

The Four Beasts of Revelation Exposed

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The Book of Revelation Refers to Four Beasts

They are:

1. A slain lamb with seven horns and seven eyes (Revelation 5)
2. A great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns (Revelation 12)
3. A leopard-like composite beast with seven heads and ten horns (Revelation 13:1-10; 17:3-13)
4. A beast coming up out of the Earth with two horns like the lamb but speaking like the dragon (Revelation 13:11-18)

What do the Four Beasts Represent?

1. The slain lamb with seven horns and seven eyes represents Jesus, the Lamb of God.
2. The great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns represents the fallen angel, Lucifer.
3. The leopard-like composite beast with seven heads and ten horns represents a coming worldwide crisis government controlled by seven religious systems and ten political kingdoms.
4. The beast coming up out of the Earth with two horns like the Lamb, but speaking like the dragon, represents the physical appearing of Lucifer masquerading as God. Lucifer, the ancient Antichrist himself, will gloriously and physically appear before all nations during the Great Tribulation.

A Crucial Topic

Why should Bible students be concerned with the identity of these beasts? Answer: These beasts are about to fulfill a prophetic destiny that includes everyone on planet Earth. Later, I will present the reasons why I identify the four beasts as I do, but for now, consider the conclusions presented as a "starting place" for this study. For the sake of clarity and discussion, I have reduced the beasts to four short names:

1. The slain lamb with seven horns and seven eyes will be called "**The Lamb. -**"
2. The red dragon with seven heads and ten horns will be called "**The Dragon.**"
3. The leopard-like composite beast with seven heads and ten horns will be called "**The Dragon-like beast.**"
4. The beast with two horns like the Lamb will be called "**The Lamb-like beast. -**"

Synthesis

It may be helpful as we open this study to conceptually group the four beasts in the following manner:

The Lamb and His imposter, the Lamb-like beast

The dragon and his worldwide empire, the Dragon-like beast

If you have a set of the four-color charts called *Roadmaps for the End-Time*, please refer to charts 2, 7, 8 and 9 as you study this document. The synthesis of the beasts as Lamb/Lamb-like; Dragon/Dragon-like may flow together better if you can visually see their relationships on the charts. (If you do not have the set of nine charts, they are available at a very reasonable price by calling the WUAS office at 800-475-0876.)

The Lamb and the Lamb-like Beast

This association of names is easy to remember because the contrast is obvious: Jesus is "The Lamb of God" and when Lucifer personates Christ on Earth, he will portray himself as "Lamb-like" in everything he does. This is an important association because a great controversy has raged for thousands of years between Jesus and Lucifer. Revelation 12 portrays Michael and Lucifer as commanders and each has his own followers. Ever since Lucifer was cast out of Heaven, the conflict between them has not faded.

We know that Lucifer caused the events that led to Jesus' death on the cross and we also know that Jesus will destroy Lucifer in the lake of fire at the end of the thousand years. (Revelation 20) Further, we know that The King of kings (Jesus), Himself, will descend from Heaven to face His rival (Lucifer) who will have established himself as God on Earth.

These two commanders with their armies will war against one another at the Second Coming. (Revelation 19:11-20) We also know the Lamb-like beast (also known as the false prophet) "will be destroyed, but not by human power." (Daniel 8:25)

Please consider this point thoughtfully: When the great Antichrist comes, he will be more than a mere man. He will be more powerful and glorious than anyone can imagine. The Bible reveals that God will allow the devil himself to appear "in the flesh" to lead the world into destruction. (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12). Consider the fairness of our Heavenly Father. Just as Jesus came to Earth in the flesh to establish His Kingdom, Lucifer will be granted the opportunity, in days to come, to do the same.

The Dragon and the Dragon-like Beast

This association should be easy to remember because it speaks of a king (the dragon) and his government (the Dragon-like animal). Lucifer is a fallen angel king and at a future, designated time, God will allow him to have full control of Earth, just as though it were his personal possession.

The dragon king will have the advantage of operating in two dimensions – in the background (influencing the spiritual part of man) much like a hand operates within a glove, and operating before the physical senses of the people (influence through hearing, seeing, etc.).

From his spiritual throne, he will rule over demons and men as the prince of demons. (Luke 11:15) From his physical throne, he will awe many inhabitants of Earth into submission.

Note:

The reader may question why I apply both titles, "king and prince," to the devil since God has not granted the title of king to Lucifer. To be proper, the devil is a prince – that is, he rules over the kingdoms of this world under temporary provisions granted him by the King of the Universe. In other words, the difference between a prince and a king is perspective. From God's perspective, the devil is a prince and Jesus often identifies him as such. (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) On the other hand, a prince may also be regarded as a king by those over which he rules. For example, Herod is often called a king in the Bible although he was subordinate to Caesar. (Matthew 2) The use of both titles is confirmed in John 16:11 in which the devil is called a prince and Revelation 9:11 that calls him the angel king of the abyss.

Coming Destruction – A Key Event

When conducting seminars on Revelation, one of the biggest obstacles that hinders understanding about the Great Tribulation is that most people fail to appreciate the environment during that time. Of course, we can only reason from what is known, and consequently, many people try to understand Revelation's story by looking at our world "right now."

The challenge though, is to grasp what God predicts, then process it and reprocess it until we can observe complete harmony between the environment AND the resulting actions of that time. Comprehending the overwhelmingly sudden and horrible changes that will occur is important when the judgments of God begin. In this environment, the devil will be able to do things that he cannot do right now because he will be granted special privileges that he does not have currently.

The devil will seize upon a "crisis opportunity" to set up **his** worldwide government – and his actions will appear, at least on the surface, to be appropriate to the people of Earth. Although the devil cannot physically appear until the fifth trumpet, he will prove his incredible control over men by establishing a new government "overnight." This forthcoming government will eventually reflect how completely evil and controlling the character of Lucifer really is. (Revelation 13:4)

Therefore, I call his coming government by the title, "the Dragon-like beast." (The Bible also refers to this coming world government as Babylon.) Through his command and control center, the devil will wage war against everyone who chooses to oppose him and of course, this includes the saints of God.

As the time for his government draws to a close, the devil will especially seek to destroy the

saints and many of God's people will die. (Revelation 6:9-11; 18:24) As this coming world government reveals the evil character of its father, Earth's inhabitants will know why the dragon and his Dragon-like organization are so closely identified with the anatomy of the beasts.

It is extremely fitting that both entities are symbolized in Scripture as mean and ferocious animals – a dragon and a Dragon-like – what choice of symbols could have been better?

A Two-faced Devil?

Before we get too far along, I should point out that Revelation's story describes a two-faced devil – not two or three different devils. This point can be confusing at first. In other words, one view from Revelation shows the devil working *through* religious and political leaders that will continue through the Great Tribulation. (Revelation 13:4; Ephesians 6:12)

How the devil works from the spiritual realm to accomplish his evil plans remains a mystery to me. Of course, we know that he influences people to do evil things. For example, the devil influenced Herod to kill Baby Jesus. (Revelation 12:4) On the other hand, the devil will physically masquerade before the people of Earth in a glorious body of a man – claiming to be God!

How the devil can be a spiritual being and a physical being at will is another mystery. If you find my claim hard to believe, consider the fact that angels, both fallen and unfallen, can pass through walls, closed windows and doors and still appear before men as physical beings. Obviously, they exist in a different dimension than human beings. (See Acts 12:7. Jesus also performed a similar miracle on at least one occasion! See John 20:19.) However, do not let this unexplained phenomenon obscure the point.

The book of Revelation exposes both faces of the devil (the spiritual and the physical), so do not underestimate the sophistry and cunning of this wily foe. The great contest ahead is more than a physical battle – it is a contest for the souls of men and women.

Faulty Presuppositions

I know several different views exist on the identity of the four beasts described above, and the culprit that produces so many different views is this: Presuppositions. A presupposition is an idea or theory believed to be true **before** examining or testing new data. The problem with presuppositions surfaces when we force the weight of evidence found in Scripture to conform to a preexisting concept. If a presupposition leads away from a plain and simple "thus saith the Lord," then the presupposition is faulty.

Do not misunderstand, nothing is wrong with presuppositions if they can be demonstrated to be true. Everyone studies the Bible with various presuppositions, but caution is needed because logic alone is not sufficient properly to understand the Word of God. As students of God's Word, it is necessary to bring *all* the relevant data to the table before we can resolve the meaning of difficult passages. Even after doing this, we are still at God's mercy to discover and know truth.

If God does not want certain things revealed, no amount of study or logic will produce them. On the other hand, if God wants something known, every sincere heart will be enabled to draw the correct conclusions! This is why the gospel must be preached to all the world before Jesus can come. (Matt 24:14)

If our heart and attitude are not right toward God and man, we cannot be open to the leading of the Holy spirit. Without the illumination of the Spirit, there is no possible way of grasping a knowledge of Truth! So, the sword of truth has two edges – we must depend upon the Spirit of God to reveal truth, and take time for personal study.

The Spirit helps us to "connect the dots" as we carefully gather all the information the Bible has to say on a topic. To show the power and influence of presuppositions, four examples are described in the following paragraphs. Please consider them and their results:

Presupposition #1:

"All events described after Revelation 4:1 occur *after* the saints are taken to Heaven in a pre-tribulation rapture."

Notice how this presupposition logically *forces* the fulfillment of the seven seals, seven trumpets and a host of other events *after* the rapture simply because the seals, trumpets and other events are described *in chapters following* Revelation 4.

Presupposition #2:

"In Bible prophecy, beasts *always* represent kingdoms or nations."

Notice how this presupposition forces the identities of the Lamb and the dragon in Revelation to be nations or kingdoms. (Contrary to the claims of those who defend this presupposition, a lamb is a beast – just like the ram and goat in Daniel 8 are beasts.) As you will see, this presupposition forces conclusions that are contrary to the plainest Scripture.

For example, the Bible interprets the symbol of the great red dragon as follows: **"The great dragon was hurled down – that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him."** (Revelation 12:9)

It is not good scholarship to make the symbol of the dragon more, or less, than what the Bible says it is. In fact, it is highly dangerous. (Revelation 22:18,19) We must be vigilant to allow the Bible to be its own interpreter. The dragon in Revelation 12 is nothing less and nothing more than the devil, and the Lamb in Revelation 5 is nothing less and nothing more than Jesus, the Son of God.

Presupposition #3:

"In Bible prophecy, a day *always* represents a year."

This presupposition produces several false conclusions. For example, if you accept this view, considering the fifth trumpet of Revelation 9 as a future event is not possible since the fifth trumpet covers a time-period of five months (5 x 30 equals 150 days that would equal 150 years using the day/year presupposition).

Further, this presupposition also prevents adherents from considering the fact that the 42 months in Revelation 13:5 occur *after* the deadly wound is healed. In other words, the presupposition demands that the 42 months be 1,260 years (42 x 30) – a time-period far too long to be considered "the last days."

So, it is argued that the 42 months cannot occur *after* the deadly wound is healed, although Scripture plainly shows just the opposite.

Presupposition #4:

"A person's position on prophetic truth may be determined by (a) a prophet, or (b) founding church fathers, or (c) a doctrine committee, since God confirms truth through (a) prophets, (b) religious leaders, or (c) scholars."

This generic presupposition includes most religious people. Moslems, Catholics, Jews, Protestants, Buddhists and Hindus all use this presupposition. The frightening aspect of this presupposition is that Scripture becomes secondary, and in some cases, immaterial.

Nothing makes the devil happier than to lead religious people away from the plain and simple truths of God's kingdom written in the Bible. Consider the real problem: Truth is ever advancing and when new truth appears, it *always* seems to contradict what was previously thought to be "true." Let me explain. At any given time, man's understanding of truth contains two elements: That which is actually true and that which is believed to be true.

The problem with human beings is that distinguishing one element from the other is hard for us. We encapsulate both elements into one neat little box we call "truth." Therefore, when new insight comes regarding truth, it always defeats that portion of existing "truth" believed to be true.

New truth does not change or alter that which is *actual truth*. Since most religious people cannot differentiate between actual truth and believed truth, they cannot endorse or accept new light as truth advances. This is why religion, *per se*, always goes stale when it comes to the area of advancing truth.

As you can see, the inherent problem with presuppositions is that they can prevent people from accepting the Bible as it reads. Any presupposition that fails to exalt the Bible and the Bible *alone* as the Word of God (the rule of faith and doctrine), and any presupposition that prevents or discourages men and women from understanding *all* that is written in Scripture, is flawed.

This does not mean that everyone has to see eye-to-eye on every point of Scripture. However, I do believe that all who are sincere and honest in their study of truth can get past their flawed presuppositions through study, prayer and the illumination of the Holy Spirit. (John 16:13)

Fussing with Secondary Details

Another point needs to be made before we begin looking at Bible texts. To make sense of prophecy, a good student first begins by trying to identify the main characters or elements of the story, constantly aligning his/her conclusions with the texts. After somewhat stable conclusions on the big parts are developed, then secondary details should be addressed. Too often, I find people trying to resolve everything at once. Fussing with secondary details, while ignoring larger issues, will only end in confusion.

Truth is always simple, straightforward and easily grasped by those who seek it. If you believe your conclusions about Revelation or any spiritual matter are better than what you find here, put those views to the test and share them with a hundred Bible students or so and observe their response. As the saying goes, "the proof is in the pudding!" So, let us turn our attention to the identity of the beasts.

The Lamb is Jesus

The identity of the Lamb is quite simple to determine. Notice the following texts:

Revelation 5:5-6, 9, 12 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.

He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth . . . And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation . . . In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

Comment

: When Jesus appears the second time, He will be "a roaring Lion" to the wicked and a "meek and gentle Lamb" to the righteous. With His own blood, He purchased men for God from every tribe, language and nation. He alone is worthy to receive the seven attributes of God (power, wealth, wisdom, etc.). Can there be any doubt as to whom the Lamb is? I do not see how. (John 1:29) The seven horns signify His omnipotence – having all power. The seven eyes signify His omniscience as though He has seven spirits reporting to Him about everything done on Earth – having all knowledge.

The Dragon is the Devil

The identity of the dragon is no mystery. Notice the texts:

Revelation 12:3, 4 Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born . . .

Revelation 12:7-9

"And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down – that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him . . ."

Revelation 12:17

"Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus."

Comment:

Taking the Bible as it reads concerning the identity of the great red dragon leaves no doubt. He was in Heaven and he was cast to the Earth. The Bible leaves no doubt that this is the dragon, who is the devil, Lucifer, and the adversary of God and man. Notice that at the end of chapter 12, the dragon "went off" to make war against the rest of the woman's offspring. This indicates that the dragon, himself, has been preparing to wage a war on the remnant of God's people during the last days. This war is described in Revelation 13:7.

Note:

The great red dragon has a strange shaped body. There are seven heads, ten horns and seven crowns on the seven heads. These descriptive appendages were purposely designed by God to help Earth's last generation trace the devil's activities through centuries of time. In other words, God's descriptive language helps us identify and trace the activities of an invisible being who works on a spiritual dimension, a being who can assume different forms and do unbelievable things. The seven heads, ten horns and seven crowns will be described in a later segment of this document.

The Dragon-like Beast

Because several clues need to be addressed before properly identifying this beast, a selection of Scripture follows. To make this investigation as simple as possible, I have inserted comments between verses.

Revelation 13:1

"And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name."

Comment:

John's words do not tell us why or when this beast appears. He does, however, provide the essential clues. For example, John says about the wounded head, that the deadly wound *had been healed!* This is a profound statement on timing. For reasons presented later, this places the appearance of this beast *after* 1798, since the "wound" inflicted to the sixth head took place in 1798.

But, why does this beast rise? The answer to this question is found in the behavior of the beast. It appears to rise to establish control over Earth's governments – suggesting a breakdown of global infrastructures. Notice this profound point: This beast does not gain dominion over the Earth by force! On the contrary, the people of Earth will be astonished (awed) and follow this beast *willfully*. Eventually, everyone will worship the beast – except those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (Revelation 13:3)

What could cause something like this to take place? What could break down the infrastructures of the world? Answer: The events associated with the first four trumpets: A global earthquake, meteoric showers of white-hot hail burning up one-third of the Earth, two asteroid impacts and hundreds of mighty volcano eruptions.

This sequence of events will inflict a mortal blow to life as we presently know it. When the first four trumpets of Revelation 8 begin, travel, commerce, communication, banking, insurance, trade and manufacturing will be devastated by the events just mentioned. Into the vacuum of this infrastructure collapse, a crisis government will rise – it has no parallel in times past.

It will quickly develop into a most impressive empire.

Like Father, Like Son

Like the dragon, this beast has ten horns and seven heads. Unlike the dragon, however, the crowns are described as being on the horns of this beast. What does this suggest? The Greek word used in this verse for crown is "diadema" which stands in contrast to another Greek word for crown, "stephanos."

In the Greek, the diadema is a crown of authority, whereas the stephanos is a crown of victory. For example, the woman in Revelation 12 wears a crown (stephanos) which has 12 stars on it, whereas the dragon and the Dragon-like beast wear crowns of authority (diadema).

The meaning behind the transfer of the crowns (from heads to horns) indicates a shift in authority. Since we have not identified who the seven heads are yet, consider this as an

assertion for a moment: In Christ's day (when the vision of Revelation 12 begins), the authority that persecuted the saints came from the heads (the religious powers).

This is why the diadema described in Revelation 12 are on the heads. However, in the last days, the authority that will persecute the saints will come from the horns (the political or civil powers). The transfer of the diadema gives us a clue regarding the tactics of Satan. By moving the crowns from the heads to the horns – the devil will change persecuting authorities.

Revelation 13:2

"The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority."

Comment:

This beast is sometimes called the leopard-like beast or "the composite beast" because it has special features taken from other beasts. This beast looks like a leopard on purpose. God designed the strange anatomy of this beast to give us clues about its character and power.

The leopard is known for his swiftness and stealth. This beast has feet like a bear (claws that are incredibly powerful and merciless) and it has the pulverizing mouth of a lion. (Who can withstand the king of beasts?) When comparing the beasts in Daniel 7 with this composite beast, notice two compelling points: The first three beasts in Daniel 7 are a lion, bear and leopard – the very elements used to make up this composite beast. However, notice that the body parts from the fourth beast of Daniel 7 *are not* included in this beast. Why is the fourth beast not included?

Answer: This composite beast *does not* represent the fourth beast of Daniel 7, and further, it is not an end-time clone of the fourth beast of Daniel 7 – a point that confuses many people.

Read the specifications about the fourth beast of Daniel 7 and you will see that the composite beast of Revelation 13 and the beast of Daniel 7 are not the same creature. The fourth beast of Daniel 7 rose in 168 B.C. and three of its ten horns were uprooted by A.D. 538. On the other hand, as you will read later, the composite beast rises after 1798 with seven heads and ten horns! Further, the composite beast is a composition of parts from the first three beasts, but the fourth beast in Daniel 7 was terrible and *different* from the first three! (Dan 7:7)

This composite beast is a unique beast in its own right. Last and perhaps most convincing, the composite beast is not ancient Rome or a neo-Roman empire that will flourish again. Once the Roman empire (the fourth beast in Daniel 7) was destroyed, it does not rise again. Remember Daniel 2?

Once we move from the legs of iron (Rome) to the feet and toes of iron and clay, we *never again* return to a world of one metal (kingdom). On the contrary, the composite beast is a soon coming composite government, something like the ancient empire of the Medes and the Persians (having more than one king). Even when the devil establishes his one-world

church/government with himself as king of kings and lord of lords, he still cannot forge a homogenous empire!

As stated above, the composite features of this seven head/ten horn beast are taken from previous world empires (the beasts in Daniel 7 were also world empires). This reveals much about the type of world government this composite beast will be.

In other words, this beast will have world dominion just as the lion, bear and leopard had world dominion in Daniel 7. However, since this beast is a composite, it will not have one king ruling over the world like Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great and other ancient kings.

This coming world empire will be ruled by 17 entities (seven heads and ten horns) for a while, but eventually, these 17 entities will be overruled by the devil himself.

A Junkyard Guard Dog

We cannot overlook the last sentence in our text: **"The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority."** The devil will empower this "crisis government," and its laws will be highly oppressive, with severe penalties for disobedience. The Bible reveals that the devil will give this beast its throne and great authority. This means that this beast will not be great by human prowess. This government will not become powerful by conquest and technology.

This beast will suddenly appear and have enormous power and authority – out of "crisis" necessity. This beast represents a composite world-government that will be set up within a few days of the global devastation caused by the first four trumpets. (Revelation 8:7-12)

Think of this government as the hand-puppet of the devil and you will conceptualize a concise picture of what is coming. Those who correctly understand this prophecy will easily "see the hand within the puppet" for themselves. No, this beast is not the impotent United Nations or some current form of government operating on Earth.

This beast does not yet exist, although all of its parts are present on Earth and ready to go. Nevertheless, this beast cannot rise up and come to life until God releases the four angels holding back the overwhelming destruction. (Revelation 7:1-4) This beast, like a sleeping "junkyard guard dog," awaits the coming global crisis described in Revelation 7 and 8. Watch for it and refuse to submit to it!

Revelation 13:3

"One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast."

Comments:

The focus of this verse is on one of the seven heads. As it turns out, the head in question is the

sixth head. Before attempting to identify the wounded head, let us consider two points:

1. Each of the seven heads bears a blasphemous name. (Revelation 13:1) This indicates that each head is religious in nature and anti-Christ. Notice that the ten horns do not have blasphemous names on them because they represent political powers and do not presume to speak for God. Yet the heads, by their very nature, claim to speak for God and yet, are opposed to the authority of God – their blasphemous names confirm this.
2. One head appeared to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound *had been healed* by the time the composite beast rises from the sea. What does the phrase "followed the beast" have to do with the fatal wound on one head being healed? Simply this: The head that was wounded represents the Christian Church that existed in John's day, which eventually evolved into the Roman Catholic Church. The healing of the fatal wound indicates a restored papacy. When this beast rises from the sea, the world will believe that obeying this beast is proper because the Roman Catholic Church will endorse the establishment of this new world government! Please! Do not misunderstand me. I am not railing on the Catholics any more than any other religious system because all the world's religions will join in this endorsement. Contrary to what many believe and teach, I do not find the composite beast to represent the papacy, nor do I find Bible prophecy predicts the papacy will rule the world during end-times, as Europe was ruled during the Dark Ages. Rather, I believe the papacy to be one of the key players in the big picture of coming events. For reasons that will follow, I understand that the seven heads are the seven religions of the world – after all, there are seven of the *same* thing – namely, seven heads. If one head of this beast is a religious system, then the remaining six heads must also be religious systems.

Sixth Head Wounded and Healed

Let us review a portion of history. In February 1798, the papacy was almost fatally wounded by Napoleon's forces. The power of the church was nearly destroyed when the pope was expelled from Rome. However, the church did not die. In 1929, Mussolini restored Vatican City to the Catholic Church and declared it to be a sovereign state. Since that time, the healing of the deadly wound has made steady progress toward recovery.

Today, the pope is regarded as a significant figure in world politics and even more, is considered the most influential religious leader in the world – all this in less than 75 years! The point is that when the composite beast rises from the sea, the Bible says, "the fatal wound *had been* healed." Notice the tense of the verb: past perfect tense. This means the healing is completed when the beast rises from the sea. So, on the basis of the three previous sentences, I believe that the time is near when the beast will rise from the sea – because the fatal wound is healed.

Who are the Seven Heads?

So far, we have established one point and asserted one point about the seven heads. The established point is that each of the seven heads is religious, anti-Christ – and blasphemous.

My asserted point is that the wounded head is the papacy. But, who are the other six heads? The answer to this question is quite simple.

First, let us gather all the data:

1. Each head is described as wearing a blasphemous name. (Revelation 13:1)
2. One head seemed to receive a fatal wound, but the fatal wound was healed. (Revelation 13:3)
3. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. (Revelation 17:9)

Comment:

In Revelation 17, each head is declared to be seven mountains or hills (the Greek word 'oros is correctly translated as hill or mountain). This chapter repeats and enlarges some of the details about the composite beast described in chapter 13. In chapter 17, however, an evil woman called a whore is introduced into the story and she rides on the beast.

The imagery is direct and simple – this evil woman will eventually control the composite beast, much like a rider controls a powerful horse. Let us focus on the details concerning the seven heads. Verse 9 says the seven heads are seven hills (or mountains, KJV) on which the woman sits. What does this mean?

Not Just Any Place

In ancient times, God was not worshiped "in just any place." Today, a church body may look for property they can afford and if the location and price is right, a church is built. But, this was not the case in ancient times. The God of Heaven (as well as false gods) was worshiped at special sites called "high places" or holy places located in the mountains. Notice these Bible texts (there are many more, but these will suffice):

Moses, looking forward to Israel's future, prophesied the Lord would select a special place for His temple. As it turned out, God selected a mountain! Notice first, the words of Moses:
Deuteronomy 12:11 "Then to the *place* the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name – *there* you are to bring everything I command you: your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, and all the choice possessions you have vowed to the Lord."

About 470 years later, the Lord identified the specific place: **1 Chronicles 21:18** "Then the angel of the Lord ordered [the prophet] Gad to tell David to go up and *build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.*" About ten years later, **2 Chronicles 3:1** records the following: "Then Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David. *It was on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David.*"

The point here, of course, is that God placed His temple on a mountain top in a very specific

place.

Before Solomon built the temple, notice where the people worshiped. **"The people, however, were still sacrificing at the *high places*, because a temple had not yet been built for the Name of the Lord. Solomon showed his love for the Lord by walking according to the statutes of his father David, except that he offered sacrifices and burned incense on the *high places*."** (1 Kings 3:2,3) Years later, after Solomon died, Israel's apostasy matured.

Notice what they did: **"They also set up for themselves *high places*, sacred stones and Asherah poles on every *high hill* and under every spreading tree. There were even male shrine prostitutes in the land; the people engaged in all the *detestable practices* of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites."** (1 Kings 14:23,24)

These few verses explain why the seven heads are called seven hills (or mountains). In ancient times, mountains were believed to be the footstools of God (or gods). (Exodus 19:12; Psalm 95:5; 1 Chronicles 28:2) Remember God's dramatic presence on the mountains of Sinai, Carmel and Moriah? (Fire came down and consumed the offerings of Solomon at the dedication of the temple that was built on Mt. Moriah.)

Therefore, it should not seem strange that mountains were believed to be the footstools of the gods in ancient times. Many native religions still believe their gods dwell on the mountain tops to this very day. God is direct and to the point – the symbolism is both direct and simple – the seven heads are seven hills.

Even David helps us understand this concept: **"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."** (Psalm 121:1 KJV)

Capitol Hill

Americans should easily grasp the concept of describing religious systems (or religious authorities) as hills since we refer to the official building of our lawmakers in Washington D.C. as *Capitol Hill*. If we assemble the information that has been studied so far, the weight of evidence points to this conclusion: The seven heads are seven blasphemous religious systems (or authorities) that people look up to as having the truth about God.

4. - They are also seven kings. (Revelation 17:10)

This part of the equation is also simple. The seven heads are seven kings. A king has authority, therefore, he has a kingdom of subjects. Because each religious system has authority, it has subjects. Those who "join" or submit to the tenants of a religion submit to its laws and regulations as subjects. Thus, the seven religious systems of the world can be called "kings" for they truly have subjects.

5. - Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while. (Revelation 17:10)

This verse will support everything presented thus far. To locate *when* the five heads are fallen, we need to decide when the conversation takes place between John and the angel. The Bible says this vision came to John on the isle of Patmos (Revelation 1:9,10).

The vision occurred between A.D. 95 and A.D. 98. I take the angel's statement to be understood to be true *as of that date*. This means the five heads were fallen before A.D. 98. If this is true, a simple explanation resolves the identity of the seven heads and satisfies these specifications.

According to Webster, the term "fallen" is not limited to "destroyed or collapsed"; rather, in a larger sense it can mean "brought down" or demonstrated to be "false." If I said Jimmy Bakker, formerly of the PTL Club, was a fallen evangelist, the reader would understand that Jimmy fell from respect and honor by his wrong doing.

If we go back to the time of A.D. 95-98 and place the angel's words *in the context of when it was written*, we find a simple solution to solving the mystery within this verse. When Jesus became flesh and dwelt among men, five religious systems were "brought down" or exposed as false. Thus, *five* of the seven heads were fallen in A.D. 95.

The ministry and teaching of Jesus unmasked the vain and foolish teachings of man.

These five religious systems predate the birth of Jesus:

1. **Heathenism**
2. **Atheism**
3. **Islam***
4. **Judaism**
5. **Eastern Mysticism**

*The title "Islam" refers to the Arabic faith. Although the title today is often associated with the 6th century A.D. influence of Mohammed, the title Islam as used here, identifies the ancient Arabic faith from which Mohammedan grew.

Even though Mohammed is believed by many Christians to be the founder of Islam, it must be emphasized that Mohammed did not invent the Islamic faith. Rather, he united, organized and expanded the beliefs of nomadic Arabians. Even though he is considered by Moslems to be the last, and therefore the greatest of God's messengers, Moslems trace the origin of their faith back to Ishmael and his 12 sons. Moslems regard Ishmael as the father of their faith and not Mohammed. (See Genesis 21:13.)

These five religious systems are anti-Christ and were proven false by the birth of Jesus for the following basic reasons:

1. Heathenism is religion apart from the knowledge of the true God of Heaven. In this religious system, man creates his own gods according to fantasy or whim.
2. Atheism denies the existence of the God of Heaven and His claims upon man.

3. Judaism rejects the teachings of Jesus as the Messiah and seeks salvation through obedience and ceremonies.
4. Eastern Mysticism teaches that man can become God.
5. Islam also denies that Jesus is the Son of God and is not the Savior of the world.

Wait, There are Two More Heads!

John was also told that one head "is," and that one "is yet to come." The head or religious system that had not fallen in John's day was Christianity. Understand that what was called Christianity in New Testament times is now called Catholicism. John was a charter member of the group called Christians, a new religious system that Jesus established about A.D. 30 and this is why the angel said, "one is" – meaning the sixth head existed – even though at that point, it had not yet fallen.

However, history traces and confirms Catholicism's fall from truth and verifies that an almost fatal wound was inflicted on Catholicism in 1798. At that time, the Protestant Reformation came of age and could be identified as the seventh and final religious system of the world. The angel told John the seventh head would last for only a short time.

With all things considered, Protestantism is the "new comer," in terms of existence within the religious world, since it is less than four centuries old. In contrast, the other six religious systems are twenty or more centuries old.

Here They Are

In summary, to be consistent with everything presented thus far, it is fair to conclude that the seven heads represent:

1. **Heathenism**
2. **Atheism**
3. **Eastern Mysticism**
4. **Judaism**
5. **Islam**
6. **Catholicism**
7. **Protestantism**

Let me restate a few important conclusions. There are seven heads, seven of the *same* thing. If the wounded head represents the papacy, then the remaining six heads must also represent religious systems. They are described as blasphemous, kings and mountains, and the timing of the angel's statement, that "five have fallen, one is and one is yet to come," is consistent with all that the Bible teaches on this topic and is also compliant with recorded history.

6. The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction. (Revelation 17:11)

The Eighth King will Belong to Them!

We will consider the words, "once was, now is not" in verse 11 when we discuss the Lamb-like beast. For now, the focus is on the seven heads. When Satan physically appears on Earth claiming to be God, he will *"belong"* to the seven religions of the world in the sense that they will exalt and honor him as God.

The responsibility of exalting the devil as God will not be the work of politicians, however they will hasten to comply with the desires of religious leaders. (Remember, the crowns are on the horns during this time.)

The devil will, by using miracles, signs and wonders, convince billions of people and their religious leaders that he is God. Thus, the devil will become the eighth and greatest king. (Remember, the seven heads are also kings.) According to 2 Thessalonians 2:4 and Daniel 11:36, the devil will establish himself over the seven heads and claim to be their God. He will have the power and authority to back up his claim, too! The reason the devil is called the eighth king is interesting.

Remember when the little horn in Daniel 7 plucked up three horns by the roots? The little horn became the *eighth* horn and it ruled over the remaining seven horns with unchallenged authority. The parallel will be obvious. The devil will physically appear and eventually rule over the seven religious systems of the world with unlimited authority. Many people will oppose the devil's actions, but they will be powerless to stop him.

Notice what Paul says, **"Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God."** (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4)

It is also appropriate to say that the devil will be highly successful for a time, appearing to be invincible, but his throne, authority and power will be short lived. Jesus guarantees it.

7. The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. - (Revelation 17:12)

Horns in Bible prophecy usually represents kings. Remember the horns on the ram and goat in Daniel 8? Remember the ten horns on the monster beast in Daniel 7? Although we recognize the little horn of Daniel 7 to be more than *one* man, it can be said that the papacy was a "type of king" who ruled over the people during the Dark Ages. A horn is an ancient symbol representing a powerful entity. (Zechariah 1:18,19; Luke 1:69)

The ten horns on the composite beast represent ten kings. These ten kings are also symbolized by the ten toes of Daniel 2 (see verses 42-44) who will give their authority over to the devil after he has conquered the world during the sixth trumpet war.

Since the devil will be regarded as God by billions of people, the seven religious systems will fully unite with the devil, supporting him in his establishment of a one-world church/government. The devil will claim to be king of kings (government) and lord of lords (church).

The establishment of a one-world church/government requires (hang onto your hat) the dissolution of all seven religions. In other words, religious diversity must come to an end because God lives among men! This consolidation of the world's religions into one global church/government is called "an image to the beast" in Revelation 13 and is also identified as a whore in Revelation 17.

In other words, the composite beast (seven heads/ten horns) will no longer need to exist because "God" lives among men – commanding in all matters of religion and government. This new one-world church/government will resemble the composite beast that used religious and political powers to oppress the people.

It makes absolute sense to call this new global church/government of the devil "an image" of the [composite] beast. The essential difference between the beast and the image to the beast is consolidation. The beast is diverse having seven religions and ten kings. The image is singular – one religion – one ruler over all.

Obviously, everyone is not going to be pleased with the course of events taking place at this time. Remember, the 144,000 have been proclaiming truth during this period of time. So, the devil will enable and empower civil authorities to put to death anyone who refuses to "worship the image." The civil authorities will be "puppets" that carry out the evil schemes of the devil.

The Bible does not name or identify the ten kings that will appear, but I believe these kings will be promoted to this position during the sixth trumpet war. However, the Bible provides very little information about them. We do know this much: **"They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast. They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings – and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers."** (Revelation 17:13,14)

Returning to the Identity of the Composite Beast

So far, we have established five primary points. They are:

1. The composite beast will be a world government.
2. The composite beast consists of the world's religious and political systems.
3. The composite beast will receive its power, throne and authority from the devil.
4. The composite beast will astonish everyone and overpower everything that has authority.
5. The composite beast will stand in direct opposition to the authority of God.

Now that these elements have been established, the remaining verses are easy to understand. Please notice what each verse says. There should be no question about their meaning.

- **Revelation 13:4** - Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?"
- **Revelation 13:5** - The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.
- **Revelation 13:6** - He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven.
- **Revelation 13:7** - He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.
- **Revelation 13:8** - All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast – all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.
- **Revelation 13:9** - He who has an ear, let him hear.

Composite Beast Summary

In closing this section, I would like to make four points:

1. If a person obeys the composite beast, he is really obeying the devil. (Revelation 13:4)
2. The composite beast will be empowered for 42 months. (Revelation 13:5)
3. The composite beast will be completely victorious and the saints will be completely conquered. (Revelation 13:7)
4. Some Bible students claim the composite beast is the papacy. Others argue this beast is the devil himself. Others argue this beast is a neo-Roman nation that is yet to appear. The problem with all of these answers is that they are partially true, but none of these options meet all the specifications that identify the composite beast. Yes, the composite beast includes the papacy, the empowerment of the devil and the political acquiescence of all nations! This beast has no equal or parallel from times past. Humankind has never seen such a powerful and horrible monster. When it is established, it will crush and destroy anyone and everything that stands in its way, because the dragon is the power within it. Resisters will cry out for help saying, "Who can fight against this and ever hope to win?" (Revelation 13:4)

For these and other reasons beyond the scope of this article, I call this beast "the Dragon-like beast." I cannot find a better way to describe the next world government. To say that this empire will be confused, internally contradictory, and do evil and violent things, is an understatement. It will be worse than Hitler's Third Reich. In fact, God will use the formation of this beast to prove beyond question that there is a sharp and distinct line between truth and error. Those who have spiritual eyes and ears will clearly understand. Those people who are self-serving will not.

The Lamb-like Beast

We have discussed the Lamb, the dragon and the Dragon-like beast. Now, we come to the fourth and final beast called the Lamb-like beast. I have been scolded more than once for calling the two-horned beast in Revelation 13 "the Lamb-like" beast. Some people claim this

"label" immediately favors my claim that he is the great antagonist of the Lamb.

I encourage any reader to decide for himself or herself if the designation "Lamb-like beast" is correct even though it is not found in Revelation 13 (and neither is my designation "Dragon-like beast" found in Scripture). However, I insist on calling this beast "the Lamb-like beast" because it can be quickly determined that he is the star attraction of last-day events.

He has no equal. The world will be delighted, entertained, led astray and into war against Jesus by this incredible creature. This beast will prove to be nothing less than the great Antichrist himself – Lucifer in the flesh.

Revelation 13:11 Then I saw another beast, coming out of the Earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon.

Comments:

First, notice the origin of this beast. He comes up out of the Earth – this stands in sharp contrast to the composite beast that rises from the sea. According to Revelation 17:15, waters represent peoples, multitudes, nations, languages, etc. Therefore, we can assume that the composite beast rises out of nations, multitudes and languages. In contrast, the Lamb-like beast does not rise from nations, multitudes, languages or peoples and this is a critical difference.

Unlike the composite beast, the Lamb-like beast does not depend on the presence of people to exist! This beast just appears "out of nowhere" – rising from Earth. In fact, this phrase is very descriptive, since his origin turns out to be the bottomless pit! The origin of the Lamb-like beast is a very crucial point. This is why: The Lamb-like beast rising up out of the Earth in Revelation 13:11 describes the same event as "the beast rising up out of the bottomless pit" in Revelation 17:8.

If this is not the case, then Revelation becomes internally inconsistent.

If the beast from the bottomless pit (or abyss) is not the Lamb-like beast, then the beast from the bottomless pit cannot be identified since the beast from the bottomless pit has specific identifiable characteristics that also belong to the Lamb-like beast. Therefore, only four beasts exist in Revelation. Notice that John provides the origin of each beast:

1. The Lamb is seen in Heaven. (Revelation 5)
2. The Dragon is also seen in Heaven, but cast into the Earth. (Revelation 12)
3. The Composite beast rises from the sea. (Revelation 13:1)
4. The Lamb-like beast rises from the Earth. (Revelation 13:11)

See if this flow of data makes sense to you:

1. The beast that rises out of the Earth is the is the angel-king of the bottomless pit. (Revelation 17:8; 9:11)
2. The angel-king from the bottomless pit is the dragon who was cast into the Earth.

(Revelation 12:7)

3. The dragon has to be released from the Earth at some point in time because he will be put back into the bottomless pit right after the Second Coming. (Revelation 20)

Before we examine a sequence of texts in Revelation, reconsider this point: The release of the angel-king from the bottomless pit in Revelation 9 is the same event as the release of the Lamb-like beast from the Earth in Revelation 13:11. Two descriptions of the same thing – an example of repetition and enlargement.

Consider the sequence of scenes shown to John:

- a. In Revelation 12:7, John saw a war in Heaven between Michael and Lucifer (notice the contestants).
- b. In Revelation 12:9 John saw the dragon and his angels cast *into* the Earth. (KJV)
- c. In Revelation 13:11 John saw a two-horned beast rising from the Earth that will deceive the *whole* world by means of the miracles, signs and wonders that it has power to do. This beast even calls fire down from the sky at will (to convince the inhabitants of Earth of his assumed divinity).
- d. In Revelation 9:1-11 John saw "the angel king of the bottomless pit" released at the fifth trumpet to hurt man for an appointed amount of time.
- e. In Revelation 17:8 a messenger from God informs John by saying, "the beast *you* saw once was [visible], now is not [visible], yet will come up out of the bottomless pit and go to his destruction. The wicked living on Earth at that time will be astonished when they see the beast because he once was [visible], now is not [visible], but yet he will come up out of the bottomless pit and go to this destruction." (Paraphrase mine) The beast referred to here is the great red dragon that had been cast into the Earth.
- f. In Revelation 17:11 the messenger continues, "the beast who once was [visible], now is not [visible] will be an eighth king who is going to his destruction."

So, how does all of this information fit together? Simply said, John saw Lucifer physically and *visibly* cast out of Heaven. Lucifer and his angel followers were thrown into a dungeon within the Earth. In John's day, the world was believed to be flat and a bottomless pit was a hole that went all the way through the surface of the Earth. In ancient times, it was believed that the devil and his demons lived in a dungeon beneath the surface of the Earth and could only escape through caves, or a bottomless pit.

God used the knowledge of John's day to make a profound point: John saw Lucifer as a visible dragon at war in Heaven, but after he was cast into the Earth, Lucifer was no longer *visible*. Nevertheless, the devil has been hard at work – operating from his spiritual "dungeon."

However, at an appointed future time during the fifth trumpet, the devil will be allowed to escape his spiritual domain and appear in the flesh. When he does appear, the wicked billions on Earth will be astonished at his glory and power! The reason the righteous will not be impressed is because they know exactly who he is. One more point. When Jesus appears at the Second Coming, the physical body that Lucifer uses will be destroyed by fire. The destruction of this body is not to be confused with the destruction of Lucifer.

When the devil personates Christ, his physical body will only be an apparition. (We have already noticed in this study that angels can pass through closed windows, doors and walls and still appear as physical beings.) So, after Lucifer's apparition is destroyed, an angel descends from Heaven and lays hold of the devil and puts him back into the dungeon (abyss) for 1,000 years. (Revelation 20)

Executive Summary on the Origin of the Beast

This review of all of the data shows a simple harmony throughout Revelation if we take the Bible literally as it reads. The origin of the two-horned beast, rising out of the Earth in Revelation 13:11 is the *same concept* as the angel king and his demons (as many as locusts) being released from the bottomless pit in Revelation 9:1, which is the *same concept* as the beast that once was [visible] rising from the abyss! (Revelation 17:8)

By restating this *same concept* in three different ways, a solid and truthful interpretation can be reached. This is good, for the more comprehensive the picture, the clearer the meaning. The Bible often follows the practice of repetition and enlargement.

For example, the image's chest of silver in Daniel 2 is the same thing as the bear in Daniel 7, which is the same thing as the ram in Daniel 8; namely, the Medo-Persian empire!

Like a Lamb

Revelation 13:11 (Continued) "Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon."

Did you notice that nothing was said about the physical appearance of this beast except he has two horns like **the** lamb and speaks like **the** dragon. Notice my bold print on the words, "the." I did this to direct your attention to this point: the Bible says "like a lamb" instead of "like the lamb" and the same is true concerning the dragon.

I am sure Bible translators do their best to give us a true and faithful interpretation of each verse. However, it is possible for a translation detail to be overlooked that needs some explanation. In this case, it is the anarthrous nouns "lamb" and "dragon" that need a bit of explanation.

Using anarthrous nouns is customary in the Greek language. An anarthrous noun is a noun without an article, such as "a" or "the." An anarthrous noun points back to a character that has already been introduced into a story. In the Greek, a literal translation of this sentence would read: "and it had horns, two like lamb, and spoke like dragon."

Notice that the nouns "lamb" and "dragon" do not have articles – they are anarthrous. English translators added the article "a" to make the sentence read correctly in English. However, they should have used the article "**the**" because *the lamb* and *the dragon* were previously introduced in the story of Revelation.

In other words, this beast had two horns like the lamb which had seven horns and this beast also spoke like the dragon because it is the dragon in sheep's clothing!

What do the two horns represent? The devil will be two kings in one! He will be King over ten horns (political kings) and Lord over the seven heads (religions). The obvious parallel here is the devil's mockery directed at Jesus alone who has been granted the title "King of kings and Lord of lords" by the Father.

Jesus was found worthy to lay claim to this title. (Revelation 5) He is humankind's High Priest by virtue of that appointment by the Father. He is also humankind's Sovereign King by appointment of the Father. The irony here is that the Lamb-like beast steals this unique title belonging to Jesus before Jesus appears in the clouds.

This shows how exceedingly dark and grossly ignorant the minds of sinners are, actually to believe the devil is God! Since the wicked do not recognize the value of character, God allows the devil to awe them with signs and miracles and lead them into complete rebellion. On the other hand, the righteous understand something about the purity and holiness of God, so God allows them to see that signs, miracles and wonders are worthless if righteousness and love is not the basis of character.

God is in the character business and this is why Jesus had to be found worthy before the Father would grant Him everything that Heaven has to offer. Wouldn't it be wonderful if governmental leaders were found to be "character-worthy" of their high office?

Revelation 13:12 He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed.

Comments:

This verse confuses many people at first. They ask, "If this beast is the devil impersonating Christ as you say, then (a) why does the Lamb-like beast have and exercise the same authority as the first beast, and (b) if he is impersonating God, why does he make the people worship the composite beast instead of worshipping himself?" These are good questions and deserve good answers.

When the devil is allowed physically to appear as the Lamb-like beast, he knows that God has predetermined that his time is very short – just five months to establish his total dominion before the sixth trumpet begins. (Revelation 9:5,10,15) Therefore, to get immediate attention and as many followers as possible, he will do two things: First, appear before billions of suffering people performing counterfeit signs, miracles and wonders. (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)

This will awe the people everywhere and convince many that indeed, God is among men. Many will exclaim, "Hope has come at last with healing in his wings!" (Malachi 4:2) Second, the devil will, in the assumed voice of God, command the people to obey their religious leaders.

This will, of course, highly flatter the religious leaders to have "God on their side" and sound

reasonable to those who have refused to love the truth. However, this is an important point of Revelation 13:12: The devil will have and exercise the same high-level authority as the "crisis government."

In other words, the Lamb-like beast does not derive authority from the "crisis government" or any nation. This is consistent with the nature of his origin – this beast just rises from the Earth having two horns. The devil "just appears" out of nowhere having authority equal to the "crisis government."

This is a profound point. The devil has carefully calculated every move necessary to win the favor of world's "crisis government" (the composite beast). After gaining a majority, he will begin to oppose and change small issues which the "crisis government" has made law and eventually, he will rise above the seven heads in authority as the eighth and greatest king. His use of opposition will demonstrate his superiority.

Notice the words of Paul: "**He [the man of sin] will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped . . .**" (2 Thessalonians 2:4 – emphasis mine) He will exercise as much authority as the first beast for his own benefit. After all, what would you expect of God?

Why not Worship the Devil?

Now the question, "Why does the devil make the people worship the composite beast – instead of himself?" Answer: If the devil initially required one group of people to worship him as God, this would separate and alienate him from the other religions of the world. In other words, if the devil required the Moslems to worship his person as Allah, then Catholics, Protestants and Jews would regard this being as a Moslem God.

The devil knows two things:

- a. by forcing people to worship the composite beast, they are actually worshiping him (Revelation 13:4) since he is the author of false religion, and
- b. by compelling diverse bodies of people to obey their respective religious leaders, he will initially fulfill the expectations of people who already think they are worshiping God.

Therefore, the devil will insist that everyone living in Moslem countries worship according to the laws of the "crisis government" for that nation. People living in Catholic countries will be commanded by the devil to worship according to the authorities for that country, etc. This is a *temporary* move by the devil to lead a diverse world toward the establishment of his one world church/government. In the end, however, people end up worshiping the Lamb-like beast. The establishment of the mark of the "beast" proves this point.

When the devil physically appears (during the fifth trumpet), Moslems, Jews, Catholics, Protestants, etc. will be worshiping according to the laws established in their respective countries. By commanding the nations to obey their religious leaders, the religious leaders from

all nations will be pleased that "God" is supporting them and in turn, the devil will later extract their support for his cunning "one-world-church" plan.

Ultimately, when the devil has gained enough control to establish his "one-world-church," the options he gives to every world inhabitant are not good – obey and live, disobey and die. (Revelation 13: 15) But to reach this point in his plan, religious leaders of all faiths must first "join themselves" and support the devil before he will unfold his plan for a new world church. After all, with God on Earth, there will be no reason to continue plurality of religion.

To make his idea as palatable as possible, the devil will take certain elements from each religion to create the new one; thus, the new religion is called "an image" or clone of the composite beast. By using a clone, everyone will find something in the new religion that was borrowed from their old system.

This new religion or church is also the whore that rides on the seven heads described in Revelation 17. For a short time, the new one-world religion will rule over the people of Earth.

There will be many distinguishing differences between the people of God and the followers of the devil. However, two character traits will fully separate the righteous from the wicked. First, the righteous will **"obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus."** (Revelation 12:17)

The Ten Commandments are beyond impeachment. They stand forever because the One who established them lives forever! The fourth commandment, requiring man to honor and keep the seventh day holy will stand in direct contrast to the day of worship that Satan declares holy.

Perhaps the devil will direct his one-world church to worship on Sunday, since Catholic and Protestant populations represent a very large segment of people in terms of numbers. (In other words, Sunday observance could be one of those tenants of doctrine carried over into the devil's new church.)

No one can biblically verify just what day the devil will set forth as holy, but we can be sure it will not be the seventh day. Remember, the devil is empowered by God to lead the world astray and the sharper the contrast, the clearer the issues are between truth and falsehood. (Revelation 13:14)

Second, the people of God will be holding to the testimony of Jesus. The testimony of Jesus is described as the spirit of prophecy that He will give to the 144,000. (Revelation 19:10; 10:7) The wicked, on the other hand, will be following the testimony of their "false prophet," the devil. The Lamb-like beast is also called, "the false prophet," because he lies to the people in the face of the clearest evidences of truth. (John 8:44)

The devil will be the chief spokesman for his new world order and as such, earns the title, "false prophet."

One last point. The Bible says the devil will make the people ". . . worship the first beast, whose

fatal wound had been healed." (Revelation 13:12)

Why is the first beast identified as the one whose fatal wound had been healed? This question comes up often and the simple answer is – to avoid any confusion. John refers to a distinguishing feature associated with the first beast, so there is no mistaking the identity of the beast.

This keeps the actions of these two beasts separate and distinct. For example, if five men were standing in a line-up and you wished clearly to indicate which man you were pointing to, you might say, "the man without any hair on his head." That would certainly eliminate any doubt if the other men had hair!

A Really Big Show

Revelation 13:13 And he

[the Lamb-like beast] **performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men.** [to prove his assumed divinity]

Revelation 13:14 Because of the signs he

[the Lamb-like beast] **was given power [from God] to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived [all of the wicked] inhabitants of the Earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.**

Revelation 13:15 He

[the Lamb-like beast] **was given power [from God] to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.**

Comments

: A few comments are necessary about these verses. First, the ability to call fire down from the heavens at will, upon command, is a most compelling display of divine authority. Do not be fooled into thinking this falling fire is just a harmless holiday display.

No, this falling fire will be deadly – destroying the enemies of the devil. This will certainly put the "fear of God" in every heart. (Read 2 Kings 1 for an example of what I mean.)

Also, notice that the image is set up in honor of the composite beast. What does this mean? The devil is a master at using flattery, especially when flattery paves the way toward fulfilling his evil schemes.

He feigns "honor" for the ancient religions of millenniums past as he moves in the background to do away with them! The devil wants to convince people, the world over, that his new church, the

one-world church/government, is being assembled as a new religion that encompasses all people and all faiths. "All people of all faiths are invited to participate in the honorable church of the living God – a church that makes the old way obsolete since God now lives among men.

Yes, in times past, God winked at man's diversity, but now he calls for everyone to assemble for worship and praise at the appointed time." I can almost hear this evil announcement ringing in my ears right now! After the one-world church is established, tones and attitudes will quickly change. Verse 15 is chilling, as well as self-explanatory.

The Mark of the Beast

Revelation 13:16 He

[the Lamb-like beast] **also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead,**

Revelation 13:17 so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is

[either] **the name of the [Lamb-like] beast or the number of his name.**

Revelation 13:18 This calls for

[very little] **wisdom. If anyone has [two ounces of] insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.**

Comments:

Perhaps, no single topic in the Bible is more widely known and discussed than the mark of the beast. It could also be said that no topic in the Bible is more poorly understood than this one. Three reasons exist for this confusion.

First, identifying who the beasts are in Revelation is a problem for most people. Second, which beast does the mark belong to? Last, is the mark visible, literal or symbolic? (Before we continue, if you have a copy of the charts called *Roadmaps for the End-times*, look over charts 8 and 9. Note the timing of the devil's appearance and the establishment of the mark of the beast.)

As previously identified, the four beasts in Revelation represent Jesus as the Lamb of God; Lucifer, the dragon cast into a spiritual dungeon; Lucifer's "crisis government" (the composite beast); and Lucifer as the Lamb-like beast personating Jesus.

The beast that owns the mark is the Lamb-like beast, none other than Lucifer himself, in the assumed form of God. If we read this verse literally, then the mark will be either a visible tattoo on the forehead (bearing the name that the devil will assume) or a tattoo showing the number "666" on the right hand.

Consider the following points:

- a. The beast that owns the mark is the beast of greatest and highest authority. In other words, the mark of the beast cannot come from the composite beast because no particular religious or political power can force the rest of the world to comply with its demands. The composite beast has many members and as such, one member cannot demand submission from the rest of its members. If it could, then it would not be a composite beast.
- b. The Lamb-like beast is the devil impersonating Christ. Because he can perform counterfeit signs, wonders and miracles, because he can call down fire from the heavens at will, because he is the star performer during the end-time, because he is the eighth king that rules over the seven heads and ten horns – he is the greater power of the two beasts in Revelation 13.
- c. The number "666" is associated with a man – specifically, *the* man of sin (or the man of lawlessness – 2 Thessalonians 2). It may surprise you that the Bible refers to angels, even the devil, as a man. Following are some key texts:

Daniel 8:15-17

While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man. And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision. As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me, "understand that the vision concerns the time of the end . . . " Dan 9:21 while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice.

Ezekiel 28:2,3; 12-14 {2} Son of man, say to the

[real] ruler of Tyre, This is what the Sovereign Lord says: "In the pride of your heart you say, 'I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god in the heart of the seas.' But you are a man and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god. {3} Are you wiser than Daniel? Is no secret hidden from you?" . . . {12} Son of man, take up a lament concerning the [real] king of Tyre and say to him: This is what the Sovereign Lord says: "You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. {13 } You were in Eden, the garden of God . . . {14 } You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones."

Isaiah 14:12-17

"How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.

I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' But you

are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit. Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: 'Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, the man who made the world a desert, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?'"

These texts confirm the essential point that angels are often referred to as men by Bible writers.

Other examples could be used, but these make the point – especially the selections from Ezekiel and Isaiah concerning Lucifer.

666 and the Man

How is the devil (in the form of a man) and the number "666" connected? These are the facts as I understand them. God has made sure that the number "666" represents something evil for nearly two thousand years. Almost everyone who has read anything in the Bible knows this number is associated with evil and mystery.

As mentioned earlier, the mark of the beast is either the name that the devil will assume or the number "666." The reason for the distinction between the forehead and right hand is rank. Those who serve in Lucifer's government as officials will receive a tattoo on their foreheads as a mark of their rank, devotion and loyalty in Lucifer's court. You might be surprised to learn that this process is mandated by God to make Lucifer's deception all the more secure.

Notice what the Bible says about the 144,000: "**Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.**" (Revelation 14:1 – emphasis mine)

In other words, the devil is required by God to imitate the distinction that Jesus and the Father are going to bestow on Their own servants! The contrast, of course, is like daylight and darkness. One will be an ugly and hideous tattoo, while the other will be a glorious light that reflects the beauty and holiness of God.

Nevertheless, officers in Lucifer's government will have the mark of the beast that is the assumed name of the devil, tattooed on their foreheads. (Incidentally, in most military organizations today, officers display rank on their collars or foreheads using hats.)

What about the number "666?" The rank and file of the devil's one-world church/government will receive a tattoo on their saluting (right) hand showing allegiance and loyalty to this new order. The irony is important here. Men and women will willfully and knowingly submit to this evil tattoo rather than put their faith in God.

The tattoo must be clearly visible since it will have to be displayed to buy or sell what few precious rations are available. I do not believe the mark of the beast is a super computer, nor a microchip implanted beneath the skin.

The Bible says the mark of the beast is a *mark*. Hitler demonstrated that the easiest way to track large numbers of people without electricity or fancy gadgets is to put a tattoo on their physical body. Tattoos are permanent. They cannot be transferred or removed without great agony.

Remember, by the time the "mark" is activated, the world is in shambles. The devastation caused by the trumpets will leave the world without electricity, computers, paper or other things we depend on so heavily today. The mark of the beast must work with the same precision in every country (including undeveloped third world countries) and with this in mind, the tattoo is not a far-flung idea.

In fact, ancient history also confirms the use of tattoos to mark slaves. Exodus 13:9 illustrates an interesting parallel. The generation that left Egypt were marked with tattoos indicating they were the property of Pharaoh. That generation died in the wilderness after 40 years of wandering as a result of their rebellion against God.

The new generation that entered the Promised Land were not marked as slaves. By the grace of God, they were freemen! So it will be again! When Jesus comes, there will be two classes of people – the slaves of the devil and the free in Christ – the marked and the unmarked.

God will not allow the devil to use an alternate means of marking the people. God has attached an evil significance to the number "666" for a good reason and He requires the devil to implement it. God does this to prove beyond any doubt that men and women, with hearts full of rebellion against God, would rather receive the evil mark of the beast than to submit to the authority of God. This is the final course of sin.

I want to draw your attention to a critical point in verse 18. Verse 18 is an understatement. It basically says, "When the time comes for the implementation of the mark of the beast, if anyone has two ounces of brain power, he will be able to grasp the seriousness and importance of avoiding the mark because everyone who receives the mark of the beast will receive the wrath of God."

Revelation 14:9

– 11 A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."

Summary

This study has been far-reaching and perhaps, a bit too technical and long, especially if this topic is new to you. However, this may be my only opportunity to share my findings with you. In closing, let me emphasize again that the Bible is rich in God's grace. God has given us much to

consider!

At the current time, the events and developments described in Revelation's story may seem far removed and highly impossible. However, this attitude will change in a single day – just like it did in Noah's day.

I hope you can see that the events in Revelation are worldwide, which means that every prophetic conclusion has worldwide implications. This is where many students of prophecy fail, since they do not include all six billion people living on Earth in the story. Do not consider this story from a personal perspective. Instead, pretend you are circling the Earth in the space shuttle and watching events unfold on Earth. The activities of the four beasts will be the same *in every country*, even though we are a world of different religions, governments and languages. You must not overlook this point!

When the four angels (Revelation 7:1-4), who are currently holding back the wrath of God, hear the Lamb say, "There is no more delay" (Revelation 10:6), they will release the four winds. First, the Earth will be shaken by a global earthquake. (Revelation 8:3-5)

Then, the first four trumpets will sound, (Revelation 8:6-12) and the "crisis government" will quickly form the composite beast of Revelation 13:1-8. While the composite beast is in power, the devil will operate from his spiritual dungeon. The dragon of Revelation 12 was cast into this dungeon. After a period of time, perhaps as much as two years from the initial global earthquake, the devil will physically appear out of nowhere. (The Lamb-like beast of Revelation 13:11-18 will rise from the Earth or bottomless pit.)

He has only one goal – to lead the world into destruction and total rebellion against God. He will succeed because God has pre-decreed both his victory and his destruction. (Revelation 17:8)

Revelation tells a story about two great kings. One is noble, righteous and loving and the other is mean, evil and violent. The two kings are about to declare war on each other and the souls of men and women are the prize.

Therefore, I would encourage you to reread this material and study it until your own thoughts are clear about the identity of the four beasts. Surely, the better we understand God's Word, the better we will be able to testify on His behalf and share His saving truth with people around us. Billions of people do not have a clue about God's forthcoming plans. Many people around you have no idea about these soon coming events. To be sure, the day is almost here when everyone will be "awakened" to hear this story.

At that time, billions of people will wake up, only to find themselves in the middle of a life and death conflict! Who knows, you might be instrumental in leading someone to eternal life because you understand the big picture!

So seriously consider our Savior's words, **"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."** (Matthew 24:14)