Identity of both the Political Power and the Harlot in **Revelation 17:1-19:6**

**By Arlen Chitwood**

The identity of both *the political power and the harlot* in **Revelation 17:1-19:6** is, more often than not, associated with “Rome” --- viewing matters as “a revived Roman Empire” forming *the political power*, and “the Roman Catholic Church” forming *a religious power within the political*. However, neither identity-view is correct.

The Church has never departed from ideology coming out of the Reformation concerning the interpretation of this part of the book of **Revelation**. Almost five hundred years ago the Reformers generally saw everything as “Roman” in these three chapters — *a Roman political power* and *a Roman Catholic religious power*, often viewing the Pope as the Antichrist.

And, aside from viewing the Papacy in this manner (though some Christians still do today), this whole interpretative ideology has remained essentially unchanged since the time of the Reformation.

Suffice it to say, ideology associating either *the political power* or *the harlot* with “Rome” was wrong at the time of the Reformation, and it remains just as wrong today. In short, that part of Christendom following either or both parts of this interpretation has been wrong for almost five hundred years concerning that which is taught in these three chapters in the book of **Revelation**.

The book of **Revelation**, as any other part of Scripture, *must be understood and interpreted in the light of Scripture*. Material in this book *must be understood and interpreted contextually*, and the entire book rests upon *that which is previously revealed in the Old Testament*.

Seeking to identify the political power as a revived Roman Empire has *absolutely no basis in Scripture*. The book of **Daniel** is usually referenced, but *this book identifies this final form of Gentile world power as other than Roman*.

And seeking to associate the harlot with the Church of Rome, as well, has *absolutely no basis in these three chapters*, *or elsewhere in the book*, *or in other Scripture.* In fact, *the book of* ***Revelation*** *clearly identifies the harlot*, and this identification is completely in line with and rests upon that which is previously revealed in the Old Testament.

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