

**Another Look at
THE BEAST AND THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES
Part I - REVELATION 17:9**

July 22, 2005 - Don E. Haney

Many of us owe thanks to God for those who have preached the gospel before us, for the truth imparted thereby. However, as Mr. Armstrong used to say, we need to continue studying and growing in God's truth. Even the scriptures demonstrate that the full truth of the gospel is not, and has never been, complete in any one man. Only God and His Word are Truth and in Him alone is completeness. Let's maintain respect for those who have taught before us, but avoid treating them like idols by being fearful to grow in scriptural truth beyond what they taught us. Otherwise, if a person is not cautious, they can tend towards lazily making a habit of taking their church leaders' words in place of God's by only believing what their church tells them to believe. This takes less study and less heart. Yet some think it is the way to be sure that we "all speak the same thing." But is that what God meant when He said we are to STUDY to be able to rightly divide His Word and to PROVE ALL THINGS? (1 Thess.5:21 & 2 Tim.2:15) God and His Word should ALWAYS be our primary teacher. Further, true unity of doctrine comes only when each one humbly looks to the same reliable and unchangeable source for Truth – the Word of God – then follows it. Only then have we really fully submitted to God as our supreme King. Only then can we be truly sure we have not unwittingly committed the sin of idolatry by fearing or following men more than God. Only then will true unity, truth and freedom become possible (Jn.8:32).

Jesus' testimony is the spirit of prophecy. (Rev.19:10) Respectfully I ask, do you read and believe Jesus' words, or do you let someone interpret them for you and tell you what to believe? One of the titles of the Pope is Vicar, which in Latin means "substitute", or "in place of". Many view the Pope as being the substitute for, or in the place of, Christ on earth. **Has your church leader become your vicar, whose words or interpretations you believe in place of studying and believing God's words yourself?** Is that not akin to idolatry? Do your biblical teachers "interpret" scripture for you or do they plainly EXPOUND GOD'S WORDS?

With loving brotherly concern, I have noticed that many in the Church of God are NOT THINKING for themselves! For too many, true Bible study and meditation has been replaced by a blind following of men, and the doctrines of men. Sometimes this is accomplished by an abuse of so called "Church Government." This has led some to be fearful to study or believe what they see in scripture, if it is not exactly what their church has taught them. Other times people do not truly study, think and meditate or act on God's Word, because of spiritual lethargy. Regardless of the reason, the result often leads to erroneous assumptions as to what God's Word says. Many believe it says what those who have interpreted it for them, told them it says. This scenario has led to many churches and church leaders, in effect, becoming idols to those who have made it a habit to blindly follow and submit. Well meaning or not, this is dangerously close to a "Kool-Aid" mentality! It can lead to much unnecessary deception, pain and heartache. I know there are many well meaning ministers. But please don't let us "think" for you. Our words are not on par with God's. With that preface in mind, let's learn from God's Words – concerning the beast and the prophesied time of the end.

As the time of Christ's return to save mankind from himself draws nearer, we need to know what the signs are that God Himself in His Word tells us to look for. Do you consider reading church booklets and articles Bible study? Please be careful, as their teaching are sometimes slanted to uphold their traditions and interpretations, or to fit their church policy etc., but may not accurately reflect the teaching of the Holy Scriptures! When carefully checked with scripture, biblical articles and booklets can be very educational and profitable, but they should never replace a thorough study of the Holy scriptures.

For example, many have been taught to look for a union of ten European nations as a sign of the times. Many believe this to be a time marker telling the wise that the beginning of the Great Tribulation is near. This is, of course, because they have been told that the final revival of the Beast will be made up of a union of ten European nations represented by the ten toes of Daniel 2 and the ten horns of Revelation 17. They have been taught this so many times, they come to believe it. Is this what you too have been taught and have come to believe?

What do God's words in your Bible actually say about the Beast and the ten horns? Could it be that your mind and conscience has been trained to believe something other than what the Bible actually says, so that when you read a passage, you read into it what you already believe it says? Since Jesus said "the truth shall make you free," (Jn.8:32) let's take off the VEIL of blindly following the traditional teachings of men, and see what God's words actually say.

We all know that no one wants to be misled or mistaken on important issues of God's Truth, including many sincere and godly ministers who have been mistaken in their teachings. Notice now God's words - directly from Him - to you and me:

Rev 17:9 "Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

10 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.

11 "And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

12 "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

13 "These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

14 "These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful." (NKJ)

Notice what verse 12 actually says. Please take time to carefully read it again, before going on in this article.

Verse 12 clearly says the Beast already exists (at that time), but that the ten kings - represented by the Beast's ten horns - have received **no kingdom as yet**. Jesus also tells us that when these kings DO receive their authority as kings, it will **only be for ONE HOUR!** That HOUR must be **AT THE END of the tribulation**, for they will then be destroyed by Christ at His coming - (verse 14)! This is plain and unambiguous! **This union of the ten kings is NOT a reliable time marker of the beginning of the Tribulation - it is a reliable time marker of near the END of the Tribulation!**

Since the Tribulation is 3½ years in length (Dan.12:6-7 & Rev.11:2), an hour is a relatively short period of this time. If taken literally, one could figure an hour as 1/24th of a day. With the prophetic day for a year principle, this could be 1/24th of a year - or about 2½ weeks. Or if taken metaphorically, it would simply mean a relatively small amount of the total tribulation period, coming at the end of the 3½ years of worldwide trial and war!

Again, since God tells us these ten kings will ONLY have authority as kings for one hour, and then they are to be destroyed by Christ at His coming, this hour must be at the END of the Tribulation - since that is when Jesus returns! Therefore they will NOT be kings with the Beast power before the tribulation, or even well into it - but only at the climax of the great tribulation and the close of this age. **Those who are looking to a union of 10 nations to know when the "hour" (tribulation period) is near, will find it really is a marker of when the "hour" is NEARLY OVER!** It would then be "TOO LATE" for the ten kings to be an effective warning of the impending times of the gentiles!

Rather, the alliance of the ten kings with the Beast are an EFFECTIVE MARKER OF HOPE, that the end of this pain and suffering is near, as Jesus will soon come and destroy the Beast power and the ten kings with it. We can read about Jesus' destroying both the Beast and its loose amalgamation with ten kings in Rev.19:19-20. This takes place AFTER the tribulation when the seven seals and seven trumpet plagues are completed - and are over!

So how does the actual account in Revelation fit with Daniel's account of the ten-toed beast of Daniel 2? You will notice that Daniel's Beast is one Beast made up of several different kingdoms and kings – depicted by the head of gold, the chest of silver, down to the legs and feet of iron. Notice also that the feet and legs are mentioned first, and more often than the toes. The ten toes are not even detailed until verse 41. This is because as you work your way down a body, beginning from the head – the toes are the very last thing you come to! The legs and the feet are the bulk of the power and mobility of the body, not the toes. Toes are a COMPARABLY small and weak part of the feet and legs, and they come at the very tip end of the feet. If the head is the beginning, truly the toes come at the very end (after the legs and feet) – so there is no disagreement between the accounts of Daniel and Revelation. They are in perfect agreement! But there's more – much more. As we put any prejudice and prior teachings aside, let's see what else the words in the books of Revelation and Daniel actually say. Notice carefully:

Rev.17:12 “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings *with* the beast. 13 “These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.”

Remember, the beast is already in power and is making havoc all through the great tribulation, before the ten kings ever come into power. Their power only lasts the last “hour” of the tribulation period – and they give this authority over to the beast for that time. Could it even be that it is the beast that gives them their authority (allied nation building) as a means of strengthening itself and enlarging its empire? Now let's do some basic math.

Ruling governing authority of 10 kings + ruling governing authority of 1 beast = union of **11 nations**.

It's easy to make the mistake of focusing and counting only the ten kings. **This is like looking at the toes, while ignoring the foot that they are attached to!** Also remember that in the past, the beast power was made up of more than one nation or king at a time, as with the axis of power between Hitler and Mussolini. This will likely be the case in the end of the beast's reign – as depicted by the image that stood on TWO legs and TWO feet of Daniel 2! Just as Justinian healed the breach between the eastern and western legs of the Roman empire in 554 A.D., we have long expected an eastern and western alliance to form, bringing about the final rise of the beast power. With that being likely, we would have:

Ruling kingdom of 10 kings + ruling authority of at least 2 legs of beast's kingdom = **12+ Nations!**

We know that the beast empire will be led by a single strong man who will be heavily influenced by a soon-coming powerful religious leader (2 Thess.2:3-11 & Rev.13 - the whore that rides the beast). It is also possible that the beast's empire could itself be made up of several eastern and western nations in that one allied kingdom under the single leadership of the beast's strong-man leader - like a federation.

If the beast is an alliance of several nations combined into one - the total count may be difficult to determine. **Suffice it to say, that the Bible does NOT say that the beast will be made up of ten nations, but that the beast power will be JOINED by ten additional national powers.** Neither does the Bible anywhere say that the union of ten nations with the beast is to be viewed as a time marker of the beginning of the tribulation, but of its end. Such mistaken doctrines are the well-meaning doctrines of men, passed down to others to uphold the accepted traditions of their leadership.

May God open our eyes, wake us up, and help us to understand so that we can indeed be forewarned, can humbly repent, and then receive the true mercy of God, and His Son, the Great Revelator. (Rev.1:1)

What does God's Word tell us IS the time marker that we can look for to know when the prophesied "time of the gentiles" is about to begin? What are the signs that the BIBLE says we are to look for as time markers? Watch our website <http://www.GodsLawsLove.org> for a soon-coming revealing Part II to this article that will take you further on this journey through the scriptures. There readers will again have God's answers pointed out to see for themselves, to this and other important questions - directly from the Word of God!

God's Word is chock full of jewels of Truth for us to learn from. It is filled with God's love for us. It can warn us leading to repentance and life, it can prepare us, it can sharpen us, and it can enlighten us with hope and promises that we can count on!

With the widespread misunderstanding among God's people regarding this important topic and Revelation 17, it was necessary that this article be written. It is as if the minds of many have been trained in their traditions so deeply, that they have not been able to see what would otherwise seem obvious and clear. God has given us plain teachings in this regard. Will we believe Him or tradition?

This article is written in love and concern for all of the scattered people of God. In order to be a faithful servant of Christ, a minister must respectfully and faithfully teach the gospel of God's Word (1 Pet.3:16 & Gal.6:1) - **without fear of men or regard to pleasing men!** (Gal.1:10) For a minister to preach any other gospel than God's, is to bring upon himself a curse (Gal.1:8).

My words – or the words of other men - are not important. Only God's words are truly important and helpful. It is hoped that this writing will help inspire and motivate the reader into further STUDY of scripture and to pay close attention to each word God has given us, as they are given to us out of His love for us, and they are for OUR good (Deut.6:24). Let's all really learn to demonstrate by the fruits of our lives, a true love for God with all of our heart and soul - and to love our neighbor as ourselves - leading to God's glorious Kingdom (Mark 12:30-34). Let's all learn to have true godly humility and mercy in the way we talk to (and about) one another, and in the way we live - lest we fall (Micah 6:8). But we all also need to learn to carefully study (2 Tim.2:15), and to BELIEVE what God's Word says instead of preconceived ideas and inherited teachings or church traditions. (Mk.7:7) May God's Holy Spirit help each of us to have the **faith to do this**, so that we can humbly come closer to the true unity of the faith which is in God's Truth and Love. LET'S DO IT!