

Unlocking Revelation

The Sea Beast and The Land Beast

and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed” (Revelation 13:11, 12).

At first glance this creature looks very different from the first one brought to view. But as we continue to watch, it changes into the image of the first beast.

We’ve already learned that a beast symbolizes a kingdom. The first beast we have identified as the papal Roman church-state, which arose to power from the sea, or from a populated area of the world with many nations and languages.

John saw the second beast arise “out of the earth.” If a “sea” represents a populated area, the earth must represent a relatively unpopulated area of the world, which gives us our first clue as to the identity of the second beast. It comes into power in an area without established nations.

Our second clue is that this kingdom comes into existence around the time when the 1260-year period of papal supremacy is ending, which would be around 1798. John says the “first beast” he saw in vision existed “before” the second beast (Revelation 13:12).

Our third clue is that the second beast first appears like “a lamb,” but eventually speaks like “a dragon” and exercises all the power of the first beast (verse 11). It rises to power with lamb-like attributes—gentle, freedom-loving, Christian.

So what kingdom arose in an unsettled area of the world around 1798 with a lamb-like appearance? Only one nation fits this symbolic description: The United States of America. From the obscurity of a wilderness area, America was born with aspirations of liberty and justice for all.

But the prophecy goes beyond predicting the rise of this great nation. It foretells a tragic change in her character that will bring a terrible crisis of liberty upon the whole world. According to what John was shown, the United States of America, this mighty defender of religious freedom, will one day speak, no longer like a lamb, but “like a dragon.” The lamb-like beast that provided refuge from papal persecution will eventually exercise the same kind of persecuting power it once condemned. She will use her authority and status as the world’s greatest nation to turn the world’s allegiance back to Rome. She will “cause the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed” (verse 12).

But how will the second beast deceive the world?

“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that

they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (Revelation 13:13-17).

The Miracle Movement

Fire from heaven symbolizes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:3, 4). The fire brought down from heaven by the land beast is obviously not a genuine manifestation of the Holy Spirit, for it is employed to deceive the world. Here we are warned of a great counterfeit revival that will place a great deal of emphasis on “wonders” and “miracles.” A later verse in Revelation tells us that “they are the spirits of devils, working miracles” (Revelation 16:14).

It is startling for many to learn from Scripture that demons have the power to perform miracles through their followers. They masquerade as Christians and deceive those who are impressed by their apparent Holy Spirit power. According to Revelation 13 we can expect to witness a major spiritual movement centered in America that will use supernatural manifestations to deceive the world.

Simultaneously, as this false revival progresses, we can expect to see evangelical and Protestant churches reuniting with Catholicism. Vital Bible truth will be laid aside in order to facilitate ecumenical alliances between Protestant America and papal Rome. America will influence the world to give the papacy authority and allegiance.

Coercion

Revelation 13 goes on to warn that eventually America will use its authority to enforce “the mark” of papal supremacy, some kind of vowed loyalty to Rome. By means of economic boycott and even life-threatening persecution, all will be required to receive “the mark of the beast” in the right hand or in the forehead. Those who refuse to sacrifice their religious liberty will not be allowed to buy or sell. If that doesn’t gain their compliance, a death sentence will be employed.

It may be hard to believe that America will ever abandon its lamb-like principle of religious liberty and speak with the voice of a dragon. But Bible prophecy has proven itself accurate in all it has foretold so far. We can expect all that yet remains of its predictions to transpire as well.

Our next study in this series will deal in greater detail with the mark of the beast.

For many people Revelation 13 is the most fascinating part of the apocalypse. In this chapter we encounter two beasts that unite to deceive the whole world. When deception fails to gain universal domination, the terrible-twosome resort to economic control and finally the death penalty in an effort to secure the loyalties of every man, woman and child on the globe.

In this study we will allow Scripture to decipher the many symbols of Revelation 13 to discover the identity of each beast. We will also explore what the Bible reveals of their game plan for gaining control of the world.

The Sea Beast

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast” (Revelation 13:1-3).

A Symbolic Beast

First, we can clearly see that this beast is symbolic. Nobody has ever seen a beast with the body of a leopard, the mouth of a lion, the feet of a bear, with seven heads and ten horns.

This beast comes up out of the “water.” An angel explained to John that “water” is a Bible symbol for “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (Revelation 17:15). A similar figure of speech is used today. We sometimes refer to many people as a “sea of people.” This symbol gives us our first clue as to the identity of the sea beast. It comes up, or arises out of a very populated area of the world with various nations and languages.

In order to understand what the beast represents, we need to turn to the Old Testament book of Daniel. Interest-

ingly enough, Daniel and John were given very similar visions. These books are complementary. By comparing their prophecies, we can unravel their meaning. Listen to Daniel:

“Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another” (Daniel 7:2, 3).

The “great sea” represents populated parts of the earth, as we have already noted (see Revelation 17:15). But what about the four winds and the four beasts? Within the book of Daniel itself we are told the meaning of these two symbols. The “four winds” depict war (see Daniel 11:40). The “four great beasts” are four world empires (see Daniel 7:17).

Daniel continues:

“The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns” (Daniel 7:4-7).

Anyone who has taken an interest in ancient history can tell us what kingdoms are here symbolized.

The first world kingdom was Babylon, represented here by the lion with eagle’s wings. Babylon ruled from 606 B.C. to 538 B.C.

The second world kingdom, which conquered Babylon and ruled from 538 B.C. to 331 B.C., was Medio-Persia. The bear is raised up on one side higher than the other to



symbolize that the Persians were stronger than the Medes. The three ribs in its mouth no doubt represent the three provinces of Medio-Persia: Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt.

The third kingdom was Greece, ruling from 331 B.C. to 168 B.C. The four wings represent the tremendous speed with which Alexander the Great conquered the world in just eight years. But Alexander the Great could not conquer himself. He died from the results of drunkenness at a young age. When he died, his kingdom was divided among his four generals, as depicted by the four heads: Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Selucus.

The fourth world empire was different from all the others. Daniel was familiar with the lion, the bear and the leopard. But this fourth beast was not like anything he had ever seen. We might call it the nondescript beast. It was dreadful and terrible, extremely powerful and cruel, with iron teeth.

Notice verse 23 of Daniel 7: “The fourth beast is the fourth kingdom.” And what kingdom was that? Of course, it was the Roman Empire. The historian, Gibbons, called it “the iron monarchy of Rome.” It was more fierce and savage than any of the others. The Roman Empire ruled from 168 B.C. to 476 A.D.

This terrible beast had ten horns. What do they represent? “And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings” (Daniel 7:24). The ten horns represent the ten kingdoms that arose out of the Roman Empire when it divided in 476 A.D.

You recall from history that the northern tribes came sweeping down and divided western Europe into ten parts: (1) the Vandals, (2) the Ostrogoths, (3) the Heruli, (4) the Anglo-Saxons, now England, (5) the Lombards, now Italy, (6) the Visigoths, now Spain, (7) the Suevi, now Portugal, (8) the Alemanni, now Germany, (9) the Franks, now France, and (10) the Burgundians, now Switzerland.

Seven of these ten horns are still with us today. They developed into full-fledged nations. But three of them are no longer in existence: The Vandals, the Ostrogoths, and the Heruli. What happened to them? Bible prophecy answers this question by foretelling, thousands of years in advance, the demise of these three powers, as we will see.

The Little Horn

Let’s look at verse 8 of Daniel 7: “I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.”

Notice here that the prophet Daniel looked at the ten horns, which arose in 476 A.D., and he saw a little horn arise among the ten, and it uprooted three in the process of its rise to power. The three horns that no longer exist today were destroyed by the little horn.

So what power is symbolized by the little horn?

This is a very important question. I’m glad to tell you that we don’t have to guess or speculate. The Bible clearly identifies the little horn, so conclusively that we need not misunderstand.

The Scripture gives us nine identifying marks or characteristics by which we can identify the little horn. And amazingly enough, all of these nine identifying characteristics apply to only one power in history. Let’s read these nine marks of identity from the Bible in Daniel 7:8, 24, 25.

Characteristics of the Little Horn

1. The little horn came to power among the ten horns, which was in western Europe (see Daniel 7:8).
2. The little horn arose sometime after 476 A.D. (see Daniel 7:8). If it arose among the ten horns, then it had to arise after they already existed. The ten horns arose to divide the Roman Empire in 476 A.D.
3. The little horn uprooted three of the ten horns as it arose to power (see Daniel 7:8).
4. The little horn has a man at its head who speaks for it, a human leader who possesses its authority (see Daniel 7:8).
5. The little horn is a different kind of power than the ten horns (see Daniel 7:24).
6. The little horn will speak words of blasphemy against God (see Daniel 7:25). According to the Bible, blasphemy is when a man claims to be God (see John 10:30-33) and/or claims to forgive sins (see Mark 2:5-7).
7. The little horn exercises its power to persecute God’s people. It is a persecuting power (see Daniel 7:25).
8. The little horn will attempt to change God’s law (see Daniel 7:25).
9. The little horn will reign for a period of 1260 years. The time and times and dividing of times mentioned in Daniel 7:25 is also mentioned in Revelation 12:14. But here the time period is referred to as one thousand two hundred and sixty days, and also forty-two months (see Revelation 12:6 and 13:5).

“Time” equals one year; “times” equals two years; and “a half of time” equals one-half a year. These equal three and a half years. Using the Bible rule of a thirty-day month, three and a half years comes out to exactly 1260 days. Forty-two months is also equal to 1260 days. Applying the Bible rule of a day equaling a year in prophetic periods (see Ezekiel 4:6), we conclude that the little horn is to reign for a period of 1260 years.

There we have the Bible’s nine characteristic marks that reveal the identity of the little horn power. Anyone could go down to the library with these clues and discover the identity of the little horn power. There is only one power in all of history that meets all of these nine characteristics. The little horn power in Daniel 7 is clearly the papal Roman church-state.

Let’s review the nine marks that identify the little horn and notice how they apply to the papacy:

1. The little horn power was to arise in western Europe among the ten divisions of the Roman Empire. Of course the papacy did arise in western Europe, in the great city of Rome.
2. The little horn power was to begin its rule sometime after 476 A.D. The papacy began to reign in 538 A.D. when a decree by Emperor Justinian went into effect which made the pope the head of all the religious powers in the world and gave him political authority.
3. The little horn would uproot three of the ten horns as it arose to power. As we look at the pages of history, we see that the papacy destroyed the Vandals, the Ostrogoths, and the Heruli during its rise to power. The last of the three to be stamped out was the Ostrogoths in the year 538 A.D., the very year of Justinian’s decree that gave religious and political power to the church.
4. The little horn was to have a man at its head as its authoritative spokesman. The papacy exalts the pope as its human head and supreme authority.
5. The little horn would be different in character than all the other ten horns. The papacy arose as a religious power claiming political authority.
6. The little horn power would speak great words of blasphemy against God. Without much searching we find that the papacy claims that the pope is God on earth (“Holy Father”) and that he and the church’s priests can forgive men’s sins.
7. The little horn power would persecute God’s people. Of course we all know that the papacy bears the bloodstained record of putting to death over 50 million Christians in the Dark Ages. No other power in history has tortured and slain so many people in the name of God.
8. The little horn would attempt to change God’s great moral law. If you look in any Catholic catechism, even to this day, you will find that the church has omitted the second commandment that forbids the worship of graven images. Then they divided the tenth commandment into two in order to have a total of ten. The church had to omit the second commandment in order to remove the condemnation against its worship of statues of Mary, the apostles and other saints.
9. The little horn would reign for a period of 1260 years.

It was in the year 538 A.D. that a decree by Emperor Justinian gave the papacy political and religious authority. If you count down 1260 years from 538 A.D., you will arrive at the year 1798. In that very year the French general, Berthia, marched into Vatican City in Rome, dethroned the pope, took him captive, and confiscated the church’s property, thus ending the reign of the papacy. The French Directoire government made a decree that there would

never be another Bishop of Rome. As far as the world was concerned at that time, the papacy was history. It is truly amazing that the Bible foretold the exact 1260-year time period of the papal reign.

The Little Horn and the Sea Beast

What does all this information about the little horn in the book of Daniel have to do with the sea beast of Revelation 13? Everything. Let’s turn back now to Revelation 13:5-10, 3:

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.... And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.”

Notice that the sea beast opens his mouth in blasphemy against God, just like the little horn. The beast reigns for 42 months, which is equivalent to 1260 prophetic years, just like the little horn. The beast makes war on the saints, just like the little horn.

Obviously the little horn of Daniel 7 and the beast of Revelation 13 are one and the same power.

The beast receives a deadly wound, just as the little horn was taken out of power in 1798. But the prophecy here in Revelation 13 goes a step further and says the deadly wound is to be healed. The whole world is to follow after the beast and bow in submission to its authority again. The wound suffered by the papacy was largely healed in 1929 when Mussolini signed a concordat with the pope of Rome that restored its property and political status to the papacy. And that wound has been further healed since 1929 as numerous political alliances have been made with the Vatican. The deadly wound inflicted on the papal power in 1798 is, indeed, being healed. The pope of Rome has emerged as a recognized world leader.

Only the Bible, which foretold all that has transpired so far, can open to us the future. The prophetic agenda has been accurate so far. What can we expect to happen next?

Revelation 13 continues the story and gives us a clear insight into the future.

The Land Beast

After introducing to us the beast from the sea with seven heads and ten horns, Revelation 13 directs our attention to a second beast:

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth;