

The Beast from the Sea ~ Part 2

Revelation 13:1-4

The End Times

In my last post, we began to unpack Revelation 13 and learned about the first of two beasts: **The Beast from the Sea**. In this post, we will conclude the exploration of Revelation 13:1-4.

"Then the dragon stood on the seashore; ¹ and I saw a beast come up out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads. On its horns were ten royal crowns and on its heads blasphemous names. ² The beast which I saw was like a leopard, but with feet like those of a bear and a mouth like the mouth of a lion. To it the dragon gave its power, its throne and great authority. ³ One of the heads of the beast appeared to have received a fatal wound, but its fatal wound was healed, and the whole earth followed after the beast in amazement. ⁴ They worshipped the dragon, because he had given his authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who can fight against it?" ~ Revelation 12:18 - 13:4 (CJB) [Note that I added the last verse of chapter 12 that we discussed last time as more appropriately tied to this passage.]

Then the dragon stood on the seashore; ¹ and I saw a beast come up out of the sea. It is interesting to be aware of the placement of **Yochanan** on different occasions in the Book of Revelation. In Revelation 1:9, **Yochanan** is seen on the Isle of Patmos. In 4:1, he is caught up into heaven. In chapter thirteen we see him standing on the sands of the sea. In chapter seventeen he is found standing in the wilderness. In 21:10, he takes his place on a high Mountain. Wherever **Yochanan** is transported, he has a grandstand view of all that is happening in the Revelation God is sharing with him. The mention of the sea is informative, as it represents the masses of people. Revelation 17:15 explains that the sea symbolizes *"the waters that you saw, where the whore is sitting, are peoples, crowds, nations and languages."* When observing the sea from the seashore, it is apparent that only on rare occasions is it at peace with itself. Much of the time it appears troubled, casting up mire and dirt, continually seething and surging, never at rest. This is indeed an accurate picture of the people, nations, and multitudes of the world. Out of this global unrest, a universal government will arise with one man ruling with supreme authority.

The *beast* had *ten horns and seven heads*. The *seven heads* loaded with blasphemy are explained further in chapter 17. They symbolize seven empires and seven kings that are, or were, under the control of the *beast*, who receives his power from HaSatan. **Yochanan** tells us that five (empires/kings) are fallen, one *"is,"* and one is yet to come (17:10). There is much speculation on the identity of the five that are fallen. Some believe them to be the significant empires that ruled through the ages, including the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Grecian empires. The one that *"is"* is thought to be the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was never conquered; it rotted from within and eventually lost its position of world power.

Others believe that the *seven heads* represent the five kings who reigned up to **Yochanan's** day, the sixth king that was in authority during **Yochanan's** life, and a seventh king that is yet to come, which is thought to be the Antichrist.

The beast which I saw was like a leopard, but with feet like those of a bear and a mouth like the mouth of a lion. To it the dragon gave its power, its throne and great authority. Consider the order in which **Yochanan** speaks of these animals. The *leopard* (Greece); the *bear* (Medo-Persia); the *lion* (Babylon); and the *beast* (Antichrist). However, when Daniel speaks of them, the order is reversed. The reason for the reversed order is that Daniel is looking ahead to the future, whereas, **Yochanan** is looking back to the past. This *beast*, the Antichrist, and his kingdom shall be the embodiment of all these kingdoms combined into one worldwide empire. Gary Cohen and Salem Kirban in their book *Revelation Visualized* write:

The Beast has the fierce qualities of the Daniel 7's previous beast nations as Rev. 13:2 shows. It has the Babylonian "mouth of a lion" (Rev. 13:2; Dan. 7:4)—lust to consume victims; great power. It has the Persian "feet... of a bear" (Rev. 13:2; Dan 7:5)—great size; armies able to crush rebellions. It has

the Greek body of a "leopard" (Rev. 13:2; Dan. 7:6)—agility, swiftness; a capacity for military mobility and speed of strike. The future Beast will have all of these qualities. And lest we forget, it is a Beast—in God's sight a monster that consumes rapaciously. Since the Dragon, Satan gives it its power, the Beast—both the empire and the man, Antichrist—will be exceedingly anti-god, against all who turn to God, and wicked in every way. ¹

One of the heads of the beast appeared to have received a fatal wound, but its fatal wound was healed. It comes as no surprise that HaSatan, the great imitator, orchestrates the ***"death and resurrection"*** of the Antichrist. A cheap imitation, indeed, but ***the whole earth followed after the beast in amazement.*** How easily people are deceived if they don't know the truth found in God's Word!

Keep in mind that the Antichrist begins his career as a peacemaker (Revelation 6:2). This may be possible through his ability to settle the on-going Arab-Israeli territorial problem. This peace solution will bring about a seven-year covenant with the Jews (Daniel 9:27) and allow Israel to rebuild the Temple and reinstate religious rituals (Daniel 9:27). However, by the middle of the seven years the Antichrist's true colors show forth, and although the Jews turn against him, the world, in general, is more and more solidified behind him as his popularity continues to grow.

At this point the Jews, who were merely used as a stepping stone, are blocking his way to unanimous public idolization. He breaks the covenant with them (Daniel 9:27) and sets himself up as a god. At about this time an assassination attempt is made on his life. The Scripture says ***the beast appeared to have received a fatal wound.*** The people at large think the assassination attempt was successful and that their leader, the Antichrist, has been killed. HaSatan uses this episode to make the people believe the Antichrist has been supernaturally raised from the dead! While it is known that it is beyond the power of HaSatan to give life, the healing of this wound would be possible for HaSatan. This apparent miracle will cause the people to rally behind the Antichrist even more and set the stage for world dictatorship.

They worshipped the dragon, because he had given his authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who can fight against it?" It has always been the desire of HaSatan for people to worship him (Isaiah 14:12-14) and pride has been his problem all along. Today, there are all kinds of cults worshipping the Devil; they eagerly give their allegiance to his Majesty, the Devil. They give their bodies, souls, and all they have to his service for time and eternity. There has never been such a defiant, bold, arrogant, blasphemous age as the one now living. Oliver Greene comments on this subject:

The world is looking for a superman, and this world dictator of the revived Roman Empire will sweep men off their feet. Immediately they will begin to worship him. They will declare that no one can stand against him, that there is nothing he cannot do. What horrible blasphemy! This is the age of personality worshippers... in religion, in politics, in social life and in every other phase of life. This is the age of idols. ²

Special Comparative Note on Chapter 13:1-4 ³

Futurist Approach:

Futurists see a ***beast come up out of the sea*** as the four beasts of Daniel 7. The ***sea*** is a symbol of Gentile nations. They have no difficulty connecting ***the beast*** to the Roman Empire in light of Daniel 7 and Revelation 17. Dispensationalism asserts that the world empire of the Tribulation period will be a revival of

¹ Quoted in A Layman's Commentary on Revelation by Don Jones.

² Ibid.

³ Material in this post is taken from "Revelation: Four Views, Revised & Updated" by Steve Gregg. Notations in brackets, if any, are my comments.

old, pagan Imperial Rome, under a Roman head. Ironside describes him as “the statesman of a Caesar, the military genius of a Napoleon, and the personal attractiveness of a Chesterfield.”

Idealist Approach:

Idealists tend to share the same views as the **Preterists** and **Futurists** concerning *the beast* and *the sea*. The *dragon gave its power* to the beast. Swete comments that the dragon works through the beast as his agent: the war is HaSatan’s, but the Emire is his tool for waging it. **Idealists** also support the **Preterists** view on the fatal wound.

In my next post, we will explore **Revelation 13:5-10** dealing with **The Beast’s War with the Saints**.