

LESSON 12 Judgment on Babylon (*March 16-22)

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: Revelation 17; Jer. 51:13; Exod. 28:36-38; Rev. 13:1-8; Rev. 13:18; Rev. 16:2-12.

Memory Text: “And 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. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities” (*Revelation 18:4-5, NKJV*).

The primary message of Revelation 17 is that “the will of God is accomplished!” “For God hath put in their hearts to *fulfil his will*, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, **until the words of God shall be fulfilled.**” (Rev. 17: 17). This marks the conclusion of the seventh trumpet, as previously studied, which declares that, “in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the **mystery of God should be finished,**” (Rev. 10: 1). Therefore, more than the harlot, and they seven-headed beast outfitted with his ten horns, is the truth of the finishing of the “words of God”—the everlasting gospel in all the world.

A second feature of this chapter is to disclose God’s “judgment” upon Mystery Babylon—the false religious-political-economic enterprise that shall have deceived all the inhabitants of the earth, save for those who hear the Voice of the Good Shepherd, during the Loud Cry of the Third Angel’s message.

Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, March 23.

SUNDAY [↑] March 17

The Harlot Babylon

Read Revelation 17:1. Jeremiah 51:13 shows that the “many waters” upon which Babylon sits are the river Euphrates. According to Revelation 17:15, what do many waters symbolize?

Quarterly’s Note: “A woman in the Bible is a symbol for God’s people. In Revelation, God’s true church is portrayed as a pure woman (Rev. 12:1, Rev. 22:17). A harlot thus represents a false apostate church. In Revelation 17:5, this harlot is identified as Babylon the Great. Just as ancient Babylon depended on the Euphrates River for its existence, so will end-time Babylon rely on the support of the masses to enforce her plans.”

Reaction: Overall, the lesson did a decent job on this day’s study. This latter-day Babylon will not depend on the masses for the execution of her plans, as she will, on the Political Heads of States—the proverbial “kings” of the earth. They will be the primary candidates who will employ and enforce her policies. A great example for today can be seen in the Paris Climate Change agreement, in which the heads of nations have agreed, save for Donald Trump, to enroll their respective countries in this accord, and in this way their inhabitants are also intoxicated with that venomous cocktail of false doctrines, and false worship. In her destruction also, it will be seen that it is the heads of these nations—“the ten kings,” who shall also execute her and burn her flesh (Rev. 17: 16), when they finally sense that they were deceived by her policies.

Read [Revelation 17:2](#) along with [Revelation 14:8](#) and [Revelation 18:2-3](#). What two groups of people are specified as being involved in an illicit relationship with, and being seduced by, end-time Babylon?

MONDAY [↑] *March 18*

The Harlot Riding on the Scarlet Beast

Read [Revelation 17:3](#). One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues offers to show John the judgment of the harlot who sat on many waters.

It must be noted that this woman had three sittings, or sat in three separate places:

1. "Upon many waters," (Rev. 17: 1, 15).
2. "Upon a scarlet coloured beast," (Rev. 7: 3).
3. Upon "seven mountains," (Rev. 17: 9).

Each of these three locations determine the masses and or territory she rules:

1. "Upon many waters," (Rev. 17: 1, 15)—this shows her ruling the peoples of earth.
2. "Upon a scarlet coloured beast," (Rev. 17: 3)—this shows her ruling the political systems of earth. Being subservient to the woman, as she rides it, this scarlet beast is a symbol of the entire world—both political religious, for it is outfitted with seven heads (all the religious systems) and ten crowless horns (all the civil governments).
3. Upon "seven mountains," (Rev. 17: 9)—this shows here ruling the religious systems of earth. Mountains are used in prophecy to represent both political governments ([Jer. 51:25](#); [Ezek. 35:2, 3](#)), and religious governments (Isa. 56: 6, 7; Isa. 2: 2, 3; Zech. 8: 3), and the context discretely differentiates them apart. In the case at hand, it would be pointless for the beast, seven heads, and ten horns, to each represent political systems!

Here combined three sittings causes her to first "rule the masses"—the waters, then rule the Religious world (seven heads), and finally gain ascendancy over the Political worlds—the beast with the kings. For this reason the horns are crownless, because these kings "shall give their power and strength unto the beast," (Rev. 17: 13), and allow the woman to administrate their political affairs, while they only act as political figureheads to her leadings.

Therefore, Mystery Babylon, in more than the Roman Catholic Church, but a Union of all false religions, world-over. Specifically, she is a combination of Spiritualism, Roman Catholicism, and Apostate Protestantism.

Most Adventist hold that this woman is a symbol of the Roman Catholic church alone, but in this they do not have Biblical authority, for she is identified as being "full of **names** of blasphemy," (Rev. 17:3), as well as being the "mother" of "harlots"—false religious systems, and the "mother" of "abominations,"—false doctrines. In her, therefore, will be all the false religious systems on earth, and features colossal ecumenical enterprise, whose teachings are built upon rebellion against the Law of God.

Of this woman the Bible notes, "And **in her** was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of **all that were slain upon the earth.**" Rev. 18: 24. This woman hails back to the days of presumptuous Cain who substituted his own thoughts and feelings above the expressed Word of God, and thus became the persecutor of his brother Able, whom he slew (Gen. 4: 8)!

"Babylon is said to be "the mother of harlots." By **her daughters** must be symbolized **churches** that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an

unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14 announcing the fall of Babylon, must apply to **religious bodies** that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the Judgment, it must be given in the last days, therefore it cannot refer to the Romish Church [alone], for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, **in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation, in a message which is yet future**, the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God's people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, **in the various churches professing the Protestant faith.**" {GC88 382.3} [added in 1911 edition].

"Not yet, however, can it be said that "Babylon is fallen, . . . because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." **She has not yet made all nations do this.** The spirit of world-conforming and indifference to the testing truths for our time exists and has been gaining ground in **churches of the Protestant faith** in all the countries of Christendom; and **these churches are included in the solemn and terrible denunciation of the second angel.** But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination... {GC88 389.2}

"Not until this condition shall be reached, and **the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished**, throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete. The change is a progressive one, and the perfect fulfillment of Revelation 14:8 is yet future. {GC88 389.3}

TUESDAY  *March 19*

The Identification of the Scarlet Beast

We must avoid the powerful and nearly overmastering temptation of seeing everything as representing Rome or Roman Catholicism, in end-time prophecies, as the Devil will use this to his evil advantage. Just to reflect for a moment on what the Denomination teaches on this topic, gives reason for pause and discernment: It is held by SDA's in general that the harlot "woman" is a symbol of Rome, the "beast" is a symbol of Rome, and the "seven heads" are also symbols of Rome! This provides no rhyme or reason, and thus no present-truth message. We must, therefore, allow the Bible to direct our understandings to its truths.

In Revelation 13 we read of a seven-headed leopard-like beast with a "healed" head (Rev. 13: 3), of whom the two-horned beast (Rev. 13: 11) is to make an image (Rev. 13: 14, 15), and that "image" will be given life to speak and enforce worship decrees upon all the inhabitants of earth (Rev. 13: 15, 16). In Revelation 17, that "image" is seen in the form of the seven-headed scarlet-colored beast. As verily as the leopard-like had the name "blasphemy" over all seven heads, the scarlet-colored is filled with "names of blasphemy," all of which point to its being a religious system.

Blasphemy: this word has to do with false worship, including idolatry, and any form of worship that defies the Law of God. Said Jesus, "I know the **blasphemy** of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." ([Rev. 2: 9](#)). In this instance, "blasphemy" is indicative of hypocrisy, professing to be what they are not!

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and **blasphemy** shall be forgiven unto men: but the **blasphemy** against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Matt. 12:31. Since "blasphemy" can be "forgiven" then it is evident that it is a "sin," which by definition "is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3: 4). The leopard-like beast "opened his mouth in **blasphemy** against God, to **blaspheme his name**, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." (Rev 13:6).

In short, then, the word "blasphemy" must be understood as "evil-speaking against God," "evil teaching (doctrines)," and "speaking insultingly against YHWH and His truth, etc."

Caution: Whenever we seek to allow Scripture to Interpret Scripture, it is NEVER safe to use the voice of false teachers as a barometer for Truth. For example, many have used the Pharisees' definition of "blasphemy" to be the Bible standard (John 10: 33), when it is not. We can never err when we employ the words Christ has spoken, but we are on the enemy's ground when we resort to his words to interpret the truths of the Scriptures, even if those words are written in the Bible! This is why some believers cannot accept that Jesus Christ is not only the "son" of David, but very David, and as blinders they cite passages from the Pharisees and the common people (Matt. 21: 9), whose words are at times fraught with a misconception of the truth! Members from those crowds also heard his say, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands," (Mark 14:58), although "he spake of the temple of his body!" (Joh 2:21). Again, we cannot wholly rely on the theology of the people in the Bible to be speaking for God, therefore, "let God be true," and all men liars. (Rom. 3: 4).

Was, Is not, Yet Is: "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: 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." (Rev. 17: 8).

When the Spirit of Truth interprets the Scriptures, the whole Bible comes in harmony. To this end, the key phrase in the above verse is "the bottomless pit." A correct understanding of this term clears the way for an "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." We note that the word "ascend" precedes the phrase, demonstrating that it is the ascension as of a resurrection. Given that the earth is called the "bottomless pit," (Rev. 20: 1, 3), and knowing that there is a resurrection scheduled from that pit (Rev. 20: 7-9), it becomes self-evident that this resurrection is **after** the millennium! Working along these lines, we can very easily see the three phases of this scarlet-colored beast:

1. The beast "was:" This phase shows the "image of the beast" phase, in which the Mark of the Beast system (Rev. 13: 15-18) is deployed under the reign of "Mother" Babylon. This is prior to the millennium.
2. The beast "is not:" This second phase is occasioned by the Second Advent of Christ, which brings an end to this entire sinful world, and depopulates the earth (2 Thess. 2: 8; Rev. 1: 7; 2 Thess. 1: 7-10; Rev. 19: 15-21 and other kindred passages). In such a state of lifeless existence and Sabbatical rest, the earth can only await the resurrection from the dead, or the descent of the Holy City with the saints, in order to again her inhabitants.
3. The beast "yet is:" Emerging "from the bottomless pit" (Rev. 17: 8) at the end of the thousand years and continuing to live for "a short space" (v. 10) equivalent to 100 years (Isa. 65: 20), and finally going "into perdition," (v. 11), a state of eternal death or non-existence, (not eternal punishment), the whole chapter of the sinful world is completed, and only leaves the saints of God to possess a clean universe, free from the traces and reminders of sin.

Quarterly's Note: (1) The beast "was". It existed in the past. Its prior activities lasted for the prophetic period of 42 months, also known as 1,260 days/years (see [Rev. 13:5](#) and [Lesson 9, Sunday](#)). (2) "Is not". With its deadly wound ([Rev. 13:3](#)), the beast went into its nonexistence phase, at least, as a persecutor, in 1798. It vanished for some time from the world scene; yet it survived. (3) Finally, with the healing of the deadly wound, the beast will revive in full satanic rage.

Analysis: A review of the details we provided above, stands in bold relief against this very contrary view held in the Quarterly. This is because out Denomination tends to see everything with Roman eyes, and not through the lenses of the Holy Spirit of Prophecy!

WEDNESDAY  March 20

The Seven Heads of the Beast

Read [Revelation 17:9-11](#) along with [Revelation 13:18](#). The requirement for understanding the seven heads is a mind of wisdom. What kind of wisdom is in view here? How does one obtain this divinely imparted wisdom ([James 1:5](#))?

Quarterly's Note: Thus, the seven mountains symbolize seven great successive empires that dominated the world throughout history, through which Satan opposed God and harmed God's people. From John's time perspective, five of these empires have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. While no single view has been agreed upon by all Adventist interpreters, many hold that the five that have fallen are the great kingdoms that in Old Testament times dominated and (on occasion) harmed God's people: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece. The "one is" kingdom was the Roman Empire of John's time.

Analysis: The notion that these "seven heads" are "successive empires" is foreign to the truth of the Scriptures. When Inspiration wants us to see kingdoms in succession, they are represented as separate beasts rising on the stage of action, as in Dan 7: 1-6, or as horns growing in place, as in Dan. 7: 7, 8. When systems or governments exist simultaneously in prophecy, as in the seven-headed dragon with the ten horns (Rev. 12: 3), Inspiration notifies us of their contemporaneous appearances, and if successive, we are similarly informed. In the case at hand, this beast was to have arisen some 1900 years after John was given the vision of them, and even in his days those empires cited by our trusty theologians were already extinct, let alone to be brought up under the Christian era! Egypt and Assyria were never even forecasted in the prophetic chain of beasts from Daniel through Revelation, and stands as clear testament to "private interpretation," which only yields false conclusions. As we have already reviewed these seven heads under Monday's lesson, to be the entire religious world, no further elucidation is necessary at this time.

Quarterly's Note: There are seven kings, too, who are symbolized by the seven mountains. Also, these mountains are successive, not simultaneous.

Analysis: As with the "seven heads," the same error is carried over with the "seven mountains," and a foreign conclusion to the centrality of the Scriptures is derived! In the above analysis, we have demonstrated how inspiration shows "successive" governments and systems, and the reader is encouraged to be guided by this salient Biblical principle.

Quarterly's Note: John is further told that the scarlet beast is an eighth world power, although it is one of the seven heads (world powers). Which of the seven? Because the heads are sequential in time, the eighth must be the seventh head that received the deadly wound. It is at the time of this eighth world power that the scarlet beast appears, carrying and advancing the goals of the harlot Babylon. Today, we live at the time of the healing of the deadly wound. The eighth world power will appear on the scene right before the end and will go to perdition.

Analysis: Let's read the Bible for what it says, and not what others conjecture of it. "10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. 11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." Rev. 17: 10, 11.

From the outset, it must be stated bluntly that we are not at liberty to "add to" or "subtract from" the words of this prophecy (Rev. 22: 18, 18), lest we receive the frown of God, and debarred from the Holy City! With this in mind, it is rather revealing that the Quarterly reads the "eight beast" as "one of the seven heads!" There is not even logic to this conclusion. How could the beast itself be one of the heads that it carries? (!). Is this a sort of zombie-like creature, in which the beast is also its heads? This goes to show the dangerous lengths of private interpretation, and how wrong-headed it is.

The Bible states that there are seven kings (kingdoms), and the seventh is also the eighth, which will "go into perdition" at "the second death," (Rev. 20: 11-15)!

Perdition: This word is also one of the diamonds that Inspiration has hidden in the sands of the Word, to guide the seeker to the eternal Truth. Jesus said, "those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is **lost**, but the son of **perdition**; that the scripture might be fulfilled." Joh 17:12

Here, Christ contrasts the state of those “kept” or saved, vs. the one that “is lost”—Judas, the “son of perdition.” The apostle Paul states, ““But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in **destruction and perdition.**” 1Tim. 6:9 .

As with Christ’s statement, it is obvious that “perdition” is even more severe than destruction, for it not only impacts this life, but the life to come! Again, he admonished that, “we are not of **them who draw back** unto perdition; but of them that believe to **the saving of the soul.**” Heb. 10:39.

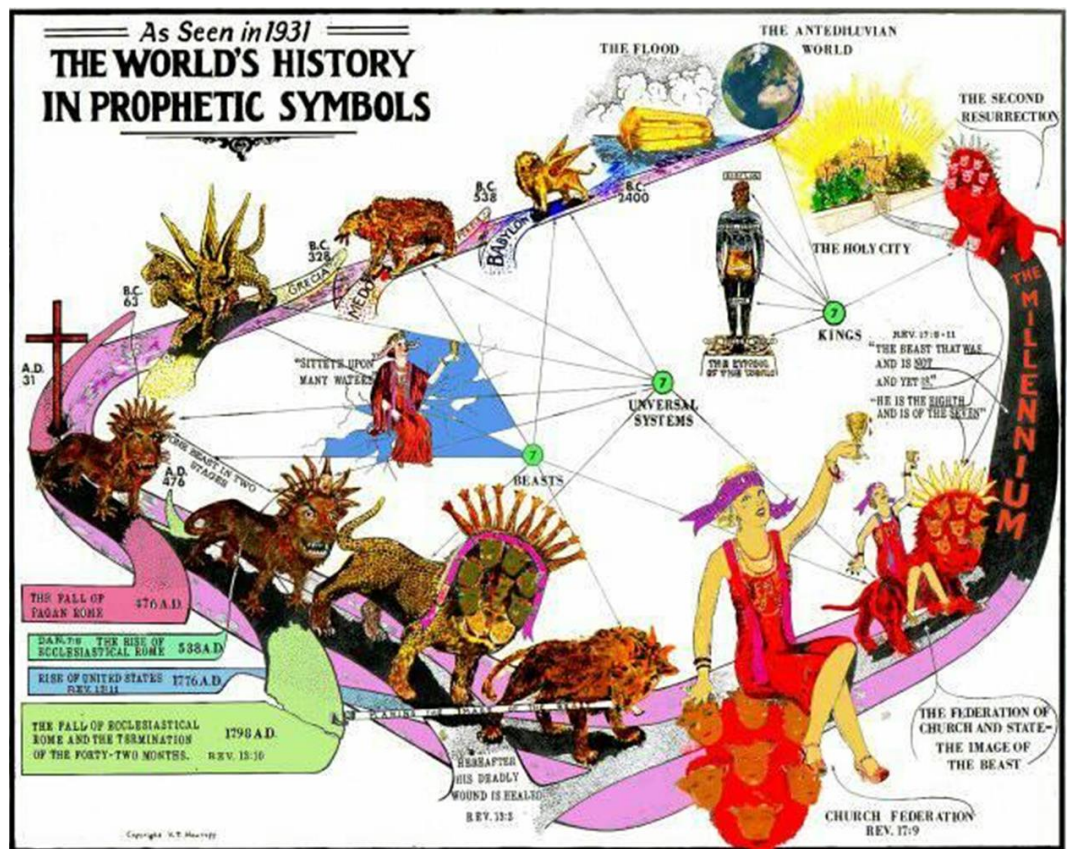
This and other related Scriptures on “perdition” show the sharp contrast between those who are eternally saved, as compared with those who are eternally lost—go into perdition! Read also Phil. 1: 28, and 2 Pet. 3:7, as they teach the same truth. We may safely conclude that salvation is to eternal life as perdition to eternal death!

The notion that “*The eighth world power will appear on the scene right before the end*” of the world, is the spawn of error, for the “eight” beast comes up after the “seventh” shall have arisen from the bottomless pit, on the other side of the millennium.

Revelation treats the beasts of Daniel in a successive continuum, and so considers them in numerically additive.

The Chart to the right illustrates this truth. Let’s become familiar with this prophetic tool.

We first analyze the three groupings of seven (7) in green circles, from left to right. The leftmost group is labeled “Beasts,” the center is labeled “Universal Systems,” and the third and last, “Kings.” Also, take particular note to follow the arrows to their destinations, to see what beasts, systems, or kings are being represented. Finally, the reader should note that the Bible



accounts for the first 1656 years of human’s existence on earth as occurring *before* the flood, and any chronology of world governments must include that aspect of history. With this basis, let’s now proceed to decoding Revelation 17’s prophecy.

“Seven Kings” (Kingdoms or Empires): The rightmost grouping of seven, points to a man’s statue (Dan. 2: 28-35), showing the seven universal kingdoms since Adam: 1) Antediluvians, 2) Babylon, 3) Medio-Persia, 4) Greece, 5) Pagan and Papal Rome, 6) Present World Governments after 1798, 7) The world government after the millennium.

Seven Beasts with the eighth: We now look at the left most grouping of seven, and as before, count these beasts, for Scripture teaches that the eight is of the seven (not seventh!). This means that the seventh beast is

counted twice, since he lived twice, his “was” and “yet is” phase respectively: 1) Lion, 2) Bear, 3) Leopard, 4) Non-descript beast in two phases (having 10 and 8 horns, respectively), 5) Leopard-like beast, 6) The two-horned beast, and 7) the Scarlet colored. Yet the prophecy does call for an eight beast which is of the seven, and logically, the 7th beast having gone through his “is not” phase, during the millennium and comes back to life in his “yet is” form, becomes the 8th beast, even though he is of “the seven.”

From what we have already covered, plus the facts of history before us, we are today living between the sixth and seventh beast, respectively, the time of the United States’ being the world’s only Super Power nation! From 1929, with the political healing of the deadly wound (Rev. 13: 3), and the rise of ecumenism, the 7th beast is already on the stage, but not yet saddled by the woman! She is today actively gaining a firm grip among the churches of the World Council of Churches and other world religions. Soon, we will move into the “image beast phase” that is to be launched by the USA, and with the rise of Pope Francis and the Paris Climate Change Agreement, now taking the world with a storm, only God alone knows how close we are to realizing the fully engineered seventh beast phase. By an act of Providence, President Trump withdrew the United States from the Paris Agreement, leaving America the *only nation in the world* that is not controlled by this Papal Bull. But the growing voices of opposition he faces both from within and without his political party, as well as from around the world, the writing is on the proverbial wall of time, that soon, and none knows how soon, the whole world will have wondered after the *healed* beast.

Contrary to what the Quarterly teaches, it now becomes a self-evident truth that the “eight” beast in his “is not yet come” stage, will arise after (not before), the Second Advent of Christ! There are only a few events remaining to bring this world to its close! Oh, what manner of persons ought we to be perfecting holiness in Christ, as we prepare for His coming Kingdom of peace!

THURSDAY [↑] March 21

The Judgment of Babylon

“16 And the ten horns which thou sawest 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. 17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” (Rev. 17: 16, 17).

Because God still has his people in Babylon, her judgments necessarily had to be delayed until his 144,000 commandos could go and fetch them from her clutches, lest they should die with her in her destruction. Just as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, God had to physically have his people relocated from those corrupted cities to a save place, in like manner will He do today—people will be physically relocated from Babylon’s geographical domains (Rev. 18: 2-5), including the US Territories, and gathered into His premillennial kingdom of peace—the holding place of the saved, till the Second Coming, so as to not be impacted by the effects of her sins and her plagues. In this way “the Words of God shall be fulfilled,” as the everlasting gospel will not only be preached in Babylon, but souls will be saved for His kingdom. HalleluYah! This goes to show that the world government of tomorrow, at its beginning, is one that is sympathetic to the Gospel rather than a totalitarian system, but will morph into one that hates the Gospel and religion and will thus turn against the false system of Babylon, after God’s people have been safely removed! This is what constitutes the “drying up” of the River Euphrates—the separating of God’s people from Babylon’s domains, so that she can be appropriately punished.

Quarterly’s Note: *In other words, the battle of Armageddon is not a military battle in the Middle East but the final conflict of the Second Coming in which Satan and his confederacy fight against Christ and His angelic host.*

Analysis: It is without meaning to suggest that the Battle of Armageddon is not of a military nature in the Middle East, for the Bible says the very opposite! That battle is fought between the Militaries of earth and the army of heaven. From Satan’s apostasy in heaven in eternity past, there has been “war” between good and evil, to suggest that the war of Armageddon is simply that same invisible war is to say nothing at all. Of that Battle, the Bible declares:

“And I saw the beast, and **the kings of the earth**, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.” Rev. 19: 19. These “kings” are the same ones in Rev. 16: 14-16, and Rev. 17: 14, who shall war against the King of glory at his Second Coming.

Read [Revelation 17:16-18](#). From what we saw in [Revelation 16:2-12](#), what lies behind the ten kings’ change of attitude toward Babylon? Who is behind what happens to Babylon?

FRIDAY ↑ *March 22*

Further Thought: Before the full moral collapse of Babylon, a voice from heaven urges God’s people still in

Discussion Questions: