

out upon those who receive “the mark of the beast” (compare with Revelation 16:1–2) just prior to the return of Jesus. Therefore, starting with Revelation 17, verse 1, we know that this chapter has an end-time context. Later on in this book, I will provide information about “the mark of the beast” itself—but not yet. At this point, I simply want you to realize that Revelation 17 begins in the context of an end-time “judgment” slated to fall upon “the great harlot who sits upon many waters.”

Another critical point to realize is that when John is “carried” away “in the Spirit” (verse 3) in Revelation 17, his attention is drawn to a woman who *has already acted wickedly*. In other words, Revelation 17 doesn’t start with a prediction of the future rising of this Lady, looking forward from John’s own time, which was around AD 96. Instead, it starts by announcing an end-time judgment slated to fall upon “the great harlot” *who has already existed for centuries and who will soon be judged for her past crimes*. Thus, in the vision of Revelation 17, John is transported into *the distant future*, far beyond his own time when he lived as a prisoner on the Greek island of Patmos in the first century.

“Come,” the angel beckoned, “*I will show*

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you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.” This “great harlot” looms large in Revelation’s end-time prophecies. A harlot is seductive. Through her tempting charms, she entices men into forbidden paths. It is the same with “the great harlot” of Revelation 17. She also seduces humans, who find her pleasurable. Yet because she leads men and women away from the Bible, she will someday be destroyed by a sin-hating God when His fierce judgments suddenly drop upon her. What does it mean that she “sits on many waters”? We don’t need to guess. The angel who talked to John soon became an interpreter with this clear explanation:

Then he [the angel] said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.” Revelation 17:15

This explanation reveals *a key principle* I have accepted in my study of Revelation 17, which is this: When an angel interprets the meaning of a symbol, he does so by providing *a literal explanation*. In this case, “The waters . . . where the harlot sits”—which are symbolic—represent literal “peoples,

multitudes, nations, and tongues [languages].” As you will soon see, this **From Symbol to Literal Principle** is rock solid. I will give more examples of it soon. It is one of the keys to correctly unlocking Revelation 17’s mysterious prophecies.

“The great harlot” “sits” upon “many waters” symbolizing vast numbers of “peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.” Another key lesson we can learn from this is that the Great Whore has acquired global influence. Thus, as we seek to correctly identify this sinister female, we must look for something well-known to earth’s teeming inhabitants. Yet until God’s “judgment” finally falls upon her during the seven last plagues, the world’s “peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” don’t realize that they have been devoting themselves to a deceiving Enchantress.

If they did, they wouldn’t support her.

The angel continued:

“. . . with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Revelation 17:2

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Here we discover that the Great Whore has been committing “fornication” with “the kings of the earth,” which means she has had illicit relations with royalty. Thus as we seek to identify The Harlot, we must look for a Mistress who has been publicly involved with “the kings of the earth”—which would include influential queens, Heads of State, distinguished diplomats, royal personages, ambassadors, and embassies.

In other words, this captivating lady’s activities aren’t hidden like a rat lurking in a dark underground sewer. No, no. Instead, they are conducted in the full light of day and are even widely reported by respected media outlets. The statement in the latter part of verse 2, that “the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication,” shows that her illicit activities have become wholly respectable in the eyes of earth’s dazzled masses. This truth is critical to correctly interpreting this startling prophecy. More clues to help us identify this Wicked Woman can be discovered by carefully reading verses 3–6. Look closely:

So he [God’s angel] carried me [John]
away [from John’s time into the distant

future] in the Spirit [this was a supernatural revelation] into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written:

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

I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. Revelation 17:3–6

The next principle I have adopted in my study of Revelation 17 is called **The Weight of Evidence Principle**. The idea is that in order to correctly identify the Seducer, we must look at the weight of evidence by piecing

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all the clues together. One clue isn't enough. We must gather them all. Only then can we detect the Harlot's true identity.

Here are twelve clues found in Revelation 17:1–6:

1. She is a “woman.” In the New Testament, a “woman” often represents a church (see Matthew 25:1–13; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 12:1, 3, 17; 19:7–8).
2. This woman is particularly dressed “in purple and scarlet” colors, which will help us to identify her.
3. She is associated with vast wealth, being “adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls.”
4. She holds “in her hand a golden cup.”
5. Her golden cup is “full of abominations.”
6. She is a “whore” (indicating that she is an unfaithful church). She is also described as “fallen” (see Revelation 18:2), which indicates that at an earlier point she stood upright and pure, but

she has departed from the revealed truth of God.

7. She is called “THE MOTHER” (only one church on earth calls itself The Mother Church).
8. She is the “Mother of Harlots,” showing that—from the perspective of this vision—she has previously given birth to harlot daughters (churches) who originally came out of her (because of her errors) but who have followed her poor example of unfaithfulness to God’s truth.
9. She has already committed spiritual fornication with “the kings of the earth” (indicating that she is often involved with world leaders).
10. The “inhabitants of the earth” have become “drunk” (confused and deceived) by her “wine” (which represents her false teachings).
11. She sits upon “many waters” (representing vast groups of people), implying that

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she has achieved global influence.

12. She has become a deadly, persecuting woman who has already shed the blood of countless “martyrs” of Jesus Christ. So much so, that she is considered to be “drunk with the blood of the saints.”

We will look at more clues soon, but that’s enough for now.

Who is “the great harlot”?

By now, the correct answer should be pressing itself into your head. Honestly, upon sober reflection—in the light of historical facts—that truth becomes obvious. Best-selling evangelical author Dave Hunt, whose twenty-plus books have combined sales of over three million copies, has tackled this topic head-on in his penetrating book, *A Woman Rides the Beast: The Roman Catholic Church and the Last Days*, published by Harvest House. Chapter titles include: Mystery Babylon, Unholy Mother, A City on Seven Hills, Dominion over Kings, Blood of Martyrs, and The Reformation Betrayed. Marshaling a vast amount of evidence from Scripture, church history, and from the Protestant Reformation, Mr. Hunt accurately reports that “The leaders of the

Reformation [in the 1500s] were certain that she [the harlot of Revelation 17] *represented the Roman Catholic Church.*”*

Based on how the prophecy of Revelation 17 fits so perfectly with history, Hunt agrees with those ancient Protestants. With a pen dipped in concern for both Protestants (who seem to have lost their knowledge of history), and sincere Roman Catholics, Mr. Hunt reveals that an apostate form of “Christianity will take over the world . . . not real Christianity but an Antichrist counterfeit thereof.”†

During the first Persian Gulf War in 1991, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein made a feeble attempt to rebuild the ancient city of Babylon whose ruins now lie about fifty miles south of Baghdad. When he did, prophecy books came pouring off Christian presses, declaring, “Look! prophecy is being fulfilled. Babylon is rising!” At the same time, an article entitled “Apocalypse Now?” appeared on the last page of the February 11, 1991, issue of *Time* magazine. Its author, John Elson, insightfully commented,

* Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast: The Roman Catholic Church and the Last Days* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994), 14. Emphasis added.

† *Ibid.*, 45.

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The temptation to seek clues to the Second Coming on CNN is easy to understand, since Saddam Hussein has proclaimed himself a successor to Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king who enslaved the Israelites of old. That makes it deceptively easy for prophecy mongers [misguided prophecy teachers] to identify [literal] Iraq with Babylon [in the Book of Revelation]. Somewhat awkwardly, *it also undercuts a long standing Protestant tradition that this symbol of corruption refers to the Church of Rome.**

For the record, this book you are now reading firmly supports this same “*long standing Protestant tradition*” which John Elson referred to in *Time* magazine. Along with Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Spurgeon, Wylie, Hunt, and countless others, we also conclude that *The Woman Riding the Beast* in Revelation 17 points to “the Church of Rome.” No other church fits every specification of prophecy, nor does *any* other organization, for that matter. Chillingly, the Roman Church even

* John Elson, “Apocalypse Now?,” *Time* Magazine, Feb. 11, 1991, 88. Emphasis added.

calls herself the “Holy Mother Church,” “the mother and teacher of all the churches.”* British Protestant scholar H. Grattan Guinness, in his masterful work, *Romanism and the Reformation*, offers this hard-to-refute summary:

Now, in conclusion, read this wonderful prophecy concerning ‘Babylon the Great’ *in the clear and all-revealing light of history*. I ask those of you who have read the history of the last eighteen centuries, did not Rome Christian become a harlot? Did not Papal Rome ally itself with the kings of the earth? Did it not glory itself to be as a queen, and call itself the Mistress of the World? Did it not ride upon the body of the beast [Rome], or fourth empire [see Daniel 7:7, 23], and govern its actions for centuries? Did not Papal Rome array itself with gold and precious stones and pearls? Is not this its attire still? We appeal to facts. Go to the churches and see. Look at the priests; look at the cardinals; look at the popes; look at the purple robes they

* Rev. Peter Geiermann, C.Ss.R. *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine* (St. Louis, Missouri: B. Herder Book Co., 1946), 102–103.

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wear; look at the scarlet robes; look at the encrusted jewels; look at the luxurious palaces in which they live; look at the eleven thousand halls and chambers in the Vatican, and the unbounded wealth and glory gathered there; look at the glorious spectacles in St. Peter's at Rome, casting even the magnificence of royalty into the shade. Go and see these things, or read the testimony of those who have seen them. Shamelessly Rome wears the very raiment, the very hues and colors, portrayed on the pages of inspired prophecy [in Revelation 17]. You may know the harlot by her attire, as certainly as by the name upon her brow.*

Further proof that “the Mother of Harlots” represents an apostate church comes from the fact that before King Jesus Christ returns in the clouds, God calls *His own people* to leave her infernal grip. “I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues’ ” (Revelation 18:4). Thus

* Henry Grattan Guinness, *Romanism and the Reformation* (1887). (Reprinted in Rapidan, Virginia: Hartland Publications, 1995), 89–90.

Babylon the Great *must represent a fallen church*, because God's own people (which includes millions of sincere, godly Catholics today) are urged to "come out of her." Thus there must be true followers of Jesus inside Mystery Babylon. Yet they must escape her clutches before the seven last plagues descend. Those "plagues" are part of the "judgment" that Revelation 17 warns us about when that chapter's first sentence begins with:

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "*Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters . . .*" Revelation 17:1

Notice again that this woman is "drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Revelation 17:6). The sober message of this inspired Bible verse is that this Mystery Woman has shed the blood of millions of God's true people—who are His "saints." By murdering them, she has made them "the martyrs of Jesus." This specific characteristic is so striking that this persecuting female is even symbolically portrayed as being "drunk" with

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blood. In God's sight, she's like a vampire. She has craved, relentlessly pursued, cruelly tortured, brutally murdered, and symbolically swallowed the blood of millions of precious believers in Jesus.

An important clarification is in order. I want to make it crystal clear that I do not apply these stirring prophecies to godly Roman Catholic people who wouldn't hurt a fly. Millions are honest and don't see the big picture. Truly, they are also the Lord's children. But God sees more than we humans do. His infinite eye reads the whole story, and He wants to enlighten us. This is why He sent His angel to boldly reveal the prophecy of Revelation 17.

In his book, *A Woman Rides the Beast: The Roman Catholic Church and the Last Days*, in the chapter, "Blood of the Martyrs," Mr. Hunt writes:

Try to imagine being suddenly arrested in the middle of the night and taken to an unknown location kept secret from family and friends. You are not told the charges against you nor the identity of your accusers, who remain unknown and thus immune from any examination

to discover whether they are telling the truth. Whatever the accusation, it is accepted as fact and you are guilty without trial. The only "trial" will be by the most ingeniously painful torture that continues until you confess to the unnamed crime or heresy [against Roman Catholic teachings] of which you have been accused. Imagine the torture of dislocated joints, torn and seared flesh, internal injuries, broken bones on the rack and other devices, mended by doctors so they could be torn asunder again by fresh torture. Eventually you confess to anything to end the torment, but no matter what you confess it never fits the secret accusation, so the torture continues until at last you expire from unbearable trauma.

Such was the fate of *millions*. These were real people: mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters—all with hopes and dreams, with passions and feelings, and many with a faith that could not be broken by torture or fire. Remember that this terror, this evil of such proportions that it is unimaginable today, was carried on for *centuries* in the

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name of Christ by the command of those who claimed to be vicars of Christ [Popes such as Gregory IX and Pope Innocent III]. They are still honored with that title by this Church, which has never admitted that Inquisitions were wrong. She has not repented or apologized, and she dares to pose even today as the supreme teacher and example of morals and truth. Remember also that the doctrines which supported the Inquisitions remain in force within the Roman Catholic Church even at the present time.*

This bloody history has been faithfully recorded in the books of heaven and in some history books. To learn more (if your stomach can endure it), read *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (a Protestant classic). Or Google: "History of the Spanish Inquisition," "Crusades against the Waldenses," "Saint Bartholomew's Massacre," or "Martyrdom of John Huss and Jerome." This will give you just a small glimpse into real history, real blood, and the real prophetic fulfillment of Revelation 17:6. God's Word is 100 percent accurate. As Dave Hunt contends,

* Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, 250.

the Roman Church has truly been “drunk with the blood of saints.”

Shocking, isn't it?

Yet this book is just getting started. Many more head-spinning revelations are yet to come. Perhaps you should pray another prayer for wisdom? After you do, pick up your Bible to follow along with me, and then brace yourself.

Then turn the page.