

## And The Beast Is... Revelation 13:1 – 4

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Revelation 13:1

“And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.” (NASB95)

John is not the first prophet to see creatures coming out of the sea. We will see some similarities between this beast and with the dragon, who is Satan, who he just described to us. There are also similarities with something that Daniel saw.

In addition, this description will also have us recall a discussion that God had with Job.

This beast that John sees coming from the sea is a man. “...the Jewish people in Biblical times regarded the sea as a wild, untamed, frightening place. (Guzik 2013, Re 13:1)

For a Jew, the sea was a wild untamed place, and, as we have previously discussed, it was a figure of evil and chaos. Evil and chaos that unsuccessfully resist God throughout the ages.

Isaiah 57:20

“But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud.” (NASB95)

We will be introduced to two beasts in chapter 13, one from the sea and one from the land. This is not a new concept either. God, in His discussion with Job, alludes to both creatures.

The last verse of chapter 12 pictured Satan standing by the sea as if to summon his henchmen from its troubled waters. Unable to reach the woman, he calls upon his wicked cohorts to destroy her offspring. (Mounce 1997, 243)

The depiction of the two beasts in chapter 13 is based in part on Job 40–41, which is the only place in the OT that portrays two satanic beasts that oppose God. The sea monster of the Job passage also has a companion classified as a land “beast” (thērion [40:15–24]). Both beasts are described with demonic

attributes and are said to have been “made to be mocked by the angels” (LXX: 40:19; 41:25 [on the two demonic beings in Job 40, see Day 1985: 62–87]). The two beasts of Job 40–41 (cf. esp. LXX) are echoed throughout Rev. 13: one is called a “dragon” from the sea (40:25); the land beast is to be slain by God with a “sword” (40:19 MT); the sea dragon conducts a “war waged by his mouth” (40:32 LXX), and “burning torches” and “a flame goes out of his mouth” (41:11, 13 LXX); “there is nothing upon the earth like him” (41:25 LXX). (Beale and McDonough 2007, 1127)

Job 41:1–25 (LXX)

“Have you not marveled at the things that are said? Nor feared, because it has been prepared by me? For who is the one who stands against me? Or who shall stand against me and endure, when all that is under the heavens is mine? I shall not keep silent by reason of it, and by a powerful word it will show mercy to one just like it. Who shall uncover the face of its garment, and who possibly can enter into the fold of its breast plate? Who shall open the gates of its face? There is fear in the circle of its teeth. Its insides are a shield of bronze; its bonding is like an emery stone. One is glued to the other, and the wind cannot go through it. It shall be glued on like a man to his brother. They shall be kept together and cannot be separated. **In its sneezing it shines out light, and its eyes are the shape of morning. From its mouth there goes out a burning torch, and there shoots out a hearth of fire. From its nose there goes out smoke, as of an oven burning with a fire of charcoal. Its breath is like burning charcoal, and flame goes out from its mouth. And in its neck power lodges.** Destruction runs before it. And the flesh of its body is glued together. If one pours down upon it, it shall not be shaken. Its heart has been made firm as stone and has been set like an inflexible anvil. And its turning over brings fear to the four-footed beasts leaping around upon the earth. If lances should meet up with it, they produce nothing, neither spear nor breastplates. For indeed it regards iron as straw, and copper as rotten wood. A copper bow does not wound it. Indeed, it regards an engine for throwing stones as grass. A hammer is counted as straw, and it laughs at the rattling of fire-bearers. Its bed is like sharp spits, and all the gold of the sea under it is like limitless clay. It boils up the deep like a cauldron, and it regards the sea as a pot of ointment. And the netherworld of the deep is like a prisoner. He regards the deep as a walk. **There is not anything upon the earth like it, being made to be mocked by my angels. It sees everything that is high, and it itself is king of all that is in the waters.**” (Lexham Press 2020, Job 41:1-25)

Job 40:10–27 (LXX)

“But now behold, indeed, the beasts before you. They eat grass just like oxen. Behold now, its strength is in its loins, and its power is in the middle of its belly. It sets its tail like a cypress, and its sinews have been entwined together. Its ribs are ribs of bronze, and its backbone is cast in iron. **This is the beginning of the creation of the Lord, being made to be mocked by his angels.** But coming upon a flinty mountain, he brought joy to the four-footed creatures in the deep place. Under all kinds of trees it sleeps, by papyrus and reeds and rushes. And great trees overshadow it, with branches and twigs from the field. If a flood should happen, it is not taken notice of. It trusts that the Jordan shall rush up into its mouth. Shall one take it in its eye? Being caught in a snare, shall one pierce its nose? And will you lead the serpent in by a fishhook and put a halter around its nose? Shall you tie a ring in its nose and pierce through its lip with a clasp? And will it speak softly in needy petitions to you? **Will it make a covenant with you, and will you take it to be an eternal slave? And will you play with it like a bird, or will you tie it like a sparrow for a child? And shall nations barter for it, and shall the people of Phoenicia divide it?** And everything that floats, coming together, shall not carry away the hide of its one tail, nor its head in the ships of fishermen. And he will place a hand on it, remembering the battle that existed in its body.” (Lexham Press 2020, Job 40:10-27)

Job 40–41 alludes to a primordial defeat of the dragon by God (see 41:8 MT [so also Midr. Rab. Exod. 15:22]) but also implies a future battle (40:19 MT (“He is the first of the ways of God; Let his maker bring near his sword.” (Job 40:19, NASB95)); 41:9 MT (“Behold, your expectation is false; Will you be laid low even at the sight of him?” (Job 41:9, NASB95)), which is necessitated by the sea beasts’ continued attitude of defiance (e.g., 41:25–26 MT). Although the beast was defeated, he continues to exist in a subdued condition (Job 7:12 MT; Amos 9:3; cf. Apoc. Ab. 10; 21). Jewish tradition held that on the fifth day of creation God created Leviathan to be in the sea and Behemoth to dwell on land (1 En. 60:7–10; 4 Ezra 6:49–52; 2 Bar. 29:4; b. B. Bat. 74b–75a; Pesiq. Rab Kah. Suppl. 2:4). These two beasts were

symbolic of the powers of evil and were to be destroyed at the final judgment (explicitly in 2 Baruch; Midr. Rab. Lev. 13:3; b. B. Bat. 74b, and implicitly in the other three texts above [for further references to the two beasts in later Judaism, see Ginzberg 1967: 5:26–27, 43–46]). (Beale and McDonough 2007, 1127)

So as promised way back in Job, and per Rabbinic tradition, we have these two creatures coming to be, in the last days. The first comes from the sea, out of the chaos of the gentile nations and coming up out of the sea to serve the originator and leader of chaos, the dragon, Satan.

Isaiah 27:1

“In that day the LORD will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea.” (NASB95)

Daniel also saw beasts coming out of the sea.

In Daniel 7, Daniel sees four beasts come from the sea representing four kingdoms. The first was like a lion, had wings of an eagle but then stood like a man, the second was a lopsided carnivorous bear, the third was four headed leopard with wings and the fourth was not named but was different, terrifying, strong with large iron teeth and ten horns. Another horn grew up and took out by the roots three other horns and had eyes and a big mouth.

The sea, chaos, but also a picture of the nations. Recall that the nations were divorced by God in Genesis 11 and referenced again in Deuteronomy 32. Psalm 82 tells us those placed in charge of the nations were aligned with someone other than God. Thus, chaos, or the sea

The beast John sees coming out of the sea, out of chaos and evil, has seven heads, ten horns and on each horn is a crown. On each head, is a blasphemous name. One of the heads has been mutilated with a sword and has the scar marks to go with it.

The word John uses to describe this creature, beast, is the Greek word *θηρίον* (therion). Even though we will learn that John is describing a person, this word is highly descriptive. It means “any living creature, excluding humans, animal, beast, of real animals. Often of wild animals in a controlled setting, namely of fighting with animals in an arena. Of animal-like beings of a transcendent kind Of a monstrous dragon. A wicked person, someone with a ‘bestial’ nature, beast, monster, beasts in human form.” (Arndt, et al. 2000, 455–456)

This idea of the wicked individual being referred to as a beast or a beast in human form is also behind some of the mythology we have today from Greece and Rome. In addition, it is what is behind Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein*, which started as a dream when she was a teenager, as well as the enhancement of stories involving Vlad the Impaler, a real historical figure.

The idea of manlike monsters continued and today they inhabit science fiction. Interesting though that some of the stories are now weaving apocalyptic themes into them which sound a lot like what shows up in scripture. Themes to prepare earth dwellers for the coming take over while at the same time making fun of scriptural truth.

Primarily, the imagery of the seven heads and ten horns parallels the description of the dragon, showing that the beast is united with the dragon and yet has a separate role. This begins another parody or great imitation: While the dragon usurps the role of God, the beast from the sea usurps the role of Christ (with the second beast or “false prophet,” the three become the false trinity in 16:13). That the diadems are on the horns of this beast indicates that while the dragon is the king of the evil empire, the beast is the military arm of the king, a parody of the “seven horns” of the Lamb in 5:6. (Osborne 2002, 490)

As we go into this chapter, and we see the description of the two creatures, we begin to see the dragon fade into the background. “He does his work not openly, but through people. John is talking about a more than human evil, but it is an evil that reveals itself in human deeds.” (Morris 1987, 161)

Satan is introducing us to his trinity. He has usurped the role of God, or so he believes. We are going to see that the beast from the sea will be a parody of Jesus Christ complete with a staged apparent death and apparent resurrection. The beast from the land will be a parody of the Holy Spirit. This makes up what is the true evil empire.

Why will the beast go into the temple and demand to be worshiped, because he is the imitation of Jesus Christ. Satan tempted Jesus to jump off the Temple's high point knowing the result would be worship and a usurpation of God's plan. He wants to be like the most high.

The point of time we are seeing us shortly after the emergence of little horn and the displacing of three horns from Daniel 7.

For centuries, the number one game played by Bible believing Christians has been – Antichrist Antichrist, Who Is the Antichrist?

Names which have forwarded as potential candidates, and yes some predate the prophecy:

- Alexander the Great
- Julius Caesar
- Caligula
- Nero
- Napoleon
- Adolf Hitler

And there are many more names if you bother to look at the literature surrounding Revelation 13.

The attempt to name the beast, or discover who it is, is in relation to 2 Thessalonians 2:3-7 that tells us plainly, we will know who that is, but there are preconditions.

One other interesting tidbit we see in the language of chapter 13 involves the nature of the Greek words used in discussion of the beast. The NASB says "...and on his horns..."

The Greek word used here is αὐτοῦ (autou). αὐτοῦ is a "reference to a definite person or thing, he, him, she, her, it, they, them." (Arndt, et al. 2000, 153)

All of the pronouns referring to this beast (along with the second beast appearing in 13:11) could be translated as "it" because the word for beast (θηρίον, thērion) is neuter gender in Greek and all the pronouns related to it are parsed as neuter in the Gramcord/Accordance database. Nevertheless, most interpreters would agree that the beast ultimately represents a human ruler, so beginning at the end of v. 4 the masculine pronouns ("he," "him," etc.) are used to refer to the first beast as well as the second beast appearing in 13:11. (Biblical Studies Press 2005)

2 Thessalonians 2:3–7

"Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless **the rebellion (apostasy) comes first**, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. For the **mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.**" (ESV)

The Holy Spirit has not been removed, so why play the game?

None of the names I previously listed, or any other name even comes close.

There is a type of the antichrist in the scriptures that is pointed to, in advance, by Daniel. This person Daniel predicted is specifically pointed to, historically, as a type by Jesus Christ. The prophecies

concerning this man are found in Daniel 11. When you combine the prophecy with the history, you realize he is simply a type; a poor imitation of the real thing. But we begin to understand just how vile and violent the antichrist will be. We are introduced, in advance to the type in Daniel 11

Antiochus Epiphanes. We are given significantly more information in Daniel 11 about this man as Jesus himself pointed out that he is a type of the Antichrist as referenced here in Revelation 13.

Important things to remember, significant pointers for us.

He was a Gentile King who arose to power in the Seleucid Empire based in Syria. Remember the location as that too is part of the overall picture since we do see one of the names in the scripture of the antichrist being the Assyrian (Isaiah 10:5,12; Micah 5:5,6).

He gave himself the title Epiphanes, the glorious one or manifest god.

The Jews called him Epimanes, "the Madman."

Daniel 11:22–24

"Armies will be suddenly swept away in defeat before him; both they and a covenant leader will be destroyed. After entering into an alliance with him, he will behave treacherously; he will ascend to power with only a small force. In a time of prosperity for the most productive areas of the province he will come and accomplish what neither his fathers nor their fathers accomplished. He will distribute loot, spoils, and property to his followers, and he will devise plans against fortified cities, but not for long." (NET)

Antiochus IV was successful in battle against Egypt. He had a unique way of fighting.

It was Epiphanes' policy to throw his intended victims off guard by offering them his friendship and alliance. Then he would maneuver for an advantageous position till he could catch them by surprise. (Constable 2003, Da 11:22)

As we saw in the first seal judgement, there is a leader who achieves taking over his enemies with rhetoric and trickery conquering with a bow but no arrows.

Revelation 6:1–2

"Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer." (NASB95)

Antiochus would negotiate one thing and do something else. He practiced perfidy which is a war crime. Again, he was not the rightful heir, but he swept into power with guile and deceit. He came to the throne in 175 BC with promises of peace. He was a deceiver and a flatterer.

One of the things that Antiochus Epiphanes loved to do was to loot the treasuries of the temples, because he considered himself a god. He would then go through the streets, taking the silver and gold and throwing it to his followers. He would laugh as the people threw themselves upon the ground collecting the pieces of gold and silver. His best friends always received the best gifts. Antiochus was a deceitful, incredibly arrogant king. (Storz and Hughes 2004, 204-205)

In 170 BC, during a time of peace, he marched his army all the way into the Nile delta before Egypt realized what was going on.

He took possession of the fertile places in Egypt under the pretense of peace. He took Pelusium and laid siege to the fortified places Naucratis and Alexandria. (Gaebelin 1911, 174)

#### Daniel 11:25–28

“He will rouse his strength and enthusiasm against the king of the south with a large army. The king of the south will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to prevail because of the plans devised against him. Those who share the king’s fine food will attempt to destroy him, and his army will be swept away; many will be killed in battle. These two kings, their minds filled with evil intentions, will trade lies with one another at the same table. But it will not succeed, for there is still an end at the appointed time. Then the king of the north will return to his own land with much property. His mind will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action, and then return to his own land.” (NET)

Ptolemy’s army, those who ate food with him, wound up plotting against Ptolemy. The battle was successful in part because Antiochus was saying he was actually there to help Ptolemy against an internal usurper. When they did sit down for peace, they lied to each other and in the end, Antiochus returned home with much plunder.

His interests then turned to Israel.

A Jew named Jason wanted to be high priest. Knowing Antiochus’ reputation Jason offered the king a bribe to depose the high priest, Onias III. Antiochus cooperated. This state of affairs encouraged another pretender to the high priesthood, Menelaus, to try the same tactic against Jason. Antiochus cooperated again. Onias, whom the Jews respected, objected and lost his life for doing so. Antiochus executed certain individuals for their alleged roles in these maneuverings. However, he did not punish Jason or Menelaus but the people of Jerusalem, again in response to bribes. After Jason attempted a coup de etat thinking that Antiochus was dead, Antiochus entered Jerusalem, slew 80,000 men, and, accompanied by Menelaus, desecrated the temple. This happened in 168 B.C. (Constable 2003, Da 11:28)

#### Daniel 11:29–30

“At an appointed time he will again invade the south, but this latter visit will not turn out the way the former one did. The ships of Kittim will come against him, leaving him disheartened. He will turn back and direct his indignation against the holy covenant. He will return and honor those who forsake the holy covenant.” (NET)

In 168 BC, Antiochus decided to go into Egypt again. This time he is met in Alexandria by Rome. Roman ships sailed from Kittim (Cyprus) as a warning so Antiochus returned home and turned his attention to the Jews.

#### 1 Maccabees 1:20–24

“And Antiochus turned after striking Egypt in the one hundred and forty-third year, and he went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a fierce army. And he entered the sanctuary in arrogance and took the gold altar and the lampstand for the light, and all its accessories, and the table of presentation and the drink offering cups and the bowls and the golden censers and the veil and the crowns and the golden adornment applied to the face of the temple walls, and he peeled it all off. And he took the gold and silver and the valuable accessories. And he took the hidden treasures that he found. And having taken everything, he departed to his land. And he made a massacre and spoke with great arrogance.” (Lexham Press 2020, 1 Macc 1:20-24)

#### Daniel 11:31

“His forces will rise up and profane the fortified sanctuary, stopping the daily sacrifice. In its place they will set up the abomination that causes desolation.” (NET)

On December 16, 168 BC, Antiochus’ general, Apollonius, entered Jerusalem with 22,000 troops, it was a Sabbath. He killed many in the city, took many of the women as slaves as well as children. The goal was to eliminate Judaism and Hellenize the Jews. In the temple, an altar to Zeus was set up and a pig was sacrificed. This act was referred to as “the abomination that caused desolation.”

### 1 Maccabees 1:29–64

“After two years of time, the king sent a chief of tribute collection to the cities of Judah. And he came to Jerusalem with fierce force. And he spoke to them peaceful words with cunning. And they trusted him. But he fell upon the city suddenly and struck them with a great slaughter and destroyed many people from Israel. And he took the spoils of the city and burned it with fire and broke down its buildings and its surrounding wall. And he took captive the women and children and took possession of the livestock. And they built in the city of David a great wall and fortified towers, and it became for them as a fortress. And they established there a sinful people, wicked men, and they became strong in it. And they stored weapons and provisions and, gathering the spoils of Jerusalem, they put it away there. And he became a great threat. And it became as an ambush against the sanctuary and as an evil menace to Israel through all time. And they shed innocent blood all around the sanctuary and defiled the sanctuary. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled because of them, and it became a settlement of foreigners, and it became foreign to the ones born in it, and its children abandoned it. Her sanctuary was stripped bare like the wilderness; her feasts turned to grief, her Sabbaths to insult, her honor to contempt. According to her glory, her dishonor was multiplied, and her majesty turned to grief. And the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be as one people, and each should abandon his customs. And all the peoples complied according to the word of the king. And many from Israel consented to his service, and they sacrificed to idols and defiled the Sabbath. And the king sent documents in the hands of messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, going after the customs of foreigners of the land, and to withhold burnt offerings and sacrifice and drink offering from the sanctuary and to profane Sabbaths and festivals, and to defile the sanctuary and holy things, to build altars and shrines and idols and sacrifice pigs and common animals, and to leave their sons uncircumcised, to make repulsive their souls with all impurity and profanation so as to forget the law and to change all their duties. And whoever should not act according to the word of the king would die. According to all these words, he wrote to his kingdom, and he appointed supervisors over all the people and ordered the cities of Judah to sacrifice according to city and city. And many assembled from the people against them—namely, all who abandoned the law and did evil in the land and put Israel in secret places, and in all kinds of hiding places, for their refuge. And on the fifteenth day of Chislev, on the forty-fifth year, they built an abomination of desolation on the altar, and in the cities around Judah, they built altars. And at the windows of their houses and in the streets, they burned incense. And the documents of the law that they found, they burned with fire, after cutting them up. And where the book of the covenant was found with someone, and if that person should give approval to the law, the decree of the king was, “Execute him.” By their strength they did thus in Israel to the ones who were found during every month and month in the cities. And on the fifth and twentieth of the month, they were sacrificing on the altar that was on the altar for burnt sacrifices. And the women who had circumcised their children, they were executed according to the command. And they hung the infants from their necks and their family, as well as the ones who circumcised them. And many in Israel were in suspense and determined among themselves not to eat what was common. And they chose to die so that they might not be defiled by the food and not profane the holy covenant, and they died. And there came a very great wrath upon Israel.” (Lexham Press 2020, 1 Macc 1:29-64)

At the time of Jesus, these events were still very fresh in the historical memory of the Jews living in and around Jerusalem. In fact, a Jewish festival had been established to memorialize the reestablishment of Temple worship, the festival is known as Hanukkah which Jesus also participated in (John 10:22 -23). Jesus uses these events as a type of what to expect in the future with the antichrist.

### Matthew 24:15–18

“Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. “Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. “Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.” (NASB95)

Again, Daniel tells us some about this individual, Antiochus Epiphanes

### Daniel 11:32–35

“Then with smooth words he will defile those who have rejected the covenant. But the people who are loyal to their God will act valiantly. These who are wise among the people will teach the masses. However, they will fall by the sword and by the flame, and they will be imprisoned and plundered for some time. When they stumble, they will be granted some help. But many will unite with them deceitfully. Even some of the wise will stumble, resulting in their refinement, purification, and cleansing until the time of the end, for it is still for the appointed time.” (NET)

Many of the Jews were deceived and participated in the worship of Zeus. Apostasy was a big problem in Jerusalem.

### 1 Maccabees 1:11

“In those days, the lawless son went out of Israel, and they persuaded many, saying, “We should go and make a treaty with the nations around us, because from that time we separated from them, much evil has found us.”” (Lexham Press 2020, 1 Macc 1:11)

According to verses 33–35, there was a small group of faithful Jews who opposed the godlessness of Antiochus and trusted God to enable them to fight back. A Jewish priest named Mattathias, with his five sons, gathered an army and were able to fight back. His son Judas, nicknamed Maccabeus (“the hammerer”), was one of the heroes of this revolt. Many Jews laid down their lives for their city, their temple, and their faith, and finally they won. On December 14, 165, the temple was purified and the altar dedicated. (Wiersbe 2000, 137)

The prophecy given to Daniel about Antiochus Epiphanes had literal fulfillment.

The example of the beast that we see in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes was picked up by Jesus as well as by John. As a result, we learn what this prophecy also points to

Desecration of the Jewish religion reached its climax on 15 Chislev (December) 167 B.C. (1 Macc 1:54) when an altar or idol-statue devoted to Olympian Zeus (Jupiter) was erected in the temple (“the abomination that causes desolation”), and on 25 Chislev sacrifices, probably including swine (cf. 1 Macc 1:47; 2 Macc 6:4–5), were offered on the altar (cf. 1 Macc 1:54, 59). In this manner the temple was desecrated and rendered empty of Yahweh worshippers. (Miller 1994, 301-302)

In December of 167 BC, worship ended in the Temple due to the abomination that made desolate. The Temple remained in that condition until it was cleansed and rededicated on December 14, 164 BC. I find it interesting that the total period that the Temple was desolate was three years.

Antiochus Epiphanes is the example of the coming world leader per Jesus. He was a ruler from Syria, an area that today is Islamic.

In every age Satan must have a man ready to take on the role of the Antichrist. Because Satan is not omniscient, he cannot know when the Rapture is going to happen. It is a total mystery to him because he is not privy to the plan of God, as it relates to the timing of the Rapture. So he must always have somebody ready in every generation to seize the moment after the Rapture of the Church. Therefore, throughout history, many of these men have been alive and present on the stage of world events. If the Rapture would have occurred, it could have been Hitler, Mussolini, or any number of world leaders throughout the last 2,000 years. We cannot say with certainty that the Antichrist, who will fulfill the prophecies of Scripture, is alive today. However, it seems reasonable to assume that one whom Satan would select to empower to be the Antichrist is alive today. (Hixson and Fontecchio 2013, 230-231)

### Daniel 9:27

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate,



even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” (NASB95)

By the time we arrive at Revelation 12 & 13, we are in the middle of the week that Daniel prophesied about.

In order to determine the nationality of the Antichrist, the first step is to identify the pronoun he in verse 27, the one who makes the Seven Year Covenant with Israel. By the rules of Hebrew grammar, a pronoun must go back to its nearest antecedent. The nearest antecedent to the pronoun he in verse 27 is the prince that shall come in verse 26, a reference to the Antichrist. So the prince that shall come is the same as the he who makes the covenant and both refer to the Antichrist. Verse 26 states that the prince that shall come will be of the very same nationality as the people who will destroy the city and the sanctuary. (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 5)

Who destroyed the city and the sanctuary? The Roman Empire did in 70 AD with the 5th, 10th, 15th and 12th legions as well as some assistance from the 22nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> legions.

They were assisted by significant forces from Arab countries that were part of the empire. Does that mean that the Beast, the coming willful king, the antichrist, will come from Rome? Probably, but what was the Roman Empire, included some but not all the Seleucid Empire and much of the western portion of the Roman Empire is becoming Islamic. The history per Tacitus.

Legions would routinely at this time in history recruit from the areas they were stationed in

5th Legion – Judea

10th Legion – Syria

15th Legion – Syria

12th Legion – Turkey and Syria

3rd Legion – Syria

22nd Legion - Egypt

At the beginning of this same year Titus Caesar, who had been selected by his father to complete the subjugation of Judea, and who had already won distinction as a soldier while both were still private citizens, began to enjoy greater power and reputation, for provinces and armies now vied with one another in enthusiasm for him. Moreover, in his own conduct, wishing to be thought greater than his fortune, he always showed himself dignified and energetic in the field; by his affable address he called forth devotion, and he often mingled with the common soldiers both at work or on the march without impairing his position as general. He found awaiting him in Judea three legions, Vespasian's old troops, the Fifth, the Tenth, and the Fifteenth. He reinforced these with the Twelfth from Syria and with some soldiers from the Twenty-second and the Third which he brought from Alexandria; these troops were accompanied by twenty cohorts of allied infantry, eight squadrons of cavalry, as well as by the princes Agrippa and Sohaemus, the auxiliaries sent by King Antiochus, **and by a strong contingent of Arabs, who hated the Jews with all that hatred that is common among neighbours**; there were besides many Romans who had been prompted to leave the capital and Italy by the hope that each entertained of securing the prince's favour while he was yet free from engagements. With these forces Titus entered the enemy's land: his troops advanced in strict order, he reconnoitred at every step and was always ready for battle; not far from Jerusalem he pitched camp. (Tacitus 1925 - 1937, 175-177)

It was not all Italian only, manned Roman legions. Legions would have been recruited from the population base wherever they were located but the destruction of Jerusalem also included a significant number of Arab troops. Yes, it was Rome that destroyed the city and the Temple, but many of the soldiers were from the old Seleucid and Ptolemaic Empires.

And now, since Caesar was no way able to restrain the enthusiastic fury of the soldiers, and the fire proceeded on more and more, he went into the holy place of the temple; with his commanders, and saw it, with what was in it, which he found to be far superior to what the relations of foreigners contained, and

not inferior to what we ourselves boasted of and believed about it; but as the flame had not as yet reached to its inward parts, but was still consuming the rooms that were about the holy house, and Titus supposing what the fact was, that the house itself might yet be saved, he came in haste and endeavored to persuade the soldiers to quench the fire, and gave order to Liberalius the centurion, and one of those spearmen that were about him, to beat the soldiers that were refractory with their staves, and to restrain them, yet were their passions too hard for the regards they had for Caesar, and the dread they had of him who forbade them, as was their hatred of the Jews, and a certain vehement inclination to fight them, too hard for them also. Moreover, the hope of plunder induced many to go on, as having this opinion, that all the places within were full of money, and as seeing that all round about it was made of gold; and besides, one of those that went into the place prevented Caesar, when he ran so hastily out to restrain the soldiers, and threw the fire upon the hinges of the gate, in the dark; whereby the flame burst out from within the holy house itself immediately, when the commanders retired, and Caesar with them, and when nobody any longer forbade those that were without to set fire to it; and thus **the holy house burnt down, without Caesar's approbation.** (Josephus 1987, 260-266 (p 740))

Yes, those who destroyed the Temple were of Rome, but many if not a majority were from Arab nations.

Revelation 13:1–8

“And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?” There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.” (NASB95)

Is the beast a person or an empire? Yes.

We begin chapter 13 almost like a modern-day science fiction motion picture. Cue the orchestra to play Richard Strauss, Also sprach Zarathustra, fanfare, and we have the setting; one which is ominous as the dragon, filled with vengeance to destroy all that God has created, watches a terrifying beast rise from the waters of the sea. A beast, one who will do the bidding of the dragon. One who will impersonate the living Lord, Jesus Christ, and lead astray as many as the dragon can convince through him and another person, we will meet a little later in the chapter.

To make the impersonation accurate, as Jesus reflects God, the beast will need to reflect the dragon.

### **Let's compare: The Dragon And His Impersonator (Beast)**

“Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.” (Revelation 12:3, NASB95)

“And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.” (Revelation 13:1, NASB95)

Daniel 7:7–8

“After these things, as I was watching in the night visions a fourth beast appeared—one dreadful, terrible, and very strong. It had two large rows of iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and anything that was left it

trampled with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that came before it, and it had ten horns. As I was contemplating the horns, another horn—a small one—came up between them, and three of the former horns were torn out by the roots to make room for it. This horn had eyes resembling human eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things.” (NET)

John provides some commentary for us from one of the seven bowl judgement angels in chapter 17 about the beast in connection with the woman that rides the beast.

Revelation 17:8–13

“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast.” (NASB95)

The beast will be from the Gentile nations, he will be the leader of a coalition of nations that have given over their authority to the Beast. Three nations had their rulers replaced by the Beast himself. Thus, seven rulers and he makes the 8th having 3 nations that he personally rules. As we saw with the first seal, he was the one astride the white horse and conquered initially with imaginative peace plans but eventually turns to war. Daniel also talked of his rise to power.

Daniel 8:23–25

“Toward the end of their rule, when rebellious acts are complete, a rash and deceitful king will arise. His power will be great, but it will not be by his strength alone. He will cause terrible destruction. He will be successful in what he undertakes. He will destroy powerful people and the people of the holy ones. By his treachery he will succeed through deceit. He will have an arrogant attitude, and he will destroy many who are unaware of his schemes. He will rise up against the Prince of princes, yet he will be broken apart— but not by human agency.” (NET)

There is a very real possibility that this person will be from the area that included Rome as well as the Seleucid Empire. Looking at those nations that fall into that area, we are talking about nations that are predominantly Islamic. That makes sense based on what we learned the cause of death for those who were post rapture believers.

Revelation 20:4

“Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.” (NASB95)

Revelation 13:2

“And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.” (NASB95)

The beast will also have all the characteristics of previous empires. Speed, huge claws and ferocity. In other words, a highly mobile, overwhelmingly large military force which operates with high, merciless killing efficiency with a religious based bent. The leader, the Beast, his power is straight from the Dragon, Satan.

Basically, the deal Jesus said no to back in Matthew 4, the Beast says yes to.

#### Matthew 4:8–10

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’” (NASB95)

The Beast, most likely, is a person from the same geographic area as Antiochus Epiphanes. He will be the ruler of a coalition of nations who had signed a 7-year deal with Israel. He had been active in protecting Israel up to the mid-point of the tribulation. It is very possible that the nations falling in line with the coalition include members of the old Roman Empire as well as some aspects of the Seleucid Empire, the Rashidun Caliphate, the Umayyad Caliphate, the Abbasid Caliphate and the Ottoman Empire.

Common amongst them all is Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Saudi, Libya, South Russia. All of the nations and locations listed and involved in the Gog Magog War of Ezekiel 38.

#### Revelation 13:3–4

“I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?”” (NASB95)

To further the look and feel of the impersonation, the Beast needs to take on characteristics like those of the true Messiah, Jesus Christ. To seal the deal, he will not only appear to have risen from the dead, but he will then enter the Temple and demand to be worshiped as God. This may prove to be upsetting to some of his followers of Islamic persuasion, but at the time this takes place, the world is a very different place from today.

Again, the idea is counterfeit, not the real. This is not a true resurrection but has the look and feel of one. We may be talking about genetic manipulation involved meaning that post injury, the Beast is no longer quite human. There is an attempted assassination of the Beast by someone using a small handheld weapon. The word in the Greek is sword or machaira sword which is similar to the sword used in hand to hand with the Roman army. The Beast receives a blow to the head by a sword (Revelation 13:14) and it appears to be a death blow. It affects his appearance.

#### Zechariah 11:17

“Woe to my worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! Let his arm be wholly withered, his right eye utterly blinded!” (ESV)

The Greek word used and translated slain is the same word used of the Lamb and used of the believers under the altar.

The root word used in all three places is the Greek word σφάζω (sfazo) - slaughter, the killing of a person by violence, butcher or murder someone. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 979)

We have examined this word once before. Yes, it is a word used for murder, but it is used for other purposes as well. Throughout the Septuagint, it shows up as the word used when discussing the various ritual sacrifices made.

#### Leviticus 4:15

“And the elders of the congregation will place their hands on the head of the young bull before the Lord, and they shall slaughter the young bull in the presence of the Lord.” (Lexham Press 2020, Lev 4:15)

It carries the sense of murder, absolutely, but it is heavily used in discussion of the ritualized slaughter of animals for sacrifice in the Temple.

As we discussed previously with the 5th seal judgement, where we learn about the disposition of those who become believers after the rapture but shortly before the beginning of the tribulation that they have been slaughtered, ritually killed for their faith. We further find in Revelation 20:4, that the death is due to beheading. What religion today has, and has had for centuries, ritualized beheading as part of their methodology of dealing with nonbelievers?

Jesus was sacrificed as the perfect Passover lamb for all of us and this was done on the cross. Post rapture / Pre-tribulation believers were to be ritually slaughtered for their faith.

Could it be that the assassination attempt is by the same group?

Could this be the reason for a break with that group and the development of dragon worship and beast worship via the False Prophet?

We see that those who follow the beast turn to dragon worship. Recall what Paul said about those who worship false gods.

1 Corinthians 10:20–21

“No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.” (NASB95)

They even go as far as attributing god like power to the beast with their statement of “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?”

This statement is a continuation of the counterfeit.

### **Who Is Like the Beast?**

Exodus 15:11

“Who is like you among the gods, LORD? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, and working wonders?” (ISV)

Micah 7:18

“Is there any God like you, forgiving iniquity, passing over transgressions by the survivors who are your heritage? He is not angry forever, because he delights in gracious love.” (ISV)

### **Who Is Able to Wage War With Him?**

Really?

Revelation 12:9

“And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.” (NASB95)

Revelation 12:10–11

“Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.” (NASB95)

Romans 8:37–39

“But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (NASB95)

John 12:31

“Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.” (NASB95)

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