

# **REFUTING PM – PART 13 (THE SEA BEAST REVISITED)**

## **I. Introductory Remarks:**

A. In our previous class we looked at Rev. 13:1-9.

1. We noted that PM believe the “beast” from the sea depicted in these verses is “The Anti-Christ.”
2. An explanation was offered which is consistent with the grand context of Scripture, is consistent with the immediate context in which Revelation was written, and is even consistent with secular history.

B. This study is offered to solidify what we previously learned.

## **II. A Brief Commentary on the Text:**

1. ***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.***

Biblically, the sea at times represents the sea of humanity (cf. Dan. 7:1-3) and also a powerful and destructive force (cf. Jer. 51:33-42; Ez. 26:1-3). The recipients of the letter, thus, would have known any beast from the sea would have been a serious human enemy. He would have had to have been an enemy that would persecute the church back in antiquity if we are to remain true to the context of the book. As the whole context of Revelation demonstrates, Satan was the power behind the beast – the human enemy. Why is the beast pictured as having seven heads and ten horns? This is because the power behind the beast is pictured as having seven heads and ten horns (cf. Rev. 12:1-3, 9). The beast looks very similar to the devil in that the beast is doing the devil’s bidding. The beast was deemed blasphemous – it would be totally opposed to God and make grand claims. Many Roman Emperors were defied after they died. So far as I can tell, Domitian was the first Roman Emperor to deify himself (claim to be deity while alive). Let’s remember that history tells us it was Domitian that had John exiled to Patmos.

2. ***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.***

Here we learn what the beast “looked like.” Dr. Frankenstein created a patchwork monster from pieces of dead bodies. In this verse we learn that the beast was a patchwork composite of three different animals: a leopard, a bear, and a lion. Where have we seen these animals together before? Answer: Daniel 7. See handout. We know from Daniel that the beast represents a fourth kingdom in antiquity and the horns represent ten kings that will come from that kingdom. Does this sound like one sole Anti-Christ or Roman Emperors? Here it is proven that the “power behind the throne” is the devil; i.e. the dragon (cf. Rev. 12:9). Note also that the beast had a seat (throne) and great authority. Does this remind you of Roman Emperors?

3. ***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.***

Here we learn that the beasts influence extends to all the world. Could this be said of Roman Emperors?

Did they have an influence in all the known world? There are many theories that have been put forth concerning this verse. Some see here various rebellions which occurred in the Roman Empire which break out to overthrow various emperors. For a short time the various rebellions seem for the moment to be able to inflict a fatal blow, but the various emperors survive the rebellions. This seems unlikely in that the text underscores just one head. I concur with those who see the head as being the great persecutor Nero – who when he died the persecution subsided somewhat. However, Domitian – an even greater persecutor – ascend to the throne. Thus, Nero’s brand of persecution was revived. It is a known historical fact that there was a widely held belief that Domitian was Nero raised from the dead in a different form.

4. ***And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?***

Here we learn that the whole world (the known world the beast had control of) worshipped the beast. It is inferred that the beast accepted the worship. However, by worshipping the beast the people were actually worshipping the devil who was the power behind the throne. Were Roman Emperors worshipped? Yes.

This is a known historical fact. Who was alive and accepting worship when John penned Revelation? Domitian. The earthly king and the kingdom he represented seemed invincible. The Lamb would later declare war upon and totally devastate the Roman Empire.

5. ***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.***

Here we learn of the arrogance of the beast. Were the Roman Emperors proud? Did they speak blasphemous things? Notice that he will continue to strut like a rooster for 42 months. This number is time and again seen in scripture and apocalyptic literature to represent an indefinite period of time known only to God. The beast would not continue forever. Domitian would eventually die. Rome would eventually fall. The slain saints would be vindicated.

6. ***And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.***

Here we get some specific information about the blasphemy the beast uttered. Deluded by power, the beast railed against God and His people. The beast would speak evilly of God, His dwelling place (would include the heavenly realm and also in the church), and also of those dwelling in heaven (Christ in sarcasm? Angelic beings? Those in paradise?). Did Roman Emperors blaspheme God? History says yes. Did they blaspheme the church? Again, history says yes. See how nicely the material revealed in Rev. 13 is fitting into an ancient setting? Why then unfairly force it into a future one?

7. ***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.***

The beast is given the authority (allowed of God) to declare war against Christians. The beast will slaughter Christians. However, as we have learned, the ability to do so will not extend forever. We here learn that the extent of the beast's rule is worldwide. Did the Roman Empire and her emperors declare war on ancient saints? History says yes. Did the same slaughter our ancient brethren? Sadly, history again says yes. Did the same have a rule that was worldwide? Yes. The thrust of the whole sits in ancient setting, not a modern or future one.

8. ***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.***

While non-Christians had no problem with worshipping Roman Emperors, it was quite a different story for members of the church. The faithful would not declare a man "Supreme Lord and God." Thus, they paid the price with their blood and lives, but as we have noted they would later be vindicated. Where are such men and women today (cf. Heb. 11:24-26)?

### III. **Concluding Remarks:**

- A. As we have seen, the sea beast of Rev. 13 represents an ancient world empire with powerful kings, not a future one world government head by "The Anti-Christ."
- B. I believe the ancient empire was Rome with its emperors – with a specific thrust upon Domitian.