

## Chapter Seventeen

### The Great Harlot

**17:1-2 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.”**

*Great harlot:* The term *harlot* is often used in scripture to describe Israel’s wicked conduct in worshiping idols. (Jud 2:17; Isa 1:21; Jer 2:20; Ezek 16) Jerusalem is pictured as playing the part of a harlot. Instead of being paid for her services, she paid others (Ezek 16:15-59), implying that she was “available” to any nation. She is called the ‘great city’ in 18:18.

True to Daniel’s vision (Dan 7:23ff), Rome ceased to be a world power sometime in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century. She wasn’t burned up or destroyed, but fizzled away—rotted from the inside out due to moral decay and corruption. The Catholic Church didn’t begin until 606 AD, when Boniface III declared himself the Universal Bishop. The catastrophic language in Revelation suggests an empire entirely different, namely, that of Satan’s.

*Sits on many waters:* She reigns over many nations, in that God exalted Israel over other nations as His chosen race. It is translated for us in verse 15: “The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, *are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.*” Since the sea is a symbol of nations, we have here a true picture of the beast that came up from the sea in chapter 13. This is not the True Israel that God brought out from the nations. This is the antithesis, the False Israel, who “made many drunk with the wine of her immorality.”

Satan is angry with Israel and goes away to war with the “rest of her seed.” “Her seed” is defined as “those who keep God’s commandments and hold Jesus’ testimony.” In other words, Christians.

John doesn’t say that Satan created this beast, only that he is “standing on the sand of the seashore,”—a symbol for “many peoples.” Satan seems to be witnessing the rising up of the beast (kingdom) from the nations, and decides to give it his throne in order to rule from there. This is the “synagogue of Satan,” the false Jews. (Rev 2:9; 3:9)

*With whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality:* Referring to Herod and other rulers over the Jews. Their immoral conduct caused others to sin. (Acts 4:23-30)

How the faithful city has become a harlot, she who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her, but now murderers. (Isa 1:21)

There are two types of spiritual fornication: (1) Idolatry and the worship of false gods; (2) illegal intercourse with other nations (Establishing political and national ties to gain an advantage instead of relying on God.)

They have gone up to Assyria, like a wild donkey all alone; Ephraim has hired lovers. (Hos 8:9)

You built yourself a high place at the top of every street and made your beauty abominable, and you spread your legs to every passer-by to multiply your harlotry. You also played the harlot with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, and multiplied your harlotry to make Me angry... Moreover, you played the harlot with the Assyrians because you were not satisfied; you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied. You also multiplied your harlotry with the land of merchants, Chaldea, yet even with this you were not satisfied. (Ezek 16:25-29)

Like many commentators of his day, Darby calls the Great Harlot “a character plain enough to mark the Roman or Papal system.”<sup>1</sup> However, being “plain enough” is not good enough. There is no verse anywhere that points to Rome or to the Catholic Church as being the Great Harlot. OT evidence is “plain enough” regarding Israel’s harlotry, along with the other contextual evidence. This is the only *scriptural* conclusion we can come up with, no matter how “plain” or “logical” some other conclusion may seem.

*Those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality:* Namely, the Jewish people, as we have already discussed. Judah’s rulers had committed fornication with Jerusalem by forging alliances with the surrounding nations. Her greater sin, however, was that they used their influence to gain cooperation in persecuting the church.

**17:3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.**

*Carried me away in the Spirit:* John is carried away to see Jerusalem (the Great Harlot (vs. 3)), and also to see the bride of the Lamb. (21:10) Both are female, and both are pictures of God’s chosen. They are *religious* entities, not sexual ones. The Great Harlot was once faithful Israel, whom He is divorcing; the Bride is His new “wife.” Both times the apostle is carried away “in the Spirit,” signifying that these principles can only be seen “from far off,” or “from the mountain.” (See notes on 21:10)

*Wilderness:* The wilderness is a symbol for the world. (See notes on 12:14)

*Woman sitting on a scarlet beast:* The interpretation of the woman is given in 17:18, as *the great city who reigns over the kings of the earth*. She is sitting on a scarlet beast, or ruling over the kings of the earth. The kings of the earth had the Dragon’s authority, reflecting its color (red). Sitting is symbolic of rule. (Dan 7:10; Mark 16:19)

---

<sup>1</sup> See Darby’s commentary on Revelation

<b>Babylon</b>	<b>Great Harlot</b>	<b>Jerusalem (Israel)</b>
<p>Made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality (Rev 14:8)</p>	<p>Those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality (Rev 17:2)</p> <p>Rules over many nations (Rev 17:1; 15)</p> <p>Was corrupting the earth with her immorality (Rev 19:2)</p>	<p>Israel...began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab (Num 25:1)</p> <p>We will be like the nations, like the tribes of the lands, serving wood and stone (Ezek 20:32)</p>
<p>Remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath (Rev 16:19)</p>	<p>He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her (Rev 19:2)</p>	<p>When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand (Luke 21:20)</p>
<p>She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird (Rev 18:2)</p>		<p>A fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity...I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land (Zech 13:1-2)</p>
<p>All nations drank of the wine of the passion of her immorality, kings of the earth committed immorality with her, merchants of the earth became rich by the wealth of her sensuality (Rev 18:3)</p>	<p>Kings of the earth committed immorality with her (Rev 17:2)</p> <p>Rules over many nations (Rev 17:1; 15)</p>	<p>...you are a harlot with many lovers (Jer 3:1)</p>
<p>The kings of the earth, who committed immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning (Rev 18:9)</p>	<p>The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth (Rev 17:18)</p>	<p>I will also put an end to all her gaiety, her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths, and all her festal assemblies. And I will destroy her vines and fig trees, of which she said, 'These are my wages which my lovers have given me.' And I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field will devour them (Hosea 2:11-12)</p>

Babylon	Great Harlot	Jerusalem (Israel)
No life found in her (Rev 18:22-23)		Days are coming when they will say, “Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed” (Luke 23:29-30)
Her merchants were the great men of the earth (Rev 18:23)		
All the nations were deceived by her sorcery (Rev 18:23)	Those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality (Rev 17:2)	
In her was found the blood of prophets, saints and all who have been slain on the earth (Rev 18:24)	She was drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus (Rev 17:6)	O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! (Matt 23:37)

**Comparison table between the Great Harlot (Babylon) and Jerusalem**

When they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, “O Lord, it is Thou who didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Thy servant, didst say, “Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples devise futile things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ.” For truly *in this city* (Jerusalem) there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur. (Acts 4:24-28)

Who was present during this confrontation?

It came to pass on the morrow, that their *rulers and elders and scribes* were gathered together in Jerusalem; and *Annas the high priest* was there, and *Caiaphas*, and *John*, and *Alexander*, and as many as were of the *kindred of the high priest*. (Acts 4:5-6)

Peter and John had endured a minor inquisition (vss. 1-20), then returned to their own company and “reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said unto them.” (vs. 23) Their group quoted Psalms 2:1-2, to show what had happened to them: “Why do the nations rage, and the peoples meditate a vain thing? *The kings of the earth* set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Jehovah, and against his anointed.” “In this city” shows that the entire event took place in Jerusalem.

At the time of David’s dynasty, the ten Northern tribes (called Israel) set themselves in array against Judah and the seed of David. Israel shows up in Acts, along with the elders of Judah. There are Gentiles, King Herod, Pilate, and elders and scribes. No Gentile kings had set themselves in array against Jerusalem, Christians, or Jehovah’s anointed. The only ones that were set in array were those that took part in the inquisition in Acts 4 as prophesied in Psalms 2. *That is the fulfillment of that prophecy.*

Jesus is the Ruler over the kings of the earth (Rev 1:5), and has made the church to be a kingdom of priests. (Rev 1:6) God’s words to Moses may prove beneficial here:

Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and *you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel. (Exod 19:5-6)

Israel was *exalted* by God over the other nations. In that sense, they were kings over them. Their essence as a people was distilled into their capitol city of Jerusalem. This was the “great city,” because it was a city of kings.

I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem *which I have chosen*. (1 Kgs 11:13)

*Scarlet beast*: In Revelation, this color is associated with the red horse (6:4), the dragon (12:3), the Great Harlot, and the beast she ruled over. (17:3, 4; 18:12, 16) Israel was depicted as a rich woman clothed in scarlet. (Jer 4:30) The color was used extensively in the tabernacle. (Exo 25:4) It was the color of the cord Rahab let down from her window. (Josh 2:18) It was also a mark of prosperity. (2 Sam 1:24; Prov. 31:21) In Revelation’s context, it seems to be symbol for death and destruction.

*Full of blasphemous names*: Slanderous titles attributed to or spoken against the Lord. (See notes on 13:1) Again, identical to the beast in chapter 13.

*Seven heads and ten horns*: Clear evidence that this is the same beast (ruling power) that arose from the nations. (See notes on 13:1) The seven heads are seven *mountains*, which are seven *kings*. Seven implies *completeness*, and kings are indicative of *kingdoms*. Thus, it is a kingdom completely opposed to God’s will.

Concerning the southern kingdom of Judah (made up of Judah and Benjamin), the Babylonians appointed Gedaliah—a court official in Judah—to oversee what was left of the land. He was assassinated after only 3 years as governor. Judah’s kingdom reaped the reward of its idolatry and rebellion against the Lord, disappearing from history. (Jer 40) As a nation then, the northern kingdom (10 tribes) was considered to be the nation of Israel. The 10 horns being symbols of 10 kings (Dan 7:24) may point to the 10 tribes of the house of Israel.

**17:4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,**

*Clothed in purple and scarlet*: Purple is the color of royalty, and was a predominant color in the tabernacle. (Exo 25:4; 26:1; 35:35) The Lord prescribed the use of purple in several features of the tabernacle, such as the curtains (Exo 26:1) and the hangings. (Exo 27:16) It was also an essential part of the temple. (2 Chr 2:14) It was a color worn only by royalty. (Jud 8:26; Est 8:15; Ezek 23:6) Purple clothing was considered by men to be a symbol of greatness (Dan 5:7), but seen by God as a delusion. (Jer 10:3, 9) It was a sign of wealth but was of no recourse when God’s judgment came. (Lam 4:5; Luke 16:19) Jesus was mocked when they put a purple robe on Him during His trial. (Mark 15:17, 20) The word *Canaan* means the *land of purple*.

Scarlet, as we have seen, seems to point to death and war in the context and is related to the great red dragon and the beast that carries the harlot.

*Adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls:* All symbols of great wealth. The temple Solomon built for the Lord was “adorned with precious stones; and the gold was gold from Parvaim.” (2 Chr 3:6) Again, this is a clear picture of the idolatrous nation of God’s chosen people, the Jews:

“I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands, and a necklace around your neck. I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth...you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty (*clothed in purple*). Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you,” declares the Lord God. “But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be willing. And you took some of your clothes, *made for yourself high places of various colors*, and played the harlot on them, which should never come about nor happen.” (Ezek 16:11-16)

The harlot sits on top of (ruling over) the scarlet beast, and is represented in *the high places of various colors* Ezekiel described. Israel “played the harlot *on them*.”

*In her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality:* The hand is a symbol for deeds carried out. The cup is a symbol for a situation resulting from certain acts, specifically, Israel’s immorality. Jesus asked the sons of Zebedee, “Are you able to drink from the cup I am about to drink?” (Mark 10:38) The cup symbolized His impending crucifixion. The house of Israel then, is found holding a cup of loathing and idolatry. God’s will is to keep His church free from touching and holding such a cup. (1 Thess 4:3)

**17:5 and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”**

We equate harlotry with simple prostitution. It was, however, much darker than a simple exchange of money for sex, and is therefore important to understand in order to put Revelation’s Great Harlot in its intended context.

In ancient times, harlots were a class mingled within the social strata of all civilizations. After the corrupting foreign influxes and influences of Solomon’s day, harlotry developed to even fuller shamelessness. The erotic songs (Isa 23:16), seductive arts (Prov 6:24), and damaging influence of harlotry are vividly pictured and denounced by the prophets. (Prov 7:10; 29:3; Isa 23:16; Jer 3:3; 5:7; Ezek 16:25; cf. Deut 23:17) Money was lavished upon this class of women, and the weak and unwary were taken captive by them. As such, it became one of the Jewish father’s chief concerns to “keep (his son) from the evil woman,” who “hunts for the precious life.” (Prov 6:24, 26) From the title given her—a “foreign woman,” (Prov 23:27)—and the warnings against “the flattery of the foreigner’s tongue” (Prov 6:24; cf. 1 Kgs 11:1; Ezra 10:2), we can surmise that in later times this class was chiefly made up of strangers from outside of Israel.

The harlot represented more than a social peril and problem. She was one of a consecrated class, and as such, was the concrete expression and agent of the most insidious and powerful influence and system menacing the purity and permanence of God’s Law. This system deified sexual genitalia and the forces of Nature. Its devotees worshiped these symbols in grossly licentious rites and orgies. The temple prostitute was invested with sanctity as a member of the religious caste, and men and women

prostituted themselves in the service of their gods. Their temples and sanctuaries were nothing more than brothels, legalized by religious sanctions.

Ancient Babylon was rife with this type of “religion,” which is why the Great Harlot in Revelation is identified by the name of that immoral city. The OT prophets make it clear that the Israelites were swayed by their own carnal instincts, adopting the worship of Baal and Astarte instead of Jehovah. (Amos 2:6-8; Hos 4:13ff) Asa and Jehoshaphat undertook to purge the land of such abominations. (1 Kgs 14:24; 15:12; 22:46)

*A name was written, a mystery:* Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was called a ‘mystery’ by Daniel (Dan 2:18), and is the only OT occurrence of *musterion*. It appears three other times in Revelation:

- The mystery of the seven stars. (1:20) (The church kingdom)
- The mystery of God which was preached to His servants by the prophets. (10:7) (Fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham)
- The Great Harlot and the beast she sits on. (17:7) (The rejection of God’s plan)

*Mystery:* Things shrouded in mystery are known to God but hidden, for the most part, from mankind. (Eph 3:9) This word is not a symbol, but conveys the sense of not being able to understand the symbols that follow. (See notes on 10:7 for an explanation of *mystery*.)

*Forehead:* From a Greek word, meaning *plainly seen*. It represents what is foremost in the mind. The children of Israel were to wear the law of God on their forehead “as a public reminder” of their freedom from bondage. (Exo 13:9) False Israel (represented by the Great Harlot) sports this title in plain sight, even though the Holy Spirit calls it a mystery. It is a reminder of Israel’s true condition.

*Mother of Harlots:* Another termed used for Israel:

Thus says the Lord, “Where is the certificate of divorce, by which I have sent *your mother* away? Or to whom of My creditors did I sell you? Behold, you were sold for your iniquities, and for your transgressions *your mother* was sent away.” (Isa 50:1)

For *their mother* has played the harlot; she who conceived them has acted shamefully. For she said, “I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.” (Hos 2:5)

The term *harlot* is never used of other nations in scripture, only Israel. If we let the scriptures interpret Revelation for us, we won’t fall into error thinking this is Rome. God nurtured the Israelites, but they chased after other gods as an unfaithful wife chases after other men.

*Abominations of the earth:* The sons of Israel were told that God would destroy their mother. (Hos 4:5) In a railing judgment against Israel, Jerusalem is portrayed as “the daughter of (their) mother.” (Ezek 16:45) Being a harlot, “mother” Jerusalem gives birth to other abominations. Israel’s spiritual idolatry spread—or at least confirmed its practices—to other lands: Egypt, Assyria, Chaldea, Samaria, Sodom, Edom, and Philistine. (Ezek 16:15) This is how she made the kings of the earth drunk with the wine of her immorality. It wasn’t God’s Law they were promoting, but their own *spiritual* immorality.

**17:6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly.**

*Drunk with the blood of saints and witnesses of Jesus:* “Those who dwell on the earth” participate in Israel’s indulgence, drinking the wine of idolatry. (17:2) Again, many see this as Rome, who admittedly sent many Christians to their death. But as previously discussed, it was the Jews who instigated the Romans against Christians. They were consumed with jealousy and were enraged that Christians had bastardized their scriptures into another “religion.”

*I wondered greatly:* John was not the only one who “wondered” at her. Verse 8 shows that “those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.” *Wonder* is the same word as *amazed*. Thayer: *to pay attention to one’s external appearance; to be influenced by partiality*. This is the meaning of the angel’s words to John: “Why are you *influenced* by what you see?” When the people saw that the beast was healed, they wondered in admiration. (13:3) They were influenced by what they saw, as the children of Israel were influenced by foreign women and their foreign gods. (Exo 34:10-17) That influence led to idolatry as they began to adopt those nations’ heathen religions.

**17:7 And the angel said to me, “Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.**

A bit of insight is provided—although Israel *sits*, or *reigns* over this beast, it is a symbiosis—the beast carries *her*. One gains support from the other, but it is the rider who benefits. *Influence* is the key to this relationship. The first beast from chapter 13 is now sufficiently explained as nations (vs 15) and kings (vs 18). When we understand the scripture, “Why do the nations rage...?” we begin to see the raging beast opposed to God’s kingdom. On top of the whole mess were the one people chosen to uphold that testimony of righteousness—Jerusalem.

**17:8 “The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.**

We are now told that the scarlet beast *is about to come up* from the nations. Remember that the abyss is a picture for earthly nations:

- Smoke (concealing light) (9:2)
- Locusts (false prophets concealing truth) (9:10)
- Satan (the unseen mastermind behind it all) (9:11; 20:1)

All of these entities have one singular purpose: *deception*.

*Was and is not and will come:* A term similar to God, “who was, *and who is*, and who is to come.” (4:8) The beast however, “was, *and is not*, and will come.” (17:8) It’s another way of saying past, present and future, but qualifying the beast’s *present* state as being without power, authority or

dominion. He *is not*—God *is*. The beast *will come* from the abyss (the nations—17:9), denoting its origin.

Paul said “death reigned from Adam...who is a type of Him who *was to come*,” (Rom 5:14) referring to Christ. As Adam was a type of Christ, the beast represents the *attitudes* of rebellion against God. The beast *is NOT*, while God is *I AM*. (Exo 3:14)

**17:9-10** “Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.

*The mind which has wisdom:* Only twice does this expression appear in Revelation, the first concerning the meaning of ‘666.’ It’s a requirement to *discern* something of importance. The “mind that has wisdom” realizes that the number means something else. It’s not literal and it’s not obvious. The woman on seven hills means something else, requiring a “wise mind” to understand the symbolism. They are veiled in obvious signs, but are not obvious to see, except to those who can grasp it. Those who see the woman sitting on seven hills as Rome forget that the hills (obvious) are kings (not so obvious).

*Seven kings:* Although ‘7’ means completeness, full-grown or perfection, these seem to be 7 literal kings. Daniel saw 10 horns, which the angel interpreted to be kings. (Dan 7:24) Daniel’s 10 *horns* changed into 10 *kings*. The horns became kings but the number 10 remained as it was. In other words, the number was not symbolic.

John writes that it sits on seven *mountains*, not *hills*, two totally different symbols. The text is quite clear: the heads are *mountains*, and those mountains are *kings*. Men reading this stop at *mountains* and immediately point to Rome as “proof.” Why not keep going and see the word “kings”? The heads are a symbol for mountains (great ones). Mountains are kings.

Two symbols are given to loose the mystery of the woman and the Beast, one is *political*, the other *demographical*; both are *enigmatical*. Rome was known in antiquity as the city of seven hills (*urbs septicolis*). Hence, it is often assumed that the seven *mountains* symbolize the seven *hills* of Rome. However, this seems questionable, if not doubtful. In the first place, the angel indicates that the answer to the mystery of the woman and the Beast that he is about to provide requires wisdom to grasp and comprehend (“*here is a mind which hath wisdom*”). Similar language is employed when John indicated the numeric identity of the Beast in Rev. 13:18. As all will readily concede, the explanation of the Beast’s identity by the number six hundred three score and six requires unraveling a mystery within a mystery, and has perplexed and eluded commentators for centuries. Despite ostensibly providing the number of the Beast to reveal its identity, the method adopted also plainly served to disguise it. Although readily ascertainable to its original recipients, the riddle of the name probably was largely inaccessible to outsiders. Hence, we expect the same here. The very fact that Rome was universally recognized as the city of seven hills argues *against* an interpretation which equates the seven mountains with the imperial city and not for it. The interpretation should have been within the reach of the early church, and those possessing a competent grasp of Biblical symbology and interpretive method, but it should not have been within the easy reach of entire ancient population, including government officials, for this would defeat the purpose of veiling the message in the first place.<sup>2</sup>

Although Rome killed Christians, persecution encompassed much of the empire, especially Asia Minor. The Beast was not localized to Rome but included “all kindreds, tongues, and nations.” (Rev

---

<sup>2</sup> *The Consummation of the Ages*, pp. 319, 320

13:7) The woman’s description is more consistent with Jerusalem’s relationship to Asia rather than to Rome. Rather than interpret the mountains geographically, the better view is to interpret them demographically, as pointing to political centers of the world, not the topography of the land.

We’ve already seen that mountains represent nations, peoples, governments, and kings. Mountains (great centers of power) and hills (lesser ones) are symbols describing human populations centered on their peaks and apexes. They were easy to defend against enemies. Mountains presented a natural defense and were difficult to besiege.

The woman sitting on waters (peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues—17:15) speaks to the woman’s *pervasiveness* within the provinces, the Jews having dwelt in many cities throughout the empire. The Book of Acts and the letters to the seven churches make it clear that the Jews had a seat in most, if not all of the major cities of Asia, and had already actively persecuted the church. (Acts 18:29; 19:8; Rev 2:9; 3:9) Therefore, rather than seeing the seven mountains as Rome, they are political centers in Asia.

*Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while:* We have another picture of the past, present and future. *Fallen* in scripture usually signifies death. (2 Sam 1:4; 3:34; 2 Chr 29:9, etc) The word means *come to an end*. Note the play on the symbols:

Five kings have fallen	The beast who was
One king is	The beast who is not
The other king has not yet come	The beast who is to come

There were seven Roman emperors in this period:

- Julius Caesar
  - Augustus (27 BC-14 AD)
  - Tiberius (14-37 AD)
  - Caligula (37-41 AD)
  - Claudius (41-54 AD)
  - Nero (54-68 AD)
  - Galba (reigned 7 months and 7 days<sup>3</sup>)
- Five have fallen (died)

→ One is (he currently rules)

→ He must remain a little while

There is furious debate over when Revelation was written because of this list. John could have been counting from the time of Christ’s death—approximately 32 AD. But who is the 7th? After Domitian, there were five relatively good rulers. Nero is the most likely candidate for the “one who is.” It was under Vespasian that Jerusalem was destroyed. Yet if we take the position that Revelation was written circa 96 A.D, this would have all been a moot point. John’s readers would have known what rulers the apostle was referring to, but we cannot know with scriptural certainty. And although Christians enjoyed a period of peace after Domitian was killed, other rulers came along who took their turn at killing Christians.

The nations come to hate the harlot, which could certainly be said of the Romans, who came to hate

<sup>3</sup> See Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIV, xi, 1; XVIII, I, 11; XVIII, ii, 2; XVIII, vi, 10 for his explanations. He refers to Julius as the *first* emperor, Augustus, Tiberius and Caligula as the second, third, and fourth emperors. This refutes claims by those who say that the Roman Empire began under Augustus. In his *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, Suetonius also includes Julius as the first emperor, as does Dio Cassius in his *Roman History*.

the Jews as a despicable and exceedingly rebellious people. “The ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.” (17:16) This seems to point to Jerusalem’s destruction by Titus in AD 70.

**17:11 “And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.**

One ruler is an *eighth*, but is also one of the *seven*. What is the meaning? He is not an eighth king but is actually *coexisting* with the sixth king and not a *successor* to the seventh. The Beast has its own kingdom. In this sense, the Beast may be understood to be an eighth king. The Beast is *out of* the seven. It is *part of* the others.

This is the scarlet beast:

The (scarlet) beast that you saw was and is not, and *is about to come up* out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and *will come*. (17:8)

And I saw one of his heads as *if it had been slain*, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast. (Rev 13:3)

The woman sits on this scarlet beast. In verse 1, she is sitting on many waters. In other words, she sits *over* the nations. This is the place God had originally assigned Israel. In verse 3, she sits on a scarlet beast. Thus, sitting on many nations is another description of the scarlet beast. These are the nations held in sway by the Dragon’s power. They reflect his color. Then in verse 9, the woman is said to be sitting on mountains, which are kings. Thus, nations become a red beast, which then becomes various rulers.

*Goes to destruction*: Destruction is not always calamitous, accompanied with a big bang. It refers more to annihilation, a dismantling of existence. Destruction and misery are in (the ungodly’s) path. (Rom 3:16) Those who exalt themselves over God are *vessels of wrath prepared for destruction*. (Rom 9:17-22)

*He is an eighth and is one of the seven*: The number 8 in scripture means *renewal* or *consecration*. First-born sons and animals were to be given to the Lord on the eighth day. (Exo 22:30) Atonement offerings were made on the eighth day after the tabernacle was completed. (Lev 9:1) Baby boys were circumcised on the eighth day as a sign of Abraham’s covenant. (Lev 12:3; Luke 1:59; Phil 3:5) On the eighth day, Israel was to assemble and have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the Lord. (Lev 23:36; Neh 8:18)

Their mission seems clear: they are to destroy the Jewish state of affairs. Taken literally, they would be Roman, since it was they who destroyed the city and its temple. This is the literal rendering, since the angel is explaining the symbols to John.

**17:12 “And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.**

We see *heads* who are *mountains* who are *kings*. Then we see *horns* which are also *kings*. If we break down the text, we see the following:

- Great city sits on many waters and on a scarlet beast (vs. 1)
- Great city rules over many nations and over the kings of the earth (15 & 18)
- Great city rules over 7 kings (9-10)
- Scarlet beast possesses 7 kings and 10 kings (3)
- 10 kings have no kingdom but reign with the scarlet beast (12)
- 10 kings reign for a very short time (12)
- Great city is destroyed by the 10 kings (Jerusalem destroyed by Rome, which was composed of 10 nations—refer to 10 toes on the feet in Daniel 4)

Keep in mind that Jerusalem ruled *providentially*, not physically. The Jews were God’s chosen people, and as such, were “above” other worldly kingdoms. They may not have seemed so to the Romans, just as the world doesn’t see Christians reigning with Christ now. (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6)

Are these 10 kings the “kings of the earth”? They have *not yet* received a kingdom, implying that they *shall* receive one. It seems that they are all to possess the *same* kingdom, not 10 *separate* kingdoms. What they receive, however, is an insignificant promotion: they are only kings for an hour. In other words, they are *temporarily* exalted for a single purpose: “God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, *until the words of God should be fulfilled.*” (vs. 17)

When these kings do receive their kingdom for a short duration, they immediately turn it over to the beast for one hour—a *short time* (see notes on 3:10). *One hour* usually signifies an *appointed time*. They have an appointment, and that is to carry out God’s will. This points back to the very beginning of Revelation: *things which will shortly take place*; (1:1) *the time is near*: (1:3) Even Paul wrote of the impending doom in his letters:

I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away. (1 Cor 7:29-31)

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering...let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds...*and all the more as you see the day drawing near.* (Heb 10:23-25)

Paul inferred that the *form* (Greek – *schema*) of the world (lit. arrangement – *kosmos*) was in the process of passing away *as he wrote*. He also said that “the ends of the ages” had come to those living at the time. (1 Cor 10:11) The Hebrew writer spoke of an impending day that was drawing near. That day was the destruction of their enemies, the ones who were hunting them down and putting them into prison and to death. Although we tend to place Hebrews 10:24, 25 in the context of Sunday morning worship services, he was speaking to Jewish Christians suffering at the hands of their brethren. “Don’t let their persecution stop you from assembling together.” It was becoming the “habit of some,” not because of laziness but because they were tired of sacrificing a normal existence for the sake of a promise.

**17:13 “These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast.**

The KJV renders this, *They have one mind...* They all agree to destroy Faithless Israel, represented in the “great city.” The spiritual Babylon (unbelieving Jerusalem) had a cup in her hand, a cup of blood. From it, she became “drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.” (Rev 17:6) Her belly was full of this wine. “In her (belly) was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.” (Rev 18:24)

Remember that the angel is describing two different entities—the woman *and* the beast that carries her. (17:7)

These 10 kings are part of the scarlet beast. This beast represents the same kings over which Jerusalem (the Jews) sits. She “reigns” because God originally intended that to be Israel’s position in the world. The kings fulfill God’s judgment by destroying Jerusalem. Historically, the Jews hated their Roman rulers, and the Romans viewed the Jews as seditious and antagonistic. This mutual distrust and dislike had existed for many years, a condition not unknown by their history:

You will discover in the record books and learn that [Jerusalem] is a rebellious city and damaging to kings and provinces, and that they have incited revolt within it in past days; therefore that city was laid waste. (Ezra 4:15)

**17:14 “These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”**

The Roman rulers, prodded by the jealous Jews, colluded to persecute the church. In chapter 20, it’s described differently—the nations (under Rome) are called Gog and Magog. They go against the Lamb but are destroyed. Note the parallels between chapters 11 and 17:

When (the two witnesses) have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. (11:7)

These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful. (17:14)

The shoe is on the other foot, so to speak. First, the Jews destroy the source of God’s testimony in chapter 11. Jesus said, “I will send to them (the Jews) prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and some they will persecute.” (Luke 11:49) In fulfilling Christ’s prophecy, the Jews viewed the deaths of Christians as progressive victories. By using the Romans, however, Christ destroys the Jewish seat of power. He did the same thing in the OT, using Assyria and Babylon to carry out His judgments. Rome, represented by these kings, wage war against Christ, yet are also determined to destroy Jerusalem. Historians tell us that the pagan Romans viewed Christians as a Jewish sect. The Jews tried to convince Rome that the new sect was a source of trouble, something Nero picked up on when he blamed Christians for the fires that destroyed most of Rome.

*Wage war against the Lamb:* In chapter 20, we will gather our findings to elaborate on the theme of war in Revelation. However, if we consolidate these “war” texts from the book we begin to see a clear picture:

### God's Side

- Christ will make war against false teachers with the sword of His mouth (2:16)
- God's Word wars against political and religious powers, and their armies (19:11, 19)

### Satan's Side

- The dragon warred against Michael and his angels (12:7)
- The dragon made war (using false doctrine) with the church (12:17)
- Satan deceives (lies to) the nations to incite them to war against the saints (20:6-9)

### Beast's (Jerusalem's) Side

- The beast (Jerusalem/Rome) made war against the Two Witnesses (11:7)
- The beast (Jerusalem/Rome) made war with the saints (13:7)

### Humanity's Side

- Jews thought that no one could "wage war" against their rule (Jerusalem) (13:4)
- "Kings of the whole world" gather together to war against God (16:14)
- Roman kings destroy Jerusalem (17:13) and make war against the Lamb (17:14)
- The nations, deceived by Satan, gather around the camp of the saints and their city to make war against them (20:9)

Note the reason the Lamb wins this war: *because He is Lord of lords and King of kings*. He wins by virtue of His title and authority. When Satan was cast out of heaven, *at that moment* (not in the future), the proclamation was made: "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ *have come*, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night." (Rev 12:10) In other words, the war had been decided. The Lamb wins because of who He is and what He has done.

*Called*: Christians are "the called of Jesus Christ." (Rom 1:6) They are "called as saints." (Rom 1:7) We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to *those who are called according to His purpose*. (Rom 8:28) Paul speaks of Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, but to *those who are the called*, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1 Cor 1:22-24)

It is Christ (or the Holy One) who does the calling. (Gal 1:6; 1 Pet 1:15) This calling is to freedom from the Law. (Gal 5:13) We are to "walk in a manner *worthy of the calling with which you have been called*, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph 4:1-3) Paul later told them, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as also *you were called in one hope of your calling*." (Eph 4:4) This calling is done by the Gospel. (2 Thess 2:14) We are to take hold of the eternal life to which we were called. (1 Tim 6:12) Being called by God causes honor to fall upon us. (Heb 5:4) The Greek word for *church* literally means *called out ones*. Christians are called out from the world and made separate.

*Faithful*: Another facet describing Christians. God preserves the faithful. (Psa 31:23) Jesus spoke of "the faithful and sensible slave" who is blessed when the master comes. (Matt 24:45)

*Chosen:* Christians are *called, faithful,* and therefore *chosen* as a result. (Col 3:12; 2 Thess 2:13) The concept of being chosen by God was first applied to Abraham, where the Lord said, “I have chosen him.” (Gen 18:19) He chose Israel “for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.” (Deut 7:6) This was later translated to Christians as His chosen race. (1 Pet 2:9) In a prophecy about Christ, “Behold, My servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.” (Isa 42:1; Luke 9:35) God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. (1 Cor 1:27) There are angels chosen by God. (1 Tim 5:21) People are *chosen* to enter the Gospel kingdom—they don’t get there by works or personal merit.

**17:15 And he said to me, “The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.**

John wrote that he saw a beast coming out of the sea, with 10 horns and 7 heads. The horns sported 10 diadems and blasphemous names. (Rev 13:1) The beast from the sea is the False Israel who sat on many waters (nations). The beast that sported 10 horns and 7 heads is the great city (Jerusalem) who also had 10 horns and 7 heads. The spirit of disobedience (symbolized in the beast) is in fact, the nation of Israel, who was exalted above the other nations (risen from the sea).

Chapter 13—The Beast	Chapter 17—The Harlot
Beast coming up out of the sea	Harlot sitting on many waters
Having 10 horns and 7 heads	Having 7 heads and 10 horns
On his heads were blasphemous names	Scarlet beast full of blasphemous names

UNFAITHFUL ISRAEL = GREAT HARLOT = BEAST FROM THE SEA

*A nation chosen above the other nations.*

It was God who exalted Israel above the other nations. However, instead of remaining faithful, they rebelled in disobedience. They became a beast, a wild animal bent on destroying God’s perfect plan. They rose higher than the other nations, but only by God’s promise to the patriarchs. They came from the sea—from the nations, rising up over them. She sat on “many waters,” described as peoples of the earth. Just as Satan stood on the seashore watching this “birth,” so too did the dragon stand before the woman, waiting for the Messiah’s coming (chapter 12).

The Jews started out as God’s chosen, but He later rejected them due to disobedience. Satan took them, just as he did Adam and Eve, choosing to give Jerusalem his throne. (13:4) This became the devil’s seat of power. This is why you see such phrases as “synagogue of Satan” (Rev 2:9) and “Satan’s throne.” (Rev 2:13) It was from Satan’s throne (political) and synagogue (religious) that sprang the Jewish persecution.

The Book of Acts describes the extent of Judaism’s reach throughout the ancient world. Rome—a man-made kingdom—was spread all over the hemisphere, but so were the Jews—the kingdom that God had purposed. Everywhere the gospel was preached, the Jews were there to oppose and persecute. The fact that Jesus had spoken against the temple (Matt 24:1, 2; 26:61), the object of their adoration, was more than they could bear. Their anger at Paul was also founded on the apostle’s attitude towards the temple: “This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people and the Law and *this place*; and besides he has even brought Greeks into *the temple* and has defiled *this holy place*.” (Acts 21:28) These were not Jews who lived in Jerusalem, but who dwelt in Asia Minor:

*The Jews from Asia*, upon seeing him in the temple, began to stir up the entire crowd and laid hands on him. (Acts 21:27)

The temple's support came from Jews living throughout Asia Minor and the Roman Empire. Thus, because of their allegiance to that city by Jews throughout the world, Jerusalem is described in Revelation as seated and ruling over "peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues."

**17:16 "And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire."**

The destruction of Jerusalem by the ones who courted her is a familiar OT theme. Those who want to take the view that the harlot is Rome are hard-pressed to explain when, why, and how the local governments burned their own capital to the ground. It was the Jews and Jerusalem whom they hated and later destroyed. The bloodletting that occurred in every town after Jerusalem's destruction testifies to the Romans' hatred of the Jews.

For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. *They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men*, hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost. (1 Thess 2:14-16)

Ten horns (strong kings), along with the nations (the scarlet beast) will destroy adulterous Israel. They will make her *desolate*:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!... Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! (Matt 23:37, 38)

Being left desolate was compared to a woman unable to bear children. (Isa 54:1) Thus, the Jews would no longer be the source or offspring of God's chosen.

*Naked*: When God made His covenant with Israel, He was to "cover her nakedness." (Ezek 16:8) When they continued in idolatry, He threatened to *uncover* her, effectively canceling His covenant with them.

Your nakedness will be uncovered, your shame also will be exposed; I will take vengeance and will not spare a man. (Isa 47:3)

Jerusalem sinned greatly, therefore she has become an unclean thing. All who honored her despise her because they have seen her nakedness; even she herself groans and turns away. Her uncleanness was in her skirts; she did not consider her future; therefore she has fallen astonishingly; she has no comforter. (Lam 1:8-9)

*Eat her flesh*: A common OT metaphor describing the defeated enemy lying dead on the battlefield who became food for the birds and wild animals. In Revelation, *flesh* is used seven times, all in the

negative sense, and is related to God's judgment against man.

According to Thayer, the flesh is a symbol of what is external; the human nature, with its frailties and passions. The flesh contains corrupt desires. (2 Pet 2:10) All flesh (all humanity) is temporary. (1 Pet 1:24) Those who trust in wealth will be judged by their riches, which will consume their flesh with fire. (James 5:3) Those who invest in the flesh will reap corruption. (Gal 6:8) It is the old, sinful (fleshly-minded) man, which is buried in baptism. (Rom 6:6; Gal 5:24) The fleshly nature is that which is opposed to God. (Rom 3:20; 8:7)

The ones who "eat (Jerusalem's) flesh" is Rome. In chapter 16, the darkening of Israel's kingdom causes its inhabitants to "devour their own tongues" (16:10), or consume their own words.

Since the woman in chapter 17 is unclean, eating her flesh would remind the Jewish reader of the law: "Flesh that touches anything unclean shall not be eaten; it shall be burned with fire." (Lev 7:19) Israel had become unclean. She would be burned with fire.

Except for the soles of her feet, Jezebel's flesh was eaten by dogs. (2 Kgs 9:36) In a prophecy concerning Jerusalem, the Lord said, "I shall make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they will eat one another's flesh in the siege and in the distress with which their enemies and those who seek their life will distress them." (Jer 19:9) This was fulfilled during the destruction of Jerusalem, where starvation drove the Jews trapped inside the besieged city to eat their own children.<sup>4</sup> Ezekiel 39 also portrays a similar catastrophe.

**17:17 "For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled.**

Note there are two things God puts into their hearts: (1) To execute His will; (2) to hand their authority over to the beast. God controls the affairs of men to suit His sovereign will:

The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes. (Prov 21:1)

This happens for a specific length of time—*until* the words of God should be fulfilled. This was done when they reigned with the beast for an appointed time. *Their* purpose was turned around to give glory to God in fulfilling *His* purpose. This is one way God "causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him." (Rom 8:28) Although Satan and his disciples have their agenda, God uses them to work out His Divine purpose.

*Until the words of God should be fulfilled:* This is a very important concept in scripture. There are many instances describing the priority of God's Truth over and above anything else. Jesus said it several times.

Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; *but this has happened that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.* (Mark 14:49)

Brethren, the Scripture *had to be fulfilled*, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. (Acts 1:16)

When Jesus was about to be taken captive, He said, "Do you think that I cannot appeal to My

---

<sup>4</sup> Josephus, *Wars VI*, chap 3, para 3-4

Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?" Fulfilling God's word was more important than anything else. How sad it is that many who claim to be Christian see God's word as trivial and out-of-touch with reality.

**17:18 "And the woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."**

It's difficult to *not* see this as Rome. But for re-emphasis, Jerusalem reigned *by virtue of God's decision* to place Israel over and above the other nations. So while Rome appeared to be the ruling power, in actuality Jerusalem held that position. This is primarily due to their association to Jehovah, where Jesus warned not to "swear by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King." (Matt 5:35) God didn't claim Rome to be His city, only Jerusalem had held that honor.

We realize that Christians, by virtue of the promises of God, are in a superior position than the unsaved. But this doesn't seem to be the case when we look at things with our physical eyes.

This chapter describes an extremely complex *relationship* between the Jews, their antagonism towards the gospel, and mankind in general, and the original covenant given to them by God. Verses 1 and 2 shows the great harlot (Jerusalem) who sits on many waters (exalted by God over the other nations). It was she with whom the kings of the earth (the Romans) committed acts of immorality (disowned God for other gods), and those who dwell on the earth that were made drunk (they caused the nations to stumble because the land had become dark).

- The great harlot represents Israel in *idolatry*.
- The kings of the earth represent righteous Israel.
- Those who dwell on the earth represent *the land of the Jews*.

They are essentially a single entity, but made up of different parts, or seen from different perspectives. The harlot rides a scarlet beast. They are separate, but by virtue of their symbiosis, they are one. *Idolatrous* Israel caused earthly kings to do wrong. These were the ones whom Jesus condemned, who put a stumbling block before the *sons of Israel*. (Rev 2:14) They were rotten apples contaminating good apples within the same barrel. They are ultimately driven to war against God. (19:19) They are two entities in collusion in the same land.

Group A is the "ones who call themselves Jews but are from Satan's synagogue." (Rev 2:9) They are typified in the woman Jezebel, who taught and led true believers astray. (Rev 2:20) These are the essence and representation of the Great Harlot.

Group B is the sons of Israel, who became influenced by the idolatry. They are the sons of God (spiritual) who saw that the daughters of men (fleshly) were beautiful; and took wives for themselves, whomever they *chose*. (Gen 6:2) They *chose* to follow their carnal instincts instead of walking in accordance with God's will.

"O My people! Those who *guide you* lead you astray, and confuse the direction of your paths."  
(Isa 3:12)

Two entities within the same group. The church is admonished to not fellowship with darkness, lest we too fall into the same trap. (2 Cor 6:14-18)