

Examining Revelation 17:12-17

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See also: *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*,
New International Greek Testament Commentary) (Beale)

Examining Rev. 17:12-17

(Beale, 878ff)

- Explanation of the mystery of the woman and of the beast (17:7-18)
 - “The ten horns which you saw” (17:12)
 - Often viewed as 10 literal rulers of the 10 Roman provinces, of Parthia, of Asia, of Palestine or elsewhere
 - After explaining the heads of the beast, the angel now explains the horns
 - As Dan. 7:4-7 provides the background for the beast, so Dan. 7:7-8, 20, 24 provides the background for the ten horns
 - Horns represent power (Rev. 5:6)
 - The horns represent kings; the kings represent kingdoms (also Dan. 7:11, 21; 8:3, 5-9, 12, 20-22)

Examining Rev. 17:12-17

(Beale, 878ff)

- Explanation of the mystery of the woman and of the beast (17:7-18)
 - The horns represent 10 future kings (kingdom) = “have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast” (17:12)
 - The number 10 does not refer to 10 literal kings (kingdoms) but represents their great power in the future
 - The number includes the many kingdoms in coalition with the Roman Empire, adding to its strength
 - “they receive” functions as a futuristic present
 - The “ten kings” (17:12-17) = “the kings from the rising of the sun” (16:12) = “the kings of the whole inhabited earth” (16:14) = “the kings of the earth” (17:2, 18)

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 - The horns represent 10 future kings (kingdom) = “have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast” (17:12)
 - According to Moulton and Milligan, the “hour” was “the shortest period of time known to the ancients” (702)
 - “These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast” (17:13)
 - They reign with and submit to the beast in strong alliance
 - God put it in their hearts to do his purpose—one purpose (17:17)—to “make war with the Lamb” (17:14)

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(Beale, 878ff)

- Explanation of the mystery of the woman and of the beast (17:7-18)
 - “These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them” (17:14a)
 - Dan. 7:21-22—“I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High . . .”
 - Rev. 11:7; 13:7a
 - Rev. 17:14 answers 13:4
 - Vindication of the persecuted saints (Dan. 7:21; Rev. 6:9-11; 12:11; 13:10, 15-17)
 - Dan. 7:22 LXX—“he gave the judgment to the saints”—the basis for the expectation that the saints would judge the wicked (1 Cor. 6:2)

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(Beale, 6, 878ff)

- Explanation of the mystery of the woman and of the beast (17:7-18)
 - “for He is Lord of lords and King of kings” (17:14b)
 - Dan. 4:37 LXX
 - “because he himself is God of gods and Lord of lords and King of kings”
 - Domitian insisted on greater divine titles than previous emperors in order to bolster his tyrannical rule (see Suetonius, Marital, Dio Cassius, Pliny and Philostratus)