



The Beast of Revelation

The book of Revelation speaks about a mysterious beast with seven heads and 10 horns that will be worshipped by “all who dwell on the earth” and will have authority over “every people, tongue, and nation”. For almost 2000 years the exact identity of this beast has fascinated mankind. This fascination has been the inspiration for numerous books, articles, and sermons and even a few Hollywood movies. To understand the true identity of this mysterious beast, we need to closely examine what is revealed about this beast in Revelation 13 and Revelation 17 and let the Bible interpret itself.

The Two Beasts of Revelation 13

Revelation 13 describes two separate beasts that work in conjunction with one another to dominate and deceive mankind. The first half of the chapter addresses a beast described as having seven heads and ten horns. It then goes on to add that this beast also possesses qualities similar to a leopard, a bear, and a lion.

Rev 13:1-10

¹ Then I stood on the sand of the sea. **And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.** ² **Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.**

³ And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. ⁴ So they worshiped **the dragon who gave authority to the beast**; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

⁵ And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. ⁶ Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰ He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

If we compare this description to the description of Daniel's dream recorded in Daniel 7, we see that the beast described in Revelation 13 obviously includes a compilation of all four of the beasts included in Daniel's dream. Daniel was told that the four beasts he saw represented four world dominating kingdoms that would dominate the world at various times throughout human history (Dan 7:17). This tells us that the beast described in Revelation 13 is also speaking about a series of world ruling kingdoms. This series of world ruling kingdoms get their power and authority from "the dragon" (Rev 13:1-4) which is a reference to Satan. In addition, the description of this beast as having seven heads and ten horns is identical to the way Satan is described in Revelation 12.

Rev 12:3-9

³ And another sign appeared in heaven: **behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.**

⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. ⁵ She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. ⁷ And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. ⁹ **So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world;** he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The second half of Revelation 13 describes "another beast". This beast is described as working in conjunction with the first beast and as having "two horns like a lamb" but speaking "like a dragon".

Rev 13:11-18

¹¹ **Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.** ¹² **And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.**

¹³ He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven

on the earth in the sight of men. ¹⁴ And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. ¹⁵ He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶ He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

We have already seen that the Bible symbolically refers to Satan as a “dragon” (Rev 13:3-17; 20:1-3). The Bible also symbolically refers to Jesus Christ as “the Lamb of God” (John 1:29-36; Rev 7:14-17; 12:11; 13:8). So, Revelation 13:11 is telling us that this second beast has the appearance of Jesus Christ but speaks like Satan. This second beast symbolically represents a false religious system that works in conjunction with the world dominating kingdoms described in the first half of the chapter to deceive “those who dwell on the earth” and it is this religious system that causes people to take on the mark of the beast. (For more information on the mark of the beast, please see the paper entitled “The Mark of The Beast”.)

The Parallel Account in Revelation 17

Revelation 17 presents a very similar picture to Revelation 13. Revelation 17 also describes a beast with seven heads and ten horns, but in this account the beast with seven heads and ten horns is pictured with a great harlot sitting on top of it.

Rev 17:1-18

¹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, **“Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, ² with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”** ³ So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on **a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.** ⁴ The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. ⁵ And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. ⁶ I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the

blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. ⁷ But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. ⁸ The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. ⁹ **"Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. ¹⁰ There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.** ¹¹ The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. ¹² "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. ¹³ These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful." ¹⁵ Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. ¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. ¹⁸ And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth."

The Bible repeatedly uses the analogy of harlotry to describe idolatrous false religion (Ex 34:12-16; Lev 17:1-7; Deu 31:16-18; Judges 8:25-27, 33-35; 1 Chr 5:25-26; 2 Chr 21:12-15; Ps 106:34-46). Using this Biblical pattern as a guide, we can see that "the great harlot" is a symbolic reference to a powerful false religious system. So, Revelation 17 is a direct parallel to Revelation 13. Both describe a beast with seven heads and ten horns that works in conjunction with a powerful false religious system to dominate and deceive mankind.

Revelation 17 also provides us with some important details that are helpful for identifying the beast with seven heads and ten horns. Verse 10 tells us the seven heads represent "seven kings". This matches Revelation 13 and Daniel 7 that also indicate that the heads of the beast symbolically represent major world dominating kingdoms throughout human history. Verse 10 also gives us another important clue by stating "Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come". If we consider the context of this statement, it identifies the sixth head for us. The book of Revelation is a series of visions delivered by an angel to the Apostle John in the first century AD (Rev 1:1-2). So, when the angel stated "Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet

come” he was speaking to John in the first century AD. Clearly the angel’s statement that “one is” refers to the Roman Empire that dominated the world from approximately 27 BC to approximately 1453 AD. This tells us that the first five kingdoms symbolized by the horns of the beast were prior to the Roman Empire and the seventh kingdom is a world dominating empire that would come after the Roman Empire.

Some interpret all seven heads of the beast in Revelation 17 to be exclusively referring to the Roman Empire and they see the multiple heads of the beast as “resurrections” of the Roman Empire. However, this doesn’t fit the context of the angel’s statement to John in verse 10. The angel told John that “five have fallen”. The only way to interpret this statement in the context in which it was stated is to conclude that the angel is telling John that five of the kingdoms being symbolized by the heads of this beast had already fallen prior to John’s lifetime. For this statement to be true, the angel has to be referring to kingdoms that reigned prior to the Roman Empire which eliminates the possibility that all seven heads are “resurrections” of the Roman Empire.

Additionally, some also interpret the “seven mountains” mentioned in verse 9 to be supportive of the theory that all seven heads of this beast are “resurrections” of the Roman Empire. This is because the city of Rome was built on seven hills. However, this approach does not consider the fact that the Bible often uses a mountain as a symbolic reference to refer to a government (Ps 30:7, 68:15-16; Is 2:2, 41:15; Jer 51:25; Dan 2:35). So, the “seven mountains” in verse 9 is just another way of indicating that the seven heads of the beast symbolize seven different world dominating empires.

Daniel Identifies Several Additional Kingdoms

We saw earlier that Revelation 13 describes the beast with seven heads and ten horns as possessing qualities similar to a leopard, a bear, and a lion. The details of this description clearly match the vision of four beasts that God revealed to Daniel (Dan 7). Prior to Daniel receiving this vision, God also inspired Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, to have a dream about a great metal image (Dan 2). Both Daniel’s vision of four beasts and Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of a great metal image symbolized four world dominating empires. If we analyze both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 to determine the identity of the empires they are speaking about, this will help us in identifying the additional six heads of the beast in Revelation 13 and Revelation 17.

The story in Daniel 2 begins with Nebuchadnezzar having a very troubling dream. Due to this troubling dream, Nebuchadnezzar issued a command to kill all the wisemen of Babylon if one of them could not tell Nebuchadnezzar the details of his dream and also interpret the dream for him. Daniel was one of the wisemen that would have been killed as a result of this command. So, he prayed to God for help and God revealed to him the details of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and Daniel was able to share this with Nebuchadnezzar and save his life and the lives of his friends.

Dan 2:29-43

²⁹ As for you, O king, **thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.** ³⁰ But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart. ³¹ “You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. ³² **This image’s head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,** ³³ **its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.** ³⁴ You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. ³⁶ “This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷ **You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;** ³⁸ **and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold.** ³⁹ **But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.** ⁴⁰ **And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.** ⁴¹ Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. ⁴³ As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

Daniel began his explanation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream by telling Nebuchadnezzar that God had given him dominion to reign over “wherever the children of men dwell”. Obviously, this statement has to be viewed in context. Clearly, Nebuchadnezzar did not reign over the entire earth, but only over a regional territory in the Middle East. So, the statement “wherever the children of men dwell” referred to the populated areas in the general region surrounding the city of Babylon. The Neo-Babylonian Empire that Nebuchadnezzar reigned over included what is today modern-

day Iraq (which is where the city of Babylon was located) as well as modern-day Syria, Jordan, Israel, Western Iran, Northern Saudi Arabia, and Southern Turkey.

Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that “you are this head of gold”. So, we know conclusively that the first empire symbolized by the metal image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream represented the Neo-Babylonian Empire that reigned from approximately 625 BC until approximately 539 BC. Daniel goes on to explain to Nebuchadnezzar that there would be three more empires that would come later throughout history and that the fourth empire would “crush all the others”.

To determine the identity of the other three other empires symbolized in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, we need to look at history and see what empires later came into power over this same geographical area. The book of Daniel records the fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (Dan 5:30-31). The Neo-Babylonian Empire was conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire in approximately 539 BC. The Medo-Persian Empire lasted until approximately 330 BC and included not only most all of the territory that the Neo-Babylonian Empire had reigned over, but also all of modern-day Iran and all of modern-day Turkey as well as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Egypt, and Northeastern Libya. So, clearly the Medo-Persian Empire would be the second empire in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream symbolized by the “chest and arms of silver”.

In approximately 330 BC, Alexander the Great, king of the Greco-Macedonian Empire, conquered the Medo-Persian Empire and went on to ultimately reign over not only all of the territory that was previously a part of the Medo-Persian Empire, but also modern-day Greece, Bulgaria, and Southeastern Romania. So, the Greco-Macedonian Empire clearly matches the Biblical criteria for the third empire in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream symbolized by the “belly and thighs of bronze”. In 323 BC, Alexander the Great died and, in the years following his death, several of the generals that had served in Alexander’s army battled for power over the empire. This resulted in the empire being split into four separate divisions which continued to separately reign over their respective areas for the next several hundred years. Daniel 11 records an extensive history of the battles between two of the divisions of the Greco-Macedonian Empire (the Seleucid Kingdom and the Ptolemaic Kingdom).

To identify the fourth empire symbolized in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, we not only need to look for another empire that reigned over the territory originally controlled by the Neo-Babylonian Empire, but we also need to consider Daniel’s statement in Daniel 2:40 that the fourth kingdom would “break in pieces and crush all the others”. So, we need to look for an empire that reigned over all of the territory of the first three empires combined.

It is often assumed that the fourth empire symbolized in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was the Roman Empire that reigned from approximately 31 BC to approximately 1453 AD. However, if we look at a historical map of the area that was controlled by the Roman Empire, we can quickly see that the Roman Empire does not match the stated Biblical criteria. The territory controlled by the Roman Empire primarily consisted of the

areas surrounding the Mediterranean Sea and only a limited section of the land directly east of the Mediterranean Sea. This included modern day Israel and portions of modern-day Syria and Jordan, but the Roman Empire never held the territory further east of this point. So, the Roman Empire only reigned over a small portion of the territory controlled by the original Neo-Babylonian Empire and less than one third of the total territory that was reigned over by the combination of the first three empires that we have covered. Looking at this fact, there is no way to argue that the Roman Empire fulfilled the criteria that the fourth kingdom would “break in pieces and crush all the others”.

The only empire that fulfilled this Biblical criteria was the Islamic Caliphate Empire that began with the Rashidun Caliphate in 632 AD after the death of Muhammed and culminated in the Ottoman Empire that officially ended in 1923. The Islamic Caliphate Empire reigned over all of the area controlled by the first three empires symbolized in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and also reigned over most of Northern Africa as well as modern day Spain.

The Four Beasts of Daniel 7

Similar to Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the metal image, Daniel also received a vision from God where Daniel saw four great beasts rising up out of the sea.

Dan 7:1-8

¹ In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts. ² Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. ³ **And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.** ⁴ The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. ⁵ “And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: ‘Arise, devour much flesh!’ ⁶ “After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. ⁷ “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. ⁸ I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

While Daniel was having this vision he was told “Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth” (Dan 7:17). This tells us that similar to the metal image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, the four beasts in Daniel’s vision also symbolize four world dominating empires. To identify these four empires, we need to view Daniel’s vision in the context that it occurred. The account begins by telling us that Daniel received this vision “In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon”. So, the context of Daniel’s vision is very similar to the context of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Both were delivered to individuals that lived in the city of Babylon during the reign of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. This means we can expect that the empires symbolized in Daniel’s vision to be empires that reigned in this same general region of the world.

The first beast is described as being “like a lion, and had eagle’s wings”. The description goes on to state that these wings were “plucked off” and “a man’s heart” was given to this beast. Jeremiah describes the Neo-Babylonian Empire as being like a “lion” (Jer 4:7) and “swifter than eagles” (Jer 4:13) for the fierceness and swiftness its army displayed in conquering other nations. However, God later turned Nebuchadnezzar into a beast which not only stunted his empire’s ability to conquer other nations but it humbled Nebuchadnezzar and softened his heart (Dan 4). So, the Neo-Babylonian Empire matches the description of the first beast in Daniel’s vision which also directly correlates with the first empire symbolized by the metal image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

The second beast is described as being “like a bear” with “three ribs in its mouth between its teeth”. As we saw earlier, the Neo-Babylonian Empire was conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire. The military conquests of the Medo-Persian Empire resulted in them conquering three major areas which included the Neo-Babylonian Empire, the Lydian Kingdom in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey), and Egypt. This matches the description of this beast having “three ribs in its mouth between its teeth”. This also matches the second empire symbolized by the metal image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

The third beast is described as being “like a leopard” with “four heads” and “four wings of a bird”. As we saw earlier, the Medo-Persian Empire was conquered by the Greco-Macedonian Empire led by Alexander the Great. In the years following the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC, several of the generals that had served in his army battled for power over the empire, and the end result was the empire being split into four separate divisions. These divisions included the Seleucid Kingdom, the Ptolemaic Kingdom, the Lysimachean Kingdom, and the Cassandrian Kingdom. This history matches the description of the third beast and also matches the third empire symbolized by the metal image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

The fourth beast is described as having “huge iron teeth” and as “devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet”. The fourth kingdom in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream is described very similarly. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that the fourth kingdom symbolized by the metal image in his dream would “break in pieces

and crush all the others". As we saw previously, the Islamic Caliphate Empire was the only historical empire that fulfills this description. So, we can conclude that the Islamic Caliphate Empire is also symbolized by the fourth beast in Daniel's vision.

The End Time Beast

As we have seen, both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 symbolically picture four major world dominating empires that dominated the greater Middle East throughout a major portion of world history. In both chapters, the fourth empire pictured is the Islamic Caliphate Empire that began with the Rashidun Caliphate in 632 AD after the death of Muhammed and culminated in the Ottoman Empire that officially ended in 1923. However, both chapters also describe the fourth empire being in existence at the time of the end when Jesus Christ returns to the earth.

Dan 2:31-35

³¹ "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.

³² **This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,** ³³ **its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.** ³⁴ **You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.** ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Dan 7:19-27

¹⁹ "Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; ²⁰ and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows. ²¹ "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. ²³ "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be A fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces. ²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak

pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. ²⁶ **“But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever.”** ²⁷ **Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’**

Notice that Daniel 2 states that the “stone cut without hands” specifically strikes the metal image on the feet and then it becomes “a great mountain and filled the whole earth”. The “stone cut without hands” symbolically represents Jesus Christ returning to the earth to establish the millennium. The fact that the “stone cut without hands” specifically strikes the metal image on the feet shows us that the fourth empire will be in existence at the time that Christ returns to the earth.

Daniel 7 paints this same picture regarding the fourth empire. Notice that the focus of verses 19 through 26 is specifically on the fourth empire. It is in this context that we are told “they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever. Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High”. The kingdoms under heaven being given to “the saints of the Most High” is an obvious reference to the resurrected Firstfruits reigning with Christ during the millennium (Rev 20:4-6). So, this indicates that the fourth empire will be in existence at the time that Christ and the resurrected Firstfruits return to the earth to begin the millennium.

Given that we know the Islamic Caliphate Empire officially came to an end 100 years ago, how do we address the fact that scripture says this empire will be in existence at the time of Christ’s return? The answer to this question is revealed in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Daniel 2.

Dan 2:31-34

³¹ “You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.

³² **This image’s head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,** ³³ **its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.** ³⁴ You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, **which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay,** and broke them in pieces.

Notice that the description of the metal image actually has five separate divisions. These are the head, chest, belly, legs, and feet. The head, chest, and belly are all made of completely different metals. However, the legs are made of iron, and

the feet are a mixture of iron and clay. So, there is a common theme in the last two divisions. Although the description of the metal image clearly contains five separate divisions, Daniel's explanation of the dream in Daniel 2:36-45 only mentions four kingdoms. This tells us that the fifth division is a continuation or revival of the fourth kingdom. This same concept is mentioned in both Revelation 13 and Revelation 17.

Rev 13:1-3

¹ Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. ² Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ³ **And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.**

Rev. 17:9-11

⁹ "Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. ¹⁰ There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. ¹¹ **The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.**

Notice that Revelation 13:3 states that one of the heads of the beast was "mortally wounded" but later this "deadly wound" is healed thus restoring this empire. This tells us that one of the empires pictured by the seven heads of the beast has two phases separated by a gap in time. Similarly, Revelation 17:11 mentions that although the beast described is pictured with only seven heads it also speaks of a beast that "was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven". This indicates the empire pictured by the seventh head will have two phases separated by a gap in time. So, all of these verses point to the end time beast being a revival of the Islamic Caliphate Empire.

Daniel 11 Paints A Similar Picture

Daniel 11 also paints a picture of kingdoms that are revived after a period of time when they have not been in existence. The vast majority of Daniel 11 focuses on the divisions of Alexander the Great's Greco-Macedonian Empire. Verses 3-4 describe Alexander's rise to power and then the division of his empire after his death. The rest of the chapter focuses on the battles between what the chapter calls the "King of the North" and the "King of the South". It is widely agreed that the King of the North refers

to the area of the Seleucid Kingdom and the King of the South refers to the area of the Ptolemaic Kingdom. The Seleucid Kingdom controlled the area of modern-day Turkey, Syria, Israel, Jordan, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The Ptolemaic Kingdom controlled the area of modern-day Egypt, Libya, Sudan, and Ethiopia. Daniel 11 records several hundred years of conflict between these two kingdoms. However, the later portion of the chapter speaks about conflict between the King of the North and the King of the South at “the time of the end”.

Dan 11:40-45

⁴⁰ **“At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.”** ⁴¹ He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon. ⁴² He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. ⁴³ He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels. ⁴⁴ But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵ And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

Obviously, these end time references have to be referring to some version of a revival of kingdoms that come out of these same geographic regions. Many people interpret the King of the North at the end of the chapter to be a reference to the Roman Empire instead of the Seleucid Kingdom (although they agree that for most of the chapter the King of the North is the Seleucid Kingdom) and they use this as support for a Roman Empire end time beast theory. However, there are significant problems with the logic used to support this theory. The logic used to transfer the identity of the King of the North to the Roman Empire is the fact that the Roman Empire conquered the western edge of the Seleucid Kingdom. However, the majority of the territory controlled by the Seleucid Kingdom was never conquered by the Roman Empire. It was the Parthians who conquered the vast majority of the territory controlled by the Seleucid Kingdom. However, the Roman Empire did conquer all of the territory previously controlled by Ptolemaic Kingdom and yet no one argues to transfer the identity of the King of South to the Roman Empire. This is very logically inconsistent. If one is going to use this argument to transfer the identity of the King of the North, then at a minimum one has to be consistent with their logic.

If we simply stick with the definitions for the King of the North and the King of the South established from the beginning of the chapter (and widely agreed upon), then we

would expect the end time King of the North to come out of the area previously controlled by the Seleucid Kingdom which is the same core geographical region that is the focus of the empires in both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7. During the time that the Seleucid Kingdom was in power, it was dominated by Greek culture and religion. However, today this same geographical region is dominated by Islamic culture and religion. So, Daniel 11 also points us to the end time beast power being a revival of the Islamic Caliphate Empire.

The Seven Heads of The Beast

We previously established the identities of the four empires pictured in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7. Now we need to look at the identities of the empires pictured by the seven heads of the beasts in Revelation 13 and Revelation 17. We saw previously that the angel in Revelation 17 told the Apostle John, regarding the empires pictured by the seven heads, that “Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come” (Rev 17:10). This statement was made to John in the first century AD during the reign of the Roman Empire. The gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John mention the Jews of that time being under the rule of the Roman Empire. So, we can clearly conclude that when the angel told John that “one is” he was referring to the Roman Empire that reigned during John’s lifetime. This means that five of the empires pictured by the heads of the beast had their reign prior to the Roman Empire, and the seventh head pictures an empire that reigned after the Roman Empire.

We have previously seen that the fourth kingdom pictured in both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 is the Islamic Caliphate Empire. We have also seen that the end time beast will be a revived version of the Islamic Caliphate Empire. The Roman Empire was officially conquered by the Islamic Caliphate Empire in 1453 AD. So, the Islamic Caliphate Empire is clearly the successor to the Roman Empire and is the empire pictured by the seventh head of the beast. We also saw previously that Revelation 13 pictures the beast with seven heads and 10 horns including imagery of a leopard, a bear, and a lion (Rev 13:1-3) which obviously connects the heads of this beast with the empires described in Daniel 7. This means that we can identify three of the five empires that reigned prior to the Roman Empire to be the Neo-Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, and the Greco-Macedonian Empire.

This identifies five of the seven heads of the beast, but how do we determine the identity of the other two heads? The Bible doesn’t say much regarding these other two heads, but, if we look at what all of the empires that we have identified have in common, this will give us a pretty good idea regarding the identity of the remaining two heads of the beast.

Beginning in the book of Genesis, the focus of the narrative of the Bible is on the descendants of Abraham and specifically his descendants through his grandson Jacob who was later renamed Israel. Jacob’s twelve sons fathered the twelve tribes of Israel. The narrative of the Bible focuses on the tribes of Israel and other nations come into the

story in reference to their interactions with the Israelites. If we look at the five empires we have identified, one of the things they all have in common is that during their reigns they held the Israelites in captivity and they reigned over the area of Jerusalem.

Using this criteria as a guide, all we need to do is look for two other major empires in history that also have these same two characteristics. The other two major empires that previously held the Israelites in captivity were the Egyptian Empire and the Assyrian Empire. In fact, if we list all seven empires in their historical order, we will also see that another thing these empires have in common is that each of them was either totally or partially conquered by the empire that followed them. The seven empires pictured by the seven heads of the beast are the Egyptian Empire, the Assyrian Empire, the Neo-Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greco-Macedonian Empire, the Roman Empire, and the Islamic Caliphate Empire. All of these empires also had their own false religious systems that dominated the culture of the empire. Thus, all of these empires were all ridden by “the great harlot” as described in Revelation 17:1-6.

The Ten Horns of The Beast

The final thing we need to address is the ten horns of the beast. The ten horns are clearly associated with the end time beast. Daniel 7 connects the ten horns with the fourth beast pictured in that chapter which we have seen is the Islamic Caliphate Empire. Daniel 2 pictures two phases of this empire with its imagery of the legs of iron and the feet of iron and clay. The feet have ten toes which correlate with the imagery of the ten horns. This tells us that the ten horns are associated with the end time revival of the Islamic Caliphate Empire. Revelation 17 also provides us with some details regarding the ten horns.

Rev 17:12-17

¹² **“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. ¹³ These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.** ¹⁴ These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.” ¹⁵ Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. ¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.

Verse 12 tells us that the ten horns symbolically represent “ten kings” who will “receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast”. This indicates that these ten

kings (or kingdoms) will actually be separate from the revived Islamic Caliphate Empire but will be in some kind of alliance “with the beast”. This also matches the description in Daniel 2. Daniel 2 describes the first phase of the fourth kingdom as legs of iron. So, the iron symbolically represents the Islamic Caliphate Empire. However, the feet are pictured as a mixture of iron and clay that have a fragile bond to one another. This again points to an alliance between the Islamic Caliphate Empire and other kingdoms. Exactly how all of this will play out is something we will have to wait and see. At this point all we can do is speculate. What we can know for sure is that the end time beast will be a revival of the Islamic Caliphate Empire.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the story of the beast of Revelation is a very consistent theme throughout the Bible. Although the imagery in the two chapters is a little different, Revelation 13 and Revelation 17 are direct parallels of each other. Both chapters tell us a story about a series of seven major world dominating empires that Satan has utilized to oppress mankind and specifically the people of Israel. All of these empires have also had a false religious system that dominated the culture of the empire and attempted to stomp out the worship of the true God. Similarly, Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 are also parallels of one another as they both describe four of these same seven empires. Together, these four chapters explain to us the empires that Satan has used as tools throughout human history to oppress mankind and specifically God’s people. These chapters also give us some insight into the future. The coming end time beast power will be a revival of the Islamic Caliphate Empire. So, we need to be watching the Middle East to be aware when these events begin to take place.