

WHAT DOES THE “BEAST” REFER TO?

(Excerpt from my book, “The Book of Revelation Decoded”, pages 342-347)

In Daniel 7:1-7 we read,

“¹In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. ²Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. ³And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. ⁴The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. ⁵And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. ⁶After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. ⁷After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.” (KJV)

And in Daniel 7:17, Daniel was told that,

1.

"¹⁷The four beasts are four earthly kingdoms." (CEV)

From the above verses, we realize that **the symbolic term "beast" refers to an earthly kingdom --- an earthly government.**

Do we know the time of the appearance of the specific "beast" which will persecute the Christian saints?

The Bible does not inform us of the date in which this specific "beast" will come into power; however, it does say that this "beast" will be **the last world government before the coming of the kingdom of God.** Let us pay attention to the following scriptures:

Daniel 7:25-28

"²⁵And he (the leader of the "beast") shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. ²⁶But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it (the "beast") unto the end. ²⁷And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom (of the Most High) is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him (the Most High). ²⁸Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts much troubled me, and my countenance was changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart."

Revelation 17:10,11

"¹⁰And there are seven kings. The five fell, the one is, the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must re-

main a short time. ¹¹And the beast which was and is not, he is the eighth, and is out of the seven, and goes to perdition. (AT)

From the above verses, we learn that the “*eighth*” king, the persecuting “*beast*”, is truly **the last earthly kingdom**, a political world government which will be followed by the kingdom of God.

How do we know that the last “*beast*” will be a world government?

Regarding the authority of the “*beast*”, Revelation 13:7 says the following:

“And it was given to it (to the ‘beast’) 'to war with the saints, and to overcome them.' And authority was given to it (to the “beast”) over every tribe and tongue and nation.” (Author’s parentheses)

And in Revelation 17:11-13, we read,

“¹¹And the beast which was and is not, he is the eighth, and is out of the seven, and goes to perdition. ¹²And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. ¹³These have one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.”

What will happen to the “*beast*” at the end of the forty-two months?

At the end of the forty-two months of persecution, the Lord Jesus will return to annihilate the central governmental authority of the “*beast*”. At the same time, He will destroy all the earthly kingdoms and He will set up His own which

will stand forever. This statement, is supported by Daniel 2:44. Let us read that verse:

"And in the days of these kings, the God of Heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people. It shall break in pieces and destroy all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

Do the above words mean that at that time the Lord Jesus will destroy all the nations, all the people?

No, of course not! **He will only remove the governmental authority from all the governments of that time, including that of the "beast"**, so that the nations will walk in the light of His kingdom and be healed (Revelation 21:24; 22:2). At that time, the Lord Jesus will annihilate two entities:

a) The *"beast"* of Daniel 7:11, who is the *"little horn"* of Daniel 7:8, (along with the *"man of sin"* of 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4,8, who is the *"image of the beast"* of Revelation 13:14,15), and

b) The *"false prophet"*.

The Lord Jesus will throw those two alive into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20).

Other verses that show that the *"beast"* will be destroyed are:

Daniel 7:26

"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."
(KJV)

Revelation 17:8

“The beast which you saw was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss, and goes to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, those whose names have not been written on the book of life from the foundation of the world, seeing the beast that was, and is not, and will be.” (AT)

Revelation 17:11

“And the beast which was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goes to perdition.”

Revelation 19:20

“And the beast was seized, and with this one the false prophet doing signs before it, by which he led astray those having received the mark of the beast, and those worshipping its image. The two were thrown alive into the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone.”

We will discuss more things about the “*beast*” in chapters 13 and 17.