

(13) THE NEW WORLD ORDER: Today, Tomorrow & You

In Revelation 13, two beasts arise out of the sea to join the dragon, Satan, and form a deadly coalition that leads the entire world to give their allegiance to Satan. Who do these two other beasts represent?

THE SEA BEAST - The first beast is "The Beast" from the sea, a 10-horned composite beast made from parts of a lion, a leopard and a bear, thus drawing our attention to the 7th chapter of Daniel, which we examined in a previous program. The fourth beast of Daniel 7, which followed the lion, bear, and leopard had a little horn among its 10 horns which attacked God's people; uprooted 3 of the ten horns as it came to power; and thought to change the times and laws of God. This little horn, as we will see, is the same power as the Beast of Revelation 13 and represents the Medieval Christian church as it departed from the teachings of the Bible. A number of characteristics help to identify the beast as the Medieval Church:

1. It came up out of the sea, which represents large numbers of people (Revelation 13:1; 17:15). Thus it arises in a populated part of the world. The Medieval Church of Rome rose to power in Europe, a populated area of the world.

2. The dragon or Satan gave the beast its power (Revelation 13:2; 12:9). In other words it arose to power through an entity led by Satan. It was "Christianized" pagan Rome which gave the church its political power in 538 AD when it put down the Heruli, Vandals and Ostrogoths, leaving the Bishop of Rome to fill the vacuum in the city of Rome.

3. It exercised its power for 42 months (Revelation 13:5). A Biblical month had 30 days and thus $30 \times 42 = 1260$ days or 1260 years. The Church exercised supreme power in Europe for 1260 years, from 538 AD to 1798.

4. The beast made war against the saints or God's people (Revelation 13:7). The Church of Rome acknowledges that it persecuted many Christians during the dark ages.

5. It received a deadly wound, which was healed, and the entire world was astonished and followed the beast (Revelation 13:3). The deadly wound occurred in 1798 when Napoleon's General Berthier took Pope Pius VI prisoner. People thought the end of the Medieval Church, or Papacy had come, but the Bible said it would revive. In 1929 the Italian dictator Mussolini returned to the Vatican its temporal power. It was now a country or political entity in its own right. Since then nations have increasingly recognized the power of Rome, until today some 100 nations have Vatican diplomats. The Papacy wields tremendous political power today. Foreign Policy, a journal published for the diplomatic corps, in an article

entitled, "Papal Foreign Policy," written by J. Bryan Hehir, Professor of Ethics and International Politics at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, and a counselor for social policy for the United States Catholic Conference, said, *"Not since the Middle Ages can a comparably broad conception of papal activity be found."* Hehir further observes: *"The Vatican acts like a state but not simply a state."* But it is *"its capacity to act like a church and a state"* that creates a *"paradox in this papacy. For the pope has established himself as a major figure in world affairs. But he consistently denies any political interest."* Such denial notwithstanding, Hehir notes that *"John Paul II's role, especially but not only in Eastern Europe, has been a political event of vast proportions."* Catholic scholar and author of *"Keys of This Blood,"* Malachi Martin, a former Jesuit, and still-loyal advocate of the papacy, said, *"In secular eyes, the Roman Church stands alone in every practical sense as the first, fully realized, fully practicing and totally independent geo-political force in the current world arena. And the Pope is by definition the world's first fully fledged geo-political leader."* But it is not just in the political sphere that the Papacy is having an enormous global impact. Former leader of the 70 million Anglicans in the world, Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, stepping out from his audience with John Paul II, addressed the congregation in the Church of St. Gregory, saying – *"For the universal church, I renew the plea. Could not all Christians come to reconsider the kind of primacy the bishop of Rome exercised within the early church, a 'presiding of love' for the sake of the unity of the churches in the diversity of their mission?"* Even the Lutheran church, which split from the Papacy nearly 500 years ago is drawing ever closer to the Church of Rome. In his address, Sweden's Lutheran Bishop, Bertil Werkstrom, stressed that the Protestant reformation was, *"meant as a movement for reform within the one, holy apostolic church. . . . The moment has come when we must say that the denunciations at the time of the reformation are no longer valid"* (quoted in the Catholic Herald). Surely Luther would turn over in his grave, for modern Protestantism, not the Church of Rome, has changed. Rome still does not acknowledge that the Bible is above church traditions and dogmas, or that Salvation is found in Jesus alone.

All of which brings us to the question, Why does the Apocalypse discuss the Anti-Christ? Because it is against Christ. Anything that is Anti-Christ is going to lead men and women away from Jesus. John saw that the beast blasphemed God's temple (Revelation 13:6). God's sanctuary revealed His way of saving people (Psalms 77:13). The

sacrificial lambs pointed to the once for all sufficient sacrifice of Jesus to take away the sins of the world (Hebrews 9:28). But the church through the Mass, in reality, says Christ's sacrifice is not sufficient, but must be repeated by the priest. Minds are drawn from the all sufficiency of Jesus alone. In the temple the priests represented Christ, who is now our Great High Priest in the heavenly temple (Hebrews 9:11,12). As such, the Bible teaches that all are able to be saved to the uttermost who come to God through Jesus - the ONLY mediator between God and humans (Hebrews 7:24,25; 1 Timothy 2:5). Sadly the church has pushed Jesus to the side, as the Saints and especially Mary have become intercessors between God and humanity. The confessional has also pushed Christ aside as humans confess through a human mediator. When Jesus claimed to have power to forgive sin He was accused of blasphemy because only God can forgive sin (Matthew 9:1-3). The Church of Rome also claims that humans are justified by faith and works. This undermines the whole plan of salvation as portrayed in the temple, where forgiveness and justification are free, through faith alone in the Lamb of God (Romans 3:24). Finally, John saw the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the Ten Commandments, in God's heavenly temple (Revelation 11:19). Sadly the church has blasphemed the temple of God in attempting to change God's commandments, by removing from their catechism the second commandment, concerning the use of images and statues in worship, and by changing the fourth commandment, concerning the Sabbath, from Saturday to Sunday. The Medieval Church of Rome is singled out by God because it turns people aside from His gracious plan of salvation and the Ten Commandments, which protect our relationships with God and fellow human beings.

THE LAND BEAST - Next John saw a beast arise out of the earth – the Land Beast or False Prophet (Rev. 13:11-15). Who is this land beast power? Several features help us to identify it:

1. Arises In a Sparsely Populated Region - "Then I saw another beast, coming up out of the earth" (Rev 13:11). The Greek verb translated as "coming up out of" that John chose here is *anabaino*, which means to grow or to spring up like a new plant. John is describing a power that springs up, or grows like a weed into its global role. The first beast came from the sea, which we saw is symbolic of great masses of people (Rev 17:15). But this second power springs up rapidly not from the waters representing masses of people, but in direct contrast - from the earth - away from the water, meaning away from the masses and multitudes of history's great nations and peoples. This second beast power springs to life in a relatively unpopulated region of the world, far away from history's peopled thoroughfares.

2. Arises Around 1798 - Verse 11 begins with the word, - "**then.**" John is drawing attention to an important sequence taking place here. We saw the first beast received a fatal wound after enjoying over a thousand years of global control during the history

of the Christian church. – "the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived" (Rev 13:3,14). This refers to the wounding of the Papacy when Pope Pius VI was taken captive in 1798. The first beast was taken captive in verse 10 – "He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword" (Rev 13:10). The very next word is "THEN." In other words around 1798 the land beast springs up.

3. Is a Global Superpower – The land beast has the ability to "make THE EARTH and ITS INHABITANTS worship the first beast ... He was given power to ... cause ALL who refused to WORSHIP ... to be KILLED" (Rev 13:12,15). It clearly has global superpower status to be able to impact all people on the planet. Given the historical background as well as the time frame for its emergence, only one international power fits the prophetic description here: late 1700s; away from Europe and the masses; growing rapidly into eventual global dominance. That power is the United States of America. But is the Bible really pointing us to the USA as this beast from the land? What evidence do we have?

In order to see that the Bible is pointing to the USA as the beast from the earth, we need to look briefly at the origins of the United States. Small groups of people, such as the Pilgrim Fathers, fled Europe because of religious persecution and traveled to North America in the early 1600s. At this time North America was indeed a sparsely populated region compared to Europe, thus fitting the prophetic specifications (symbolized by springing up from the earth in contrast to the sea). In the 1600s there were only about 1 million Indians. Even in 1776, when the United States declared its independence from Great Britain, there were still only about 3 million inhabitants. The constitution of the United States of America was formulated in 1787. The timing was perfect. As the beast from the sea (the Church of Rome) was receiving a deadly wound in 1798, the United States of America was emerging in fulfillment of Prophecy!

But there's another vital reason the Bible is correct in pointing us to the USA as the beast from the land. The Bible says this beast would become a global super power. Who would have expected that from such humble origins the USA would rise to the position of global influence and superpower status that the United States enjoys today? Notice how the United States of America is viewed today: Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, said, the United States) "*is the greatest power in the world today.*" Time Magazine said, "*But if the 20th century was the American century, the 1990's – bracketed by demonstrations of overwhelming American power in Kuwait and Kosovo – were the supreme American decade. How supreme? No other nation has exercised such military, economic, diplomatic and cultural reach since Rome. And Rome's world was little more than the Mediterranean. ... As everyone now recognizes, the world at the turn of the 21st century is not multipolar but unipolar. America bestrides the world like a*

colossus" (*Time*, December 27, 1999, p100). Bible prophecy has been fulfilled exactly. But what is the purpose of the land beast, and what will happen next?

Revelation 13 describes the terrible consequences of a composite beast power that abandons its liberties and resorts to destructive coercion in order to achieve its moral, spiritual agenda (Rev 13:11-17)! The whole planet will be set up for the eventual global enforcement of worship through the alliance of the two final superpowers: One a religious superpower, which turns to politics to achieve its ends – the revived Medieval Church of Rome; and the other a political superpower, which turns to religion to achieve its ends – Protestant USA. Prophecy reveals Jesus is coming soon.

We must have our names in the Lamb's book of life, by accepting Jesus into our lives (Revelation 13:8; 1 John 5:11,12). Furthermore, our names must remain in the Book of Life by keeping God's word or commandments, just as Christ did (Revelation 22:19; John 15:9,10). God loves you infinitely. Why not receive Christ into your life right now? Why not determine right now to remain in Christ and His book of life, by keeping all of His commandments?

Acknowledgments - This resume has drawn heavily on Dwight Nelson's, "*Beauty and the Beast*," sermon 17, and "*When the Clock Runs Out on America and the New World Order*," sermon 18, of "The Next Millennium Seminar", 1998.