424 THE APOCALYPSE {cH. xvii. 1  
  
carefully to be distinguished from the ten kings of  
Antichrist. The kings of the earth existed even in  
John’s day, and they were then ruled by the woman  
with force of arms. xvi. 18.  
But between that day of John and her doom, which  
is here shown, there was to subsist a period inter-  
mediate, passed by her in the sins specially described in  
this verse.  
1. She fornicates with kings of earth.  
Christians are to (1) obey kings in things civil.  
Rom. xiii; 1 Pet. ii. 13-17. Or (2) to suffer, if what  
is evil is enforced on them.  
The second Psalm beseeches kings to offer full devo-  
tion to Jehovah and His Christ; but only a seeming  
regard is paid to it, which ends in open opposition.  
When they are first called for by God at the sixth Seal,  
they hide with a bad conscience, like Adam and his  
wife (vi. 15); and at length are found with arms in  
their hands gathered against Jesus.  
Prayer for kings is commanded ; not, that they may be  
converted and obedient to the faith, but that God’s  
people under them may enjoy quietness. 1 Tim. ii. 2.  
But if kings will not join themselves to Christ,  
putting off their royalty as incompatible with the  
Sermon on the Mount, the false Church will debase  
itself to them.  
Rome has taken strangers instead of her husband.  
She has sought to please earthly kings, and has given  
her affections and obedience to them. She has prosti-  
tuted Christ’s rites and promises to the worldly: she  
has surrendered Christ’s principles for money and honour,  
just as the maid sells her virtue.  
Kings can understand a State religion with its pomp  
and forms; and can patronize Rome as the centre of  
Christianity, great in antiquity, fame, and worldly  
pretensions. Kings have virtually said, “ Accredit us