

38 THE BEAST part 3

INTRODUCTION: In this piece, we take a brief tentative overview of Revelation 13, correlating it with Biblical texts and extra-Biblical historical sources. We maintain that zealot-led Israel was the beast of Revelation. (See parts 1 and 2)

1. The Beast came out of the sea. Rev. 13:1 (also see Dan. 7:3)

To ancient people, the sea contained destructive, threatening creatures/forces.

- a) "And God prepareth the great monsters with which the waters have teemed..." Gen. 1:21
- b) "You divided the sea by your strength. You broke the heads of the sea monsters in the waters." Ps. 74:13
- c) "When he [Leviathan] raises himself up, the mighty are afraid. They retreat before his thrashing. " Job 41:25
- d) Criminals came from all over the land to join the lawless zealots. "[T]he captains of these troops of robbers, ...became a band of wickedness and all together crept into Jerusalem...There were besides these other robbers that came out of the country, and came into the city, and joining to them those that were worse than themselves...." (Wars 4.3.2-4)

2. The Beast was like a leopard, bear and lion. Rev. 13:2

These are the images symbolizing the previous three of the four beasts (kingdoms) named in Daniel 7, representing Greece, Persia, and Babylon, respectively. These were the three previous occupying nations of Judea which would have strongly influenced the culture, out of which, the first century Jewish culture grew.

3. The head of the Beast had a mortal wound. Rev. 13:3

We believe this may be a reference to the early and unexpected demise of Menahem, the seventh member of the "zealot dynasty" of Hezekiah, who showed "messianic promise" and successfully took possession of Masada and its cash of weaponry and supplies. He was anticipated to lead the Jews in the conflict with the Romans, but hopes were dashed when he was killed by zealot in-fighting in late AD 66.

4. Beast's fatal wound was healed. Rev. 13:3

This "healing" appears to be the revival of Jewish hope for triumph over the Romans when zealot-led forces overwhelmed the Syrian Roman legion when they came to Jerusalem in an effort to put down the rebellion in late AD 66. Josephus reported on the zealot victory. In the rout, the Romans had "left behind them their engines for sieges and for throwing of stones and a great part of the instruments of war...the Jews came back running and singing to their metropolis; while they had themselves lost a few only, but had slain of the Romans five thousand and three hundred footmen, and three hundred and eight horsemen." Wars 2.19.9. The zealots managed to obtain large amounts of Roman supplies and weaponry as well as scoring amazing numbers of Roman casualties compared to losing only a few combatants of their own.

5. They worshiped the Beast, saying, "Who is like the beast?" Rev. 13:4

This quote appears to be mimicking O.T. scriptures that praise Yahweh. Exodus 15:11 reads: "Who is like you, Yahweh, among the gods? Who is like you, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Also Ps 89:8: "Yahweh, God of Armies, who is a mighty one, like you?" This mimicry illustrates the degradation Israel had undergone to reverence and worship the war-mongering beast leaders in place of the Creator of all things.

6. Beast was given authority to wage war for 3.5 years. Rev. 13:5

The formal war with Rome began under Vespasian in the early spring of AD 67 and ended near fall of AD 70, which was 3 1/2 years. The number 7 is symbolic of perfection or completeness, and 3 1/2 may be symbolic of brokenness, judgment. This length of time comes up frequently in Revelation: 11:2, 11:3, 12:6, 12:14, 13:5. Also see Daniel: 7:25, 9:27, 12:7, 12:11, 12:12. Three and a half years was also the time of drought judgment in Elijah's day: Lk 4:25, James 5:17.

7. Beast blasphemes Yahweh and the temple. Rev. 13:6

a) Although claiming they wanted only Yahweh to rule over them, the zealots mocked God: "These men [zealots] trampled upon all the laws of man, and laughed at the laws of God; and for the oracles of the prophets, they ridiculed them as the tricks of jugglers." Wars 4:6:3

b) John of Gischala, one of the zealot leaders, used the dedicated vessels and wine in the temple for a drunken party: "But as for John, when he could no longer plunder the people, he betook himself to sacrilege, and melted down many of the sacred utensils...he emptied the vessels of that sacred wine and oil,*... and distributed it among the multitude [zealots], who, in their anointing themselves and drinking, used [each of them] above an hin [5 1/2 qt.]..." Wars 5.13.6

8. The saints* were overcome by the Beast. Rev. 13:7

a) "Now after these were slain, the zealots and the multitude of the Idumeans fell upon the people as upon a flock of

profane animals, and cut their throats...[others] they... shut them up in prison, and put off their slaughter, in hopes that some of them would turn over to their party; but not one of them would comply with their desires, but all of them preferred death before being enrolled among such wicked wretches as acted against their own country." Wars 4.5.3

b) John of Gischala (zealot leader) "never left off murdering." Wars 5.1.1.

c) The three zealot parties "were seditious one against another...they agreed in nothing but this, to kill those that were innocent." Wars 5.1.5

d) "...the people who were fallen under the power of the seditious and the robbers, were greatly desirous of peace; but, being too weak to rise up against the rest, they lay still." Wars 5.2.1

e) Famine: "Of those perished by famine in the city, the number was prodigious, and the miseries they underwent were unspeakable..." Wars 6.3.3

f) Regarding the 144,000: "These are those who came out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes, and made them white in the Lamb's blood...They will never be hungry, neither thirsty any more..." Rev. 7:14-16

9. Those who imprisoned and killed would be imprisoned and killed. Rev 13:10

"If any one is eager to lead others into captivity, he must himself go into captivity. If any one is bent on killing with the sword, he must himself be killed by the sword." Rev. 13:10 (Weymouth)

a) **Zealots imprisoned citizens:** "Now as for the people, they were kept under by the seditious." Wars. 2.19.4

b) **Zealots imprisoned and killed citizens:** "Those [Jerusalem citizens] whom they [zealots] caught in the day time were slain in the night, and then their bodies were carried out and thrown away, that there might be room for other prisoners..." Wars 4.5.3

c) **Zealots killed and imprisoned citizens:** "...men and women were in such distress...they wished for the Romans and earnestly hoped for an external war, in order to their delivery from their domestic miseries [zealots]. The citizens themselves were under a terrible consternation and fear...for guards [zealots] were set at all places, and the heads of the robbers [zealots] although they were seditious one against another in other respects, yet did they agree in killing those that were for peace with Romans...They agreed in nothing but this, to kill those that were innocent." Wars 5.1.5

d) **Zealots were enslaved:** "Out of the young men [zealots] he [Vespasian] chose six thousand of the strongest and sent them to Nero, to dig through the Isthmus and sold the remainder for slaves, being thirty thousand and four hundred..." Wars 3.10.9

e) **Jews were enslaved:** The Romans "left only the populace and sold the rest of the multitude with their wives and children and every one of them at a very low price and that because such as were sold were very many, and the buyers very few..." Wars 6.8.2

f) **Jews were enslaved and killed:** "The number of those that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand; as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand [1,100,00], the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation [with the citizens of Jerusalem]" Wars 6.9.3

10. Second Beast causes worship of beast, deception, animation of image of first beast. Rev. 13:11-15

We can see, in our own day, how media creates images for people to worship by creating mass psychosis. They even call "fire from heaven" that is, judgment, based on their lies. We will treat the accusation of the brethren in a future paper.

11. Receive the mark on hand and forehead. Rev. 13:16

a) The law of God was to be symbolically bound on the peoples' head and hand. "These words, which I command you this day, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for symbols between your eyes..." Deut 6:6-8 (also see 11:18, Ex.13:9, 16)

b) As a first century Jewish reader, it would be difficult to miss the irony of their fellow Jews being marked in their hearts and minds, not by the word of God, but by the murderous, violent precepts of zealotry.

12. No one can buy or sell without the mark. Rev. 13:17

The zealots began minting their own coin in AD 66.

13. The number of the Beast was 666. Rev. 13:18

a) The number 6 symbolizes man, human weakness, and the manifestation of sin. Man was created on the sixth day. Men are appointed 6 days to labor.

b) The weight of the gold that hath come to Solomon in one year is six hundred sixty and six talents of gold. I Kings 10:14

* The word "saints" was synonymous with Israel: Ps. 16:3, Ps. 34:9, Ps. 30:4, Ps. 116:15, Ps. 145:10, Ps. 31:23, Ps. 50:5, Ps. 97:10, 148:14, 149:5,9, 132:9,16, 37:28, Pro 2:8, Ps. 52:9, Ps 149:1, Ps. 79:2, 2 Chr 6:41

See other "beast" videos/papers in this series: 28, 34, 36, 37.

See Adam Maarschalk's website for further research on the beast.

See "The Wars of the Jews" by Josephus, Whiston Translation