

church. French general Berthier, went down to Rome and took pope Pious VI prisoner and returned him to France to live out his remaining days in exile. Thus the Catholic church was, for a period of time, without a visible head to rule.

## DEADLY WOUND INFLICTED

This was definitely a death blow or a deadly wound to the church, because without a visible head or pope, the Catholic Church was dead! It had ruled for 1260 years, and now it was powerless--just as prophecy declared.

Many believed that the church had come to an end and would never again figure significantly in world affairs. For many years this picture remained unchanged, but in 1929, Cardinal Gasparri and Benito Mussolini signed the concordat which restored temporal powers to the papacy. Once again the Vatican began to function as she had before.

No one can question that since that time the papacy has regained much of the prestige lost two centuries ago. In the 1950's, when Harry Truman attempted to appoint an official ambassador to the Vatican, there arose such a protest that it was not possible for him to follow through. But thirty years later, when President Reagan tried to accomplish the same thing, he met with little opposition.

Another remarkable point is that this Beast had the feet of a bear. The bear in Daniel 7:5 represents the empire of the Medes and Persians, and they had a method of government peculiarly their own. When the king of the Medes and Persians spoke law, he was considered to be infallible. Once given, it was not possible to change the law (see Daniel 6:8,12,15.) This finds its counterpart in the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope when he speaks ex-cathedra, and defines points of law or doctrine.

Also, on the head of the Beast was the name of blasphemy. The Biblical concept of blasphemy is found in Mark 2. The rulers of the Jewish people accused Jesus of blasphemy for presuming to forgive sins, a prerogative belonging to God alone (see verses 5-7). This authority the Catholic Church also claims to have.

The final point to note, is that the prophecy declares that this Beast power would make war with the saints of God. No one with any knowledge of history can deny that this description, without question, fits the Roman Catholic church. It is conservatively estimated that the Church of Rome caused over fifty million people to be put to death throughout it's 1260 year reign. Why were these people murdered? Because they followed Bible truth and their

conscience--even when it differed with the established teaching and authority of the Church. Thus it is clear that the Beast of Revelation 13:1-10 and the Little Horn of Daniel 7, unmistakably refers to the Roman Catholic church!

While it is true that religious tolerance is more widespread today than in the past, Bible prophecy points to the fact that this will not always be the case. This deadly wound was to be completely healed, and soon the Catholic church will re-gain her lost power. Then, along with those Protestant churches which are united with and who image her, they will revive the persecutions of the past against those who refuse to accept and abide under their authority in religious belief and practice--choosing instead to follow Bible truth and their conscience (see Revelation 13:15-17).

We understand that God did not give these Biblical prophecies as an indictment against individuals, but rather against apostate religious systems. God has sent His people these prophetic warnings so that they might not innocently become involved in this apostasy of Rome or in any of the churches of apostate Protestantism which are united with her.

In Revelation 18, God refers to these same apostate systems of religion as Babylon. In these last days we find that, just as God called Lot out of wicked Sodom before its destruction, so He sends a call to His people today to "Come out of her, my people": to separate from all these religious systems of apostasy, "that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" Revelation 18:4.

God clearly warns His people not to be united with apostate churches or with unbelievers, but to remain separate from them all. If they should continue to remain members in or united with these, they will not be clean in God's sight, He will not consider them as His sons and daughters, and they will lose eternal life (see 2 Corin 6:14-18; Isa 52:11; Micah 2:10).

It is because of God's great love for those who are still connected with these religious systems of apostasy; the many who sincerely love Him with all of their heart, that He warns them to escape from the real danger they are in. In loving kindness and tender mercy God calls His people out of all the churches, so that they might avoid being destroyed along with Babylon, and instead become connected with Christ and His kingdom of righteousness, and thus to gain everlasting life.

"Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity...My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord." Jeremiah 51:6, 45.

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The Beast power of Revelation 13:1-10 has intrigued Christians for hundreds of years. There have been many speculations as to what it is, it's nature, and the time when it appears. This concern is well placed, for the Bible gives a most powerful warning about this Beast power. But speculation is not necessary.

In Bible prophecy, political powers are frequently represented by animals, or "Beasts". This practice is not limited to Bible times, for we still use animal symbols to represent countries today. But the appearance of this particular Beast is different from any animal we know and seems to be made up of several different beasts put together into one. Thus we are unable to call it by the name of any particular beast, such as a lion or a bear; and so it has commonly become known as the Beast, or the Leopard-like Beast, or the composite Beast.

This Beast is of such interest because it demands worship in opposition to God. And it is against this false system of worship, along with those who form a part of it, that God's wrath, unmingled with mercy, is to be poured out (see Revelation 14:9-10).

In looking at the verses which pertain to this Beast power, we notice that there are many characteristics or clues that help to identify who it represents. As we examine each of these points, it should become increasingly clear who this Beast power must be.

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name 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 seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who

is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Revelation 13:1-8.

Many people are looking for a diabolical power that will force it's way into the political arena, compelling Christians to abandon their faith by setting up a nonreligious government of force. We need to notice,



however, that there is worship connected with this power. Verse 8 states that all of the people on earth will worship it, except for those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life. And it is only those whose names are written in that book of life who will be saved! Jesus spoke very plainly when He stated that “strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:14.

A little later in that same sermon Jesus made another profound statement: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Matthew 7:21-23.

From these verses we conclude that the overwhelming majority of Christians will not be ready to meet Christ when He returns. According to the prophecy, all of these will be found worshipping this Beast power. This fact must tell us something about the nature of this Beast; for if this power professed to be anti-Christian, as so many expect, very few in the Christian world would be found worshipping it.

The next point to notice is that this Beast has the body of a leopard, and in Daniel 7:6 the Greek nation was represented by a leopard (please write for our tract on The Rise and Fall of Empires). Few people realize how completely the pagan philosophy of Greece captured the world, and it also played a significant role in the formation

of thought in the church.

Several Greek philosophers are famous for the impact they had on human thought. During the middle ages, when the Bible was outlawed, men looked to Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates for light. As one may expect, their paganistic philosophy greatly permeated religious thinking, helping to shape many of the concepts that became a part of Christian belief, but for which there was no Biblical support.

For instance; Plato believed in the immortality of the soul. In his understanding, heroes and notable persons went immediately to mansions and places of reward, while the common people went down to the infernal regions to receive punishment for sinful pollutions until they had been cleansed. Here we see the religious belief of the elevation of the saints to heaven at death, and also the doctrine of purgatory.

Plato also believed in the concept of separating the body from the soul. He believed this was achieved by afflicting the body, by deprivation, and by separation from society. Thus was laid the groundwork for the later emergence of the belief for monasticism and penances.

Another point to notice is that this Beast came up out of the waters of the sea. According to Revelation 17:15, waters represent “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” So what this text is stating is that when this Beast power emerged, it arose from an area which was densely populated--such as Europe, and not from the wilderness--or an area which was sparsely populated.

It is important to understand that this Beast power was also prophesied to continue for 42 months, or three and a half years of prophetic time. Using the Jewish calendar of 30 days for each month, 42 months or 3 1/2 years would mean 1260 prophetic days. In Bible prophecy, each day of prophetic time would equal one year of literal time (see Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6). Thus we understand that this Beast would rule for 1260 prophetic days or 1260 literal years.

### The Little Horn

In Daniel 7, this same Beast power is likened to a Little Horn or kingdom which uproots and destroys three horns or kingdoms, and then speaks great blasphemous words against God (see Daniel 7:8, 20-25). This power was to rule “until a time and times and the dividing of time” Daniel 7:25. A “time” represents one year in Bible prophecy. So this Little Horn power was to rule for a time--or 1 year, times--or 2 more years, and the dividing of time--or half of a year. This would total three and a half years, or again 42 months or 1260 prophetic days or literal years. Thus the prophecies of the Beast and the Little Horn power are referring to this same religious power.

While both these prophecies indicate that the power identified was to reign for 1260 literal years, when did this

time period begin? Another significant point which helps us to establish the time for the emergence of this power, is that it was to be given it's seat, it's authority, and it's power, by the dragon.

While this dragon refers to Satan (see Revelation 12:9), it more specifically refers to the ancient pagan Roman Empire which Satan used to try and kill the man child--or Christ--as soon as He was born (see Matthew 2:1-18; Revelation 12:2-5). The seat of the old Roman Empire was the city of Rome itself. And as the date for the fall of the Roman Empire was A.D. 476, it is clear that this Beast power could not be firmly established with it's seat and authority until after this time.

Then, who could this Beast power be? When the Roman Empire fell, it's kingdom was divided into 10 nation-states. And what was the religious power which arose out of the ruins of pagan Rome? Claiming the titles and the authority of her Emperor predecessors, the Roman Catholic Church gradually sought to extend her power over these 10 nation-states of Europe. Soon the heads of these states received their crown and ruled more or less subject to Roman Catholic authority. While some might contend that the papacy is primarily a religious power, we have to understand that it is also a political power which sends and receives ambassadors and functions as a political state.

As the Roman Catholic church gradually gained more power and control over these 10 nation-states of Europe, it became evident that all but three of these nations (the Heruli, Vandals, and Ostrogoths) were in favor of, or yielded to, the Catholic religion and authority. Therefore the Catholic church made war against these three nations, and uprooted them in succession (the Heruli in 493, the Vandals in 534, and the Ostrogoths in 538)--exactly as the Bible predicted of this Little Horn-Beast power! Thus 538 would be the starting point for the Beast's rule.



It was also shown that at the end of this Beast's 1260 year reign, it's power was to be removed, and it would receive a wound that appeared to be a death blow. Yet this wound would be healed, and this same power would again exercise authority over the kings of the earth.

Beginning with the date of 538, the Catholic church ruled for exactly 1260 years, and then received it's deadly wound in the year 1798. The armies of Napoleon were marching across Europe, destroying monarchy and the