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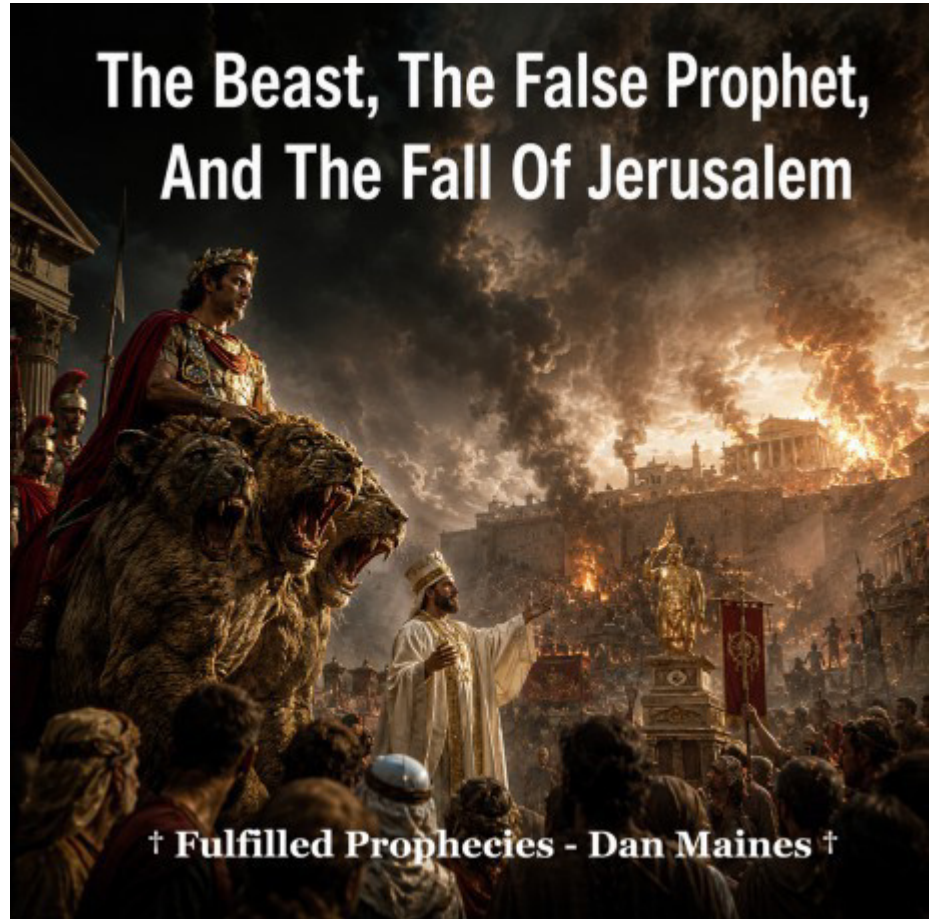
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## The Beast, The False Prophet, And The Fall Of Jerusalem



By Dan Maines

## The Beast, The False Prophet, And The Fall Of Jerusalem

### Introduction

† Many people have been taught that Revelation speaks about a future revived Roman Empire, a future antichrist system, and events thousands of years beyond the days of the apostles. But Revelation was written to real churches facing a real crisis that was about to come upon their generation. (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 22:6-10)

† John was told repeatedly that the things written in Revelation would shortly come to pass and that the time was near. The book was not written to people living two thousand years later. It was written to first century believers living under Roman rule and under pressure from apostate Judaism. (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 22:6-10)

† I think we should go through those references one section at a time, Revelation 13, 16, 17, 19, and see how the beast, the image, the mark, the false prophet, and the harlot all connect in the first century. (Revelation 13:1-18; Revelation 16:13-14; Revelation 17:1-18; Revelation 19:19-20)

† Revelation 13 onward reveals the judgment of the beastly Roman ruler system, the corrupt Jewish leadership that worked with Rome, and the destruction of the old covenant world centered in Jerusalem. (Revelation 13:1-18; Revelation 17:1-18; Matthew 23:35-38)

† When the symbols are compared carefully with scripture and history, the beast, the false prophet, the image, the mark, and the harlot all fit the first century setting perfectly. (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 17:10; Matthew 24:34)

## **Revelation 1:9**

I, John, your brother and fellow participant in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

† John said he was already a partaker in the tribulation. (Revelation 1:9)

† The tribulation was already underway in the first century church. (Revelation 1:9; Matthew 24:9-13)

† This completely contradicts the idea that the tribulation was thousands of years future from John's lifetime. (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 22:10)

† The churches receiving Revelation were living through the persecution and pressures connected to the beast system. (Revelation 2:9-10; Revelation 13:7)

## **Revelation 13:1-2**

and he stood upon the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy. and the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority.

† The beast rising from the sea points directly back to Daniel's beast kingdoms. Daniel saw Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece, and Rome pictured as beasts. Revelation combines those beast features into one final persecuting power. (Daniel 7:3-7)

† Rome was the ruling beast power in John's day. Rome ruled the nations, persecuted the saints, and exercised authority over the known world. (Luke 2:1; Daniel 7:7; Revelation 13:7)

† The dragon gave authority to the beast because Satan was working through pagan Rome to destroy the church. (Revelation 12:9-17; Revelation 13:2)

† The seven heads are later explained as kings and mountains. Rome was famously built upon seven hills, and the Caesars ruled from that seat of power. (Revelation 17:9-10)

## **Revelation 13:3**

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;

† This wounded head fits Nero Caesar and the crisis that struck Rome after his death in AD 68. (Revelation 13:3; Revelation 17:10-11)

† Nero's death brought the empire into chaos during the Year of the Four Emperors. Civil war spread across Rome and many believed the empire itself was collapsing. (Revelation 13:3; Revelation 17:8)

† The healing of the wound fits the restoration of stability through the Flavian dynasty beginning with Vespasian and continuing through Titus and Domitian. (Revelation 13:3; Revelation 17:10-11)

† Revelation does not say the beast died and resurrected thousands of years later. It says one of the heads received a deadly wound and the beast continued. (Revelation 13:3; Revelation 17:8-11)

† The beast system survived the Nero crisis and regained its authority, causing the world to marvel after it. (Revelation 13:3-4)

## **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 as 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 appears lamb like outwardly, but speaks as a dragon. This points to deceptive religious authority. (Revelation 13:11; Matthew 7:15)

† This fits the corrupt Jewish leadership that claimed to represent God while rejecting Christ and persecuting His followers. (John 8:44; Matthew 23:29-36)

† The chief priests openly aligned themselves with Caesar against Christ. They declared, We have no king but Caesar. (John 19:15)

† The false prophet worked in the presence of the first beast because apostate Jerusalem cooperated with Roman authority against the church. (Revelation 13:12; Revelation 17:3; Acts 4:1-3)

† Jesus had already warned that false prophets and deceivers would arise in that generation. (Matthew 24:11; Matthew 24:24)

† Revelation later directly identifies the second beast as the false prophet. (Revelation 19:20)

### **Revelation 13:14-17**

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. 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 causes all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, 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 image of the beast connects directly to emperor worship in the Roman Empire. (Revelation 13:14-15)

† Images and statues of Caesar were used throughout the empire as symbols of loyalty and submission to Roman authority. (Revelation 13:14-15; Daniel 3:1-6)

† Refusing emperor worship could bring persecution, exclusion from trade, and even death. (Revelation 13:15-17; Revelation 2:10)

† The false prophet promoted worship of the beast just as apostate religious leadership pushed the people toward compromise with Rome. (Revelation 13:12-15; John 19:15)

† The mark of the beast symbolized allegiance and identification with the beastly system. (Revelation 13:16-17)

† This imagery reflects covenant language already found in the Old Testament where God's people were marked symbolically in the hand and forehead through covenant loyalty. (Deuteronomy 6:6-8; Exodus 13:9)

† Revelation presents two groups, those sealed by God and those marked by the beast. (Revelation 7:3; Revelation 14:1; Revelation 13:16-17)

## **Revelation 13:18**

Here is wisdom. Let him 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 fits Nero Caesar when written in Hebrew letters and calculated through gematria. (Revelation 13:18)

† Early Christians connected Nero directly with the beast because he was the first emperor to launch massive persecution against believers. (Revelation 13:7; Revelation 17:10-11)

† Nero murdered Christians brutally and became a symbol of satanic opposition to Christ and His people. (Revelation 13:7; Revelation 12:17)

† John said the number belonged to a man, not a future computer system or barcode. (Revelation 13:18)

### **Revelation 16:13-14**

And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the entire world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

† Here the dragon, beast, and false prophet are shown working together in complete unity against God's people. (Revelation 16:13-14)

† Satan worked through Rome and apostate Judaism to resist Christ and persecute the church. (Revelation 12:9-17; Revelation 13:11-12)

† The false prophet is still connected to the beast system, proving this was an active first century alliance. (Revelation 16:13; Revelation 19:20)

† These unclean spirits symbolize deception, propaganda, false religion, and spiritual corruption spreading throughout the land. (1 Timothy 4:1; Revelation 16:13-14)

### **Revelation 17:10**

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 text says one king "is" during John's lifetime. (Revelation 17:10)

† That alone destroys the idea that the beast was thousands of years future. (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 22:10)

† John was living during the reign of the beast system. (Revelation 17:10)

† The sixth king fits Nero Caesar, while the short reign afterward fits the chaos following Nero's death. (Revelation 17:10-11)

### **Revelation 17:3-6**

And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls, holding in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her sexual

immorality, and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery: "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.

† The harlot woman represents apostate Jerusalem. (Revelation 11:8; Revelation 17:18)

† Jerusalem was the city that killed the prophets and persecuted the righteous. (Matthew 23:34-37; Luke 13:33-34)

† Revelation later identifies the great city as the place where the Lord was crucified. (Revelation 11:8)

† The harlot rode the beast because Jerusalem worked together with Roman authority against Christ and the church. (John 19:15; Revelation 17:3)

† Jesus warned Jerusalem that judgment was coming upon that generation for the blood of the prophets. (Matthew 23:35-36)

† The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 fulfilled those warnings exactly. (Matthew 24:1-2; Luke 21:20-22)

## **Revelation 18:24**

And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slaughtered on the earth.

† Revelation places the bloodguilt upon the harlot city. (Revelation 18:24)

† Jesus placed the bloodguilt of the prophets upon Jerusalem in that generation. (Matthew 23:35-36)

† This strongly identifies apostate Jerusalem as the harlot of Revelation. (Revelation 11:8; Revelation 17:18)

† The judgment against the harlot fulfilled Christ's warnings concerning Jerusalem's coming destruction. (Matthew 22:7; Luke 21:20-24)

## **Revelation 19:19-20**

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse, and against His army.

And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.

† The beast and false prophet are judged together because they worked together against Christ and His people. (Revelation 13:11-17; Revelation 19:20)

† The image, the mark, the false prophet, and the beast are all connected throughout Revelation as one united persecuting system. (Revelation 13:14-18; Revelation 16:13; Revelation 19:20)

† Rome supplied the military and political power while apostate Judaism supplied religious pressure and persecution. (John 19:15; Acts 4:1-3; Revelation 17:3)

† The judgment language reflects the complete overthrow of the persecuting old covenant order and the beastly powers behind

it. (Hebrews 8:13; Matthew 24:34)

† The lake of fire imagery points to divine judgment and complete destruction of their authority. (Revelation 19:20; Revelation 20:14)

† Rome and apostate Jerusalem stood against Christ, but both systems were judged exactly as Revelation foretold. (Matthew 24:1-34; Revelation 1:1-3)

## **Historical References**

† Josephus recorded the horrors surrounding the fall of Jerusalem, the civil war, famine, false prophets, and destruction that came upon the city in AD 70. (Matthew 24:19-22; Luke 21:20-24)

† Tacitus described the instability of Rome after Nero's death and the violent struggle for imperial power during the Year of the Four Emperors. (Revelation 13:3; Revelation 17:10-11)

† Eusebius wrote that believers remembered Christ's warnings and fled Jerusalem before the destruction came. (Matthew 24:15-18)

† Early Christian writers repeatedly connected Nero with persecution against the church and viewed the Roman power as the beastly enemy of the saints. (Revelation 13:7; Revelation 17:10-11)

## **How It Applies To Us Today**

† Revelation reminds us that Christ already reigns over the kings of the earth. (Revelation 1:5; Ephesians 1:20-22)

† Believers are not waiting for a future beast empire to suddenly appear because the beast judgment belonged to the first

century covenant transition. (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 17:10)

† The old covenant world passed away exactly as Jesus promised. Christ's kingdom remains. (Hebrews 8:13; Matthew 24:34-35)

† We must never compromise with political or religious systems that oppose Christ and persecute truth. (Romans 12:2; Revelation 18:4)

† The church belongs to the Lamb, not to the beastly systems of men. (Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:7-9)

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q:** Why do many people believe Revelation is still future?

**A:** Many approach Revelation without considering its time statements, audience relevance, and Old Testament background. Revelation says the events would shortly come to pass and that the time was near. Jesus also placed these judgments within the generation then living. (Revelation 1:1-3; Matthew 24:34)

**Q:** Does the wounded head prove a future resurrected Roman Empire?

**A:** No. Revelation says one of the heads were wounded, not that Rome disappeared for thousands of years and returned later. The Nero crisis and the rise of the Flavian dynasty fit the text naturally within first century history. (Revelation 13:3; Revelation 17:10-11)

**Q:** Why identify the false prophet with apostate Judaism?

**A:** The false prophet promoted worship of the beast and worked alongside Roman authority. The Jewish leadership rejected Christ, pressured the people, persecuted believers, and aligned themselves with Caesar against Jesus and His followers. (John 19:15; Acts 4:1-3; Revelation 13:11-12)

**Q:** Was the mark of the beast a physical object?

**A:** The mark symbolized loyalty and submission to the beastly system. Scripture already used hand and forehead imagery for covenant allegiance long before Revelation. (Deuteronomy 6:6-8; Revelation 13:16-17)

**Q:** Why is Jerusalem identified as the harlot?

**A:** Jerusalem was guilty of killing the prophets and persecuting the saints. Revelation identifies the great city as the place where the Lord was crucified. Jesus declared that judgment for righteous blood would come upon that generation. (Revelation 11:8; Matthew 23:35-36)

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

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## **Source Index**

† Revelation 1:9; Revelation 13:1-3, 11-18; Revelation 16:13-14; Revelation 17:3-10; Revelation 18:24; Revelation 19:19-20

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews Book 6; Tacitus, Histories Book 1-2; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History Book 3.

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