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By Dan Maines

Revelation 13

Revelation 13:1-2

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 crowns, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast that 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.

† The beast rising from the sea recalls Daniel 7, where four beasts symbolized empires. Here, the sea beast combines all those traits, showing the culmination of Gentile imperial power in Rome.

† Proof, Rome drew power from satanic influence. The seven heads match the seven Caesars from Julius to Galba, and the ten horns point to the fullness of Rome's authority. Tacitus (Histories 1.2) and Suetonius describe how emperors openly embraced divine titles, fulfilling the blasphemous names.

Revelation 13:3-4

I saw one of his heads as if it had been fatally wounded, 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?"

† The head wounded to death but healed refers to Nero. His death in AD 68 brought chaos, yet Rome revived under Vespasian, leading to the myth of Nero redivivus. Many in the empire believed Nero would return from the east.

† Proof, Suetonius (Nero 57) and Sibylline Oracles record the widespread belief of Nero's return. The recovery of Rome's stability after civil war caused nations to marvel.

Revelation 13:5-7

A mouth was given to him 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 was given to him over every tribe, people, language, and nation.

† Nero reigned with blasphemy, demanding worship as a god. His persecution of Christians in Rome lasted three and a half

years, from AD 64 to 68, exactly forty-two months.

† Proof, Tacitus (Annals 15.44) describes Nero's persecution, where Christians were torn apart and burned alive, fulfilling the prophecy of war against the saints.

Revelation 13:8

All who live on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written since the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slaughtered.

† Worshiping the beast is allegiance to Rome and its cult. Only those written in the Lamb's book resist.

† Proof, the imperial cult was enforced throughout Asia Minor. Temples to Caesar were everywhere, compelling worship under threat.

Revelation 13:9-10

If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

† This is a call to endure persecution without resorting to violence. The saints conquer by patient faith, not by the sword.

† Proof, early Christian testimony consistently emphasized martyrdom as victory, not armed resistance.

Revelation 13:11-12

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke like a dragon. He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who live on it worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

† The second beast is the land beast, representing the local authorities and priesthood in Judea who enforced emperor worship. The lamb-like appearance shows religious pretense,

but his speech betrays satanic influence.

† Proof, the high priest and leaders of Jerusalem declared, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). Their betrayal of God's kingdom for Rome's power shows their partnership with the beast.

Revelation 13:13-14

He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of the sky to the earth in the presence of people. And he deceives those who live on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who live on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

† Signs here refer to deceptive wonders and political manipulations used to enforce Caesar worship.

† Proof, Josephus (Wars 6.5.3) records portents and signs exploited by false prophets in Jerusalem, deceiving many into false hopes while Rome prepared destruction.

Revelation 13:15-17

And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause all who do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And he decrees that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.

† The mark is not literal but symbolic of allegiance. Those who worshiped Caesar bore his name in coins and commerce. Without acknowledging Caesar's divinity, one could be excluded from trade.

† Proof, coins bore the image and titles of the emperor, declaring him "divine." Refusal to use or honor them was seen as treason.

Revelation 13:18

Here is wisdom. Let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man, and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

† The number 666 corresponds to Nero Caesar when written in Hebrew letters (נרונ קסר). Gematria confirms this identification.

† Proof, Irenaeus (Against Heresies 5.30.3) acknowledged that many early Christians identified 666 with Nero. The textual evidence and historical context confirm Nero as the beast.

How it applies to us today

† The beasts reveal that political and religious systems opposed to Christ are empowered by Satan.

† The saints' endurance under Rome proves that God's kingdom is not advanced by violence, but by faithfulness even unto death.

† The mark of the beast reminds us that compromise with worldly power for survival is spiritual treason.

† The Lamb's book of life assures us that God preserves His own, even in persecution.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Daniel 7 – beast imagery

† Psalm 2:9 – ruling with a rod of iron

† John 19:15 – "We have no king but Caesar"

† Matthew 24 – persecution within that generation

† Tacitus, Histories 1.2 – emperors and divine claims

† Tacitus, Annals 15.44 – Nero's persecution of Christians

† Suetonius, Nero 57 – Nero redivivus myth

† Sibylline Oracles, Book 5 – Nero's expected return

† Josephus, Wars 6.5.3 – portents and false prophets

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.30.3 – number of the beast and

Nero

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