

Tuesday

June 11

Lesson 11

Identifying the Beast: Part 1

Revelation 13:1, 2. Where does this beast rise from, and who gives it authority?

The book of Revelation identifies the dragon primarily as Satan. Revelation 12:3-5 says the dragon attempted to destroy, "as soon as it was born," the "male Child," who was later "caught up to God and His throne" (NKJV). It was the devil, working through pagan Rome, who tried to destroy Christ (see Matt. 2:16-18).

"THEN HEROD, WHEN HE SAW THAT HE WAS MOCKED OF THE WISE MEN, WAS EXCEEDING WROTH, AND SENT FORTH, AND SLEW ALL THE CHILDREN THAT WERE IN BETHLEHEM, AND IN ALL THE COASTS THEREOF, FROM TWO YEARS OLD AND UNDER, ACCORDING TO THE TIME WHICH HE HAD DILIGENTLY ENQUIRED OF THE WISE MEN." MATTHEW 2:16 KJV
HEROD WAS A VASSEL OF PAGAN ROME.

The archenemy of God and man works through political and religious institutions to accomplish His purposes.

About this beast power we're told, "The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority" (Rev. 13:2, NKJV). This prophecy was precisely fulfilled hundreds of years later, when the Roman Emperor Constantine moved his capital from Rome to what came to be called Constantinople, in modern day Turkey. This left a power vacuum at the former throne or seat of the Caesars, the imperial city of Rome. Thus, pagan Rome gave the beast [THIS NEXT EARTHLY POWER] its seat, or capital city.

Isaac Backus stated, "By removing the seat of the empire to Constantinople, . . . Constantine made way for the bishop of Rome to exalt himself above all men upon earth, and above the God of Heaven."—*The Infinite Importance of the Obedience of Faith, and of Separation from the World*, p. 16 (quoted in Le Roy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 213). According to Thomas Hobbes, "the Papacy, is no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof."—*Leviathan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 386. A careful analysis reveals that the sea beast of Revelation 13 is an apostate religious power that rises out of Rome and becomes a worldwide system of worship (Rev. 13:3, 4). This beast is not a person; it is a religious organization that has substituted the truth of God's Word for human decrees.

Read Revelation 13:1, 6. What key word is used to identify the beast power?

The Bible defines *blasphemy* in John 10:33 and Luke 5:21 with two examples: (1) a man pretending to be or claiming to be God, and (2) a man claiming the power to forgive sins. These accusations [WERE BROUGHT AGAINST JESUS BUT THEY] were unjust because Jesus is truly God and, therefore, has the right to forgive sins. The Roman papacy has two distinctive doctrines that the Bible calls blasphemy: its claims that its priests have the power to forgive sins and that the pope has the prerogatives of God on earth.

PARALLEL TO DANIEL 7

- 1) Geographical Location—"among" the ten horns-Dan 7:8- among seas-Rev. 13:1, 2; Rev. 17:15
- 2) Time of ascendancy—arise "after them" -Dan 7:24. Rev. 13:2 dragon gave seat and power.
- 3) A different kind of power—Dan 7:24. Rev. 13:4 -who can make war with him?
- 4) Uproots three of the ten horns as it rises to power-Dan 7:8, 24— Not mentioned in Rev. 13
- 5) A mouth speaking great things against God-Dan 7:8, 25. Rev. 13:6- mouth speaking blasphemy.
- 6) A persecuting power-Dan 7:21, 25. Rev. 13:7- war with saints.
- 7) **Attempt to change God's law-Dan 7:25. Rev. 13:8-all worship him.**
- 8) A human authority to Dictate its belief system-Dan 7:8. Rev. 13:18- mans number at its head.
- 9) To reign for a period of 1260 years-Dan 7:25. Rev. 13:5- reign 42 months.
- 10) **Continue to persecute God's people until Jesus returns-Dan 7:22. Rev. 13:3-deadly wound healed. Leads world into final mark of beast crisis.**