

Some of the most confusing and dramatic elements of the Book of Revelation are found in the imagery of beasts. These are spiritual representations of earthly leaders and governments in combination with their spiritual influences throughout history.

A helpful way to put them in perspective is to visualize them. The images we create may change several times as we try to understand them, but this can actually be an important part of the process of interpreting the scriptures.

The Scarlet Dragon: Satan, the Serpent of Old

Revelation 12:3

³Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.



The Hebrew term for dragon describes a magnificent serpent-like creature. It was considered beautiful and fabulous to behold. One could not keep from looking at it. The horns and extra heads are symbolically attached to the dragon who sustains them. They represent spirits and people that are given power by Satan.

Satan is identified as a dragon, with reference to governing earthly authorities connected to him throughout history and the end of the age.

The seven heads are symbolic for pagan kings governing the holy land that believed they were divine and demanded cult worship. They are empowered by an antichrist spirit (the diadems). Six are from the past and one from the future (the personified antichrist).

The ten horns are symbolic of 10 caliphs having authority over regional people groups that are enemies of Israel. These groups are seen in Psalm 83, vs 6-8. The ten "kingdoms" are; Edom, Ishmaelites, Moab, Hagrites, Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, Philistia, Tyre and Assyria. This chapter tells us that they will form a confederacy to try to wipe out Israel as a nation, and Islam fits this narrative. These caliphate "kings" would manifest in radical religious factions across territories.

Revelation 13:1-2

¹And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.

²And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.

Notice again the incorporation of ten horns and seven heads. This is a representation of the antichrist's evil imperialism. His power base is depicted as this single beast, but his human identity will manifest as the last of the seven heads.



The leopard-beast pictures the collective spirits that will manifest in human form as the antichrist and his kingdom. The person of the antichrist will rise to power in the end times, and his blasphemy will be in proclaiming, "I am God!" This was a common theme among ancient kings that ruled over the holy land. Pharaoh of Egypt, Sennacherib of Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Cyrus of Persia, Alexander of Greece, the Emperor of Rome and the antichrist of the future all exhibit this complex.

The interpretation is not dependent on the order of the beasts as they are presented in Scripture. It is simply one beast, meant to be taken as a whole. The characterizations are presented here in prophetic order just as in Nebuchadnezzar's dream-statue (See illustration #18).

The mouth is that of the lion (Babylon), the body is that of the leopard (Greece), and the feet are those of the bear (Medo-Persia). The lion had been associated with a symbol of Babylon for centuries, and in an earlier visitation to Daniel, an angel identified the leopard as symbolic for Greece. The bear as a picture of Medo-Persia is the next in historical progression, as seen in the strength and large 'footprint' of the bear. The application for us is that this beastly government will have the combined attributes of a leopard, bear and lion - all wild, carnivorous creatures (See illustration #21a-c).

The blasphemous names of the seven heads are those of six self-proclaimed "king-gods" over the ancient holy land claiming divinity and demanding worship, as well as the future antichrist.

The horns best represent Islamic caliphs supported by second-heaven powers and principalities (the diadems). They exercise authority over people groups (caliphates) that are enemies of Israel and who want to wipe Israel out as a nation (Psalm 83).

The Miracle-Working Beast: the False Prophet

#35c

Revelation 13:11,16,18

¹¹Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon.

¹⁶And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead,

¹⁸Here 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.



These four symbols comprise a collective representation of one person - the false prophet.



The false prophet will be a spiritual leader who promotes the antichrist.
This person will compel people to worship him.

Scripture says that the false prophet will be able to access dark spiritual powers (Rev 13:13). The false signs and wonders performed will be real, but not sanctified by the Holy Spirit. His magic arts will parallel those of Jannes and Jambres who collided with Moses and Aaron as they served Pharaoh. It is important to remember that God's two prophetic witnesses will be working at the same time - moving in power, unleashing retribution on blasphemers. God's power and authority working through them will achieve supremacy over the false prophet.

The false prophet will force an identifying mark to be implemented in conjunction with economic mandates. We do not yet know the meaning of the number, "666," but we are told that wisdom will be required to "calculate" the number in the days to come. Until then, pre-occupation with this number is a hindrance to the body of Christ and of no benefit to the lost or the poor.

Revelation 17:3-4,9-12

³And 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.

⁴The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality.

⁹Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, ¹⁰and 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.

¹¹The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.

¹²The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.



The woman riding the beast represents the seductive face of Mystery Babylon. She is also known as the great harlot. She is a spiritual reality; an organized, deceptive, illegitimate and blasphemous religion in opposition to Jesus and His Bride. The term 'harlot' refers to a false bride who tries to supplant the true Bride.

This picture of the beast/rider is a composite representation of false religion and the powers behind it. We could recognize various cults and false religions (Buddhism, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.), but especially applicable in the days to come would be the cult of Islam (God loves Muslims - it's Islam and the demonic spirits supporting it that He has a problem with).

The beast is a composite picture of jihadist religion, the antichrist, and the false prophet in combination with the spiritual powers connected to them. These, along with principalities and powers, will control the religiously radicalized, politically motivated end-time "Mystery Babylon."

The woman riding the beast is best seen as a spiritually appealing false religion including particular elements of reformed or 'soft' Islam. Appearing to be safe, she will present herself as alluring spirituality without the need for repentance or forgiveness or the yielding of one's will to God (Allah is not another name for God, but Satan). In the end, the beast that sustains and empowers her will violently turn on her also, destroying her along with true believers (Rev17:16-17).

The gold cup full of abominations means that the woman has indulged herself in sin and spiritual immorality. It brings her pleasure to drink the blood of martyrs. She considers herself equal to the Bride.

The seven heads are seven eschatological kings that can be identified with their earthly dominion. They are representations of 7 pagan kings who all claimed divine status. At the time John was given this vision, 5 of these had already died (Pharaoh of Egypt, Shalmaneser of Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Cyrus of Persia and Alexander of Greece), one was current at that time, or 'is' (Caesar, the emperor of Rome), and one was yet to come (the antichrist of Mystery Babylon). They are also called mountains, or governments on which the woman sits. They manifest as individual people, and are supported by evil kingdoms and administrations in second-heaven realms from the second-heaven city of Mystery Babylon.

The ten horns are symbolic of 10 Islamic caliphs having authority over regional people groups who are enemies of Israel. These groups are seen in Psalm 83, vs 6-8. The ten "kingdoms" are; Edom, Ishmaelites, Moab, Hagrites, Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, Philistia, Tyre and Assyria. This chapter tells us that they will form a confederacy to try to wipe out Israel as a nation, and Islam fits this narrative. This includes second-heaven powers and principalities that support them as they manifest in radical religious factions across territories (Isis, Al-Qaeda, The Muslim Brotherhood, etc).

Remember, the heads best represent pagan kings of the past/future over the holy land that claim divinity and cult worship, and the horns best represent Islamic caliphs with authority over territories that associate with the antichrist.

The antichrist's identity is not known to us at this time.

