

# Reaching Across Time: Daniel and Revelation

## (Dan. 2:44-45)

Keys to Revelation Chapter Thirteen and Daniel Chapter Seven:

- Chapter thirteen continues the presentation of the main players in the drama of Revelation by introducing both the Roman Empire and those who promote emperor worship.
- The **sea beast** represents the Roman Empire (vv. 1-10).
- John mentions the beast and then a leopard, a bear, and a lion (vv. 1-2).
- Daniel had a similar vision, but in reverse order (Dan. 7:3-7).
- Daniel saw the succession of world empires from Babylon to Persia to Greece to Rome.
- John saw Rome first, and then the three preceding empires whose strength Rome had absorbed.
- Daniel saw from Babylon forward to Rome; John saw from Rome backward to Babylon.
- The sea beast, Rome, had ten horns and seven heads (v.1).
- Note that Satan was described as a dragon that looked just like the sea beast we have just identified as Rome (12:3).
- Satan is the force behind Rome—the ten horns represent kings that will join with Rome to defeat the church (17:12); the seven heads represent both the hills on which Rome was built and key Roman emperors (17:9-10).
- Particular attention is given to one of the heads, emperors, which seemed to have been killed, yet lived again—a false or counterfeit resurrection (vv. 3-9).
- The symbolism here draws from what is called the *Nero Redivivus Myth*—a popular myth that developed in Rome after Nero's death to the effect that Nero was alive and living with Rome's enemies the Parthians. Further, it was said by the Romans that Domitian, due to similar shocking behavior, was *bloody Nero back from the dead*.
- Therefore, I see the supposed resurrected head as being Domitian as he revived and expanded the persecutions of Nero.
- In connection with this coming fierce persecution of the church, the saints are given a solemn warning (vv. 9-10).
- Captivity and punishment are not to be resisted by force of arms (v. 10; cf. Jer. 15:2; 43:11; Matt. 26:52).
- Next is the **land beast**, representing those who enforce emperor worship (vv. 11-17).
- The power of the emperor is behind this beast (vv. 11-12).
- They seem to have power, but it is a deception (vv. 13-14).
- It is Domitian they serve (v. 14).
- They killed those who did not worship Domitian (v. 15).
- They give a sign to those who comply with emperor worship that allows them to buy and sell; those who refuse are cut off from such activities (vv. 16-17).
- The number of the dreaded emperor who brings such persecution is **666** (v. 18).
- Letters had numerical values in ancient times.
- A coin minted in the first century had the inscription NRON KSR, the Hebrew spelling of Nero Caesar—N=50, R=200, O=6, N=50, K=100, S=60, R=200, for a total of 666.
- John was a Jew and many of the early converts to the church in Asia were Jews who were well versed in such apocalyptic matters.

- Domitian is pictured as Nero come back to life—the interpretation of 666 as Nero seems too appropriate for it to be mere coincidence.

Keys to Revelation Chapter Seventeen and Daniel Chapter Seven:

- This chapter symbolically supplies more information as to the character and identity of the enemy.
- Rome is here likened to a Great Harlot, corrupter of kings/kingdoms, drunk with the blood of the martyrs, and reigning over a vast empire (vv. 2, 6, 15, 18).
- She is the archetypical “scarlet woman” (v. 3).
- She had grown rich through her abominations (v. 4).
- In fact, she was the “mother of all abominations” (v. 5).
- She was the primary force behind the murder of the martyrs (v. 7).
- She represents an immoral sense of prideful greed that drove the Roman Empire.
- The beast itself is the Satan-empowered Roman Empire.
- Directing this empire would be one particular emperor who was as one who had come back from the dead (vv. 8-11).
- The seven heads of the beast represent the seven hills upon which the city of Rome was built as well as seven kings or emperors that ruled over Rome—and a dreaded eighth that was as though one of the seven had come back from the dead (vv. 9-11).
- Here, as in 13:18, the reader is told to be especially wise in the interpretation.
- In 13:18 there was the number 666 that we identified as adding up to Nero.
- Here in 17:9-11, we are looking for a particular emperor—the emperor of the persecution.
- Beginning with Augustus, the first actual emperor of Rome, the first eleven emperors are:

○ Augustus	31 BC - AD 14
○ Tiberius	14 - 37
○ Gaius (Caligula)	37 - 41
○ Claudius	41 - 54
○ Nero	54 - 68
○ Galba	68 - 69
○ Otho	69
○ Vitilius	69
○ Vespasian	69 - 79
○ Titus	79 - 81
○ Domitian	81 – 96

- As you will recall, in chapter thirteen where we found the other symbolism in need of special attention, there was a tie in with Daniel chapter seven.
- Here we will also find a link to Daniel seven.
- As in chapter thirteen, Revelation will be looking back through history, Daniel, however, looked ahead through time (cf. Dan. 7:3-6; Rev. 13:1-2).
- Daniel, in dealing with the same persecution as Revelation, saw ten emperors and then an eleventh—the persecutor (Dan. 7:7-8, 20-24).

- John, on the other hand, saw seven emperors and then an eight—the persecutor (Rev. 17:10-11).
- But Daniel, looking forward, saw that three of the kings were removed, which would leave seven and an eighth, just like John saw in Revelation seventeen.
- History records that Domitian was in Rome through a civil war that saw Galba, Otho, and Vitilius all briefly rise up only to fall before they could gain control of the empire.
- Domitian was actually proclaimed emperor at that time in the place of his father Vespasian who was laying siege to Jerusalem, accompanied by Titus, Domitian's older brother. Vespasian returned to Rome immediately to take his place as emperor.
- So the book of Revelation has discounted the three emperors that were removed and looks at the five (Augustus—Nero), the one who was emperor at the writing of Revelation (Vespasian), the one who would come, but only reign for a short time (Titus), and then the eighth (Domitian) who was like one of the seven (Nero) come back from the dead.
- History and the Bible fit perfectly in a very intricate revelation of truth!
- Therefore, I believe that the Book of Revelation was written in the latter part of Vespasian's reign, about 78 or 79, just before Titus would come to rule for a short time, thus, just about four years before the persecutor, Domitian, would reign.
- The ten horns are ten client kings within the Roman Empire—kings allowed to reign as long as they would be subject to Rome. Their hatred against Rome will eventually be part of Rome's undoing (vv. 12, 16-17).
- The cause of Christ will prevail (v. 14).
- Rome ruled over vast numbers of people, but she was no match for the Lord (vv. 15-17).
- The Harlot, the malevolent spirit that characterized Rome, was ruler over earthly kings, but not over the King of kings (vv. 18, 14).

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December 24, 2006