

The Mysterious Beast

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By Phillip G. Kayser at Dominion Covenant Church on 2017-03-12

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Text

11:1 I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who are worshiping there. 2 And leave out the outer court of the temple and do not measure it, because it has been given to the nations; and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.

3 And I will give authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” 4 These are the two olive trees, even the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if anyone wants to harm them fire comes out of their mouths and consumes their enemies. So if anyone wants to harm them he must be killed in this way. 6 They have authority to shut up the sky so that no rain falls during the days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they wish.

7 When they finish their witness, the Beast of prey that comes up out of the Abyss will make war with them, overcome them and kill them 8—and leave their corpses in the street of the great city! (which is called Sodom and Egypt, spiritually speaking), even where their Lord was crucified.

9 And those from the peoples, tribes, languages and ethnic nations look at their corpses three-and-a-half days, and will not allow their corpses to be buried. 10 And those who dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and they will enjoy themselves and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

11 And after three-and-a-half days the breath from God entered them and they stood on their feet, and a great fear fell on those who were watching them. 12 And I heard a loud voice from the heaven saying to them, “Come up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. 13 And in that day there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city fell, and seven thousand individuals were killed in the earthquake. And the rest became fearful and gave glory to the God of heaven.)

14 The second woe is past. Look out, here comes the third woe!¹

Introduction

We've spent two Sundays looking at the two prophets. Today I want to look at this mysterious beast of prey, or what most versions simply translate as "the beast." This is the first time that the expression occurs in the book of Revelation, but starting in chapter 13, it will occur an additional 36 times. So you can see that the beast is a very central theme of the second half of the book.

Now, let me remind you of one of the things that the apostle John typically does to help us to understand this book. He typically gives us additional interpretive clues the very first time he deals with any given subject. For

¹ Translation of the Majority Text by Wilbur M. Pickering - [The Sovereign Creator Has Spoken](#).

example, he will do that in verse 8 by identifying what he wants us to see "the great city" as being. Throughout the rest of this book, that phrase, "the great city," should be seen as Jerusalem. Why? Because he identifies the great city as Jerusalem the very first time that the phrase comes up in verse 8. And he gives us some very important information about "the great city." Well, he does the same thing with the topic of the beast in verse 7.

So I am going to go through every word of this verse to try to nail down the clues that John wants us to have as we read this book. Now, when we get to chapters 13 and 17, we are going to be seeing a great deal more about this remarkable beast. But today I just want to focus on the clues that are found in this verse.

I. The origin of the beast is the "Abyss." This makes the beast:

And probably the most important clue in this verse comes from the word "Abyss." It says, "the Beast of prey that comes up out of the Abyss..." This shows the origin of this beast of prey. And way too many commentaries miss this important clue.

So, what is the Abyss? He has already told us what the Abyss is the first time he used that term - in chapter 9. It is the prison of demons in the heart of the earth. In fact, why don't you turn there, and I will read the first 11 verses. Back when I preached on chapter 9, I pointed out that this releasing of millions of demons out of the Abyss happened on October 31, of AD 66. It just dawned on me this past week that the date I gave you is the same day as Halloween. Maybe that date has significance to demons because of this event (I don't know). Certainly millions of demons were released from their prison on October 31 of AD 66. Now, that's not when the Beast got released. We'll look at that in a bit. But I am just identifying the Abyss. Beginning to read at verse 1.

9:1 So the fifth angel trumpeted, and I saw a 'star' that had fallen out of the sky to the earth. And to him was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. 2 So he opened the shaft of the Abyss and smoke went up out of the shaft, like the smoke of a burning furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke from the shaft. 3 And 'locusts' exited from the smoke into the earth. And to them was given a capability just like the scorpions of the earth have capability. 4 And they were told not to harm the grass of the earth, nor any green plant, nor any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And it was designated to them [locusts], not to kill them [men] but, to torment them five months. And their torment is like the torment of a scorpion whenever it strikes a person. 6 And in those days the people will seek death but not find it; they will want to die but death will run away from them.

7 Now the appearance of the 'locusts' was like horses prepared for battle, and something like a golden crown was on their heads, and their faces were like human faces. 8 They had hair like a woman's and their teeth were like a lion's. 9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. 10 And, they have tails like scorpions and stingers precisely in those tails! They have the capability to hurt the populace five months, 11 having as king over them the angel of the Abyss — his name in Hebrew is Abbadon, while in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

A. A demon (fallen angel) - This interpretive clue alone opens up the rest of the book in a marvelous way. (Compare also Dan. 7:2,4b,8,12,17,26 with 10:13,20; etc.)

By saying that the beast is a beast that "that comes up out of the Abyss..." he is saying that the beast is a demon - and we will be seeing that he is a demon

king. The Beast is not first and foremost the empire over which he rules. It is not first and foremost the emperor, Nero, whom he had entered into and controlled. The Beast must be seen as being a demon. Yes, he has a kingdom that is named after him, but he is a demon. Yes, he has at least three men whom he possesses at various times, who are named after him, but he is first and foremost a demon.

And this is not surprising in Biblical history. Isaiah 14 calls the king of Babylon Lucifer, but it quickly becomes clear that he is really speaking to Satan who indwells and possesses the king of Babylon. It is the demon, Satan, who is the main topic of that conversation. The same was true of the king of Tyre in Ezekiel 28. And when we get to Revelation chapters 13 and 17 we will see that this clue solves some otherwise inscrutable problems that have made virtually every commentator scratch their heads.

For example, in chapter 17 we have this puzzle: verses 8-10 indicate that the Beast was identified with the sixth king who was, but is not now, but is about to rise from the Abyss, and is also the eighth king, though he is of the seven. And people think, "What??? What on earth is he talking about?" It's fun to read the explanations of commentaries who are puzzled by it. But the explanation is quite simple if you take this clue seriously.

The demon named "the beast" had previously been assigned to Rome and had possessed Nero. But when Nero died in June of 68, I believe Satan was totally blindsided. He probably thought he was winning this war. Yet God bound the Beast in the Abyss once again. That was when the Roman empire fell apart and the persecution of Christians stopped. By comparing various verses in Revelation it appears that the demon called the Beast was bound in the Abyss from June of 68 (when Nero died) to sometime in early 69 - perhaps a little bit less than a year. And referring to that time period, that passage says that the Beast "is about to come up out of the Abyss."

Well, that makes sense if you hold that the beast is a demon since he has been in the Abyss ever since Nero died. But those who see the beast as being exclusively Nero are confused by that statement. In fact, it has led some liberals to assume that John thought that Nero was about to be resurrected and to rule the empire once again. And since Nero didn't rule the empire once again, John was a failed prophet. Conservatives like Gentry explain it that the Beast as empire got resurrected, but not the beast as Nero. The problem is that the reference to the mark of the Beast being applied is clearly in late AD 69 and it is an individual beast that applies that mark.

But the clue given to us in verse 7 opens up both that passage and Daniel 7.

In both Daniel and Revelation the rulers are primarily demons who rule through men, and the men take on the character and the name of the demon. Some of the demonic rulers of Daniel actually ruled through several successive emperors. For example, you can't say that the prince of Persia was just one human king because Daniel indicates first that the prince of Persia was a demon, and secondly that he ruled over Persia for the entire length of that empire - longer than any human emperor reigned. And the same is true here. Once you see that it was the demon behind Nero who was bound in the Abyss, who comes back out of the Abyss in early 69, then everything becomes logical and clear.

In fact, it perfectly explains certain puzzles in secular history - such as the sudden change that happened to Vespasian right at the time that the Beast is released again. Prior to that time Vespasian was a reasonable man, but he became a butcher for the next few months. It's weird (unless of course you take the demonic into account - then it is not strange at all). And interestingly, Vespasian became a god to his armies at that time because of all the miracles that he was doing; miracles that have been well-documented by the historians. But the text of Revelation 17 indicates that the Beast only continued with Vespasian for a short time and then became the eighth ruler. Verse 11 says that the Beast was the one who was and is not (that's his time with Nero) and "is himself also the eighth (that's his time with Titus), and is of the seven (he was ruling through the previous seven emperors)." The word "also" is ignored by many interpreters, but it indicates that the Beast was not just Nero or just Titus, but the Beast was Titus, his predecessor Vespasian, as well as Nero who had passed away by that point. The Greek grammar perfectly reflects the situation of history once you see that it was a demon.

So since the text indicates that the Beast only continues with Vespasian for a short time before moving on to the Eighth ruler, and since Titus is the eighth ruler, we would expect to see similar changes in Titus in that winter. And we do. Almost identical changes came over Titus in late December of 69 or early January of 70 and there was a sudden appearance of demonic miracles in him. In fact, those miracles moved both his father and his troops to start calling Titus "Caesar Titus" long before he officially assumed the throne. He received the position of emperor and gave decrees in his name as emperor. That had never happened before. So there were all kinds of strange things that happened to Titus, including unbelievable hatred for Jehovah, blasphemy against Jehovah, weird things he did to offend Jehovah in the temple. The demon beast had moved from Vespasian to Titus. Apparently the

demon was more interested in the slaughter going on in the Middle East than he was in ruling Rome, so he left Rome in the hands of the previous two demons, Thanatos and Hades. But he is still in charge. And we will look at all of those remarkable details when we get to chapters 13 and especially 17.

Now obviously there is an objection to this interpretation: people say that in chapter 13 the mark of the Beast is the number of man; and it is. But it doesn't say that the Beast is a man. It says that the mark of the Beast is the number of a man. And as one commentator pointed out, that distinguishes the Beast from the man of AD 70 who bore his mark and his name. In that verse Titus wears the demon's mark and Titus forces people to wear that mark on their foreheads and hands - their phylacteries. And we will be seeing the agreement that Titus and the free Jewish leaders (outside of Jerusalem) had made with each other at that time.

But the important point is that Titus wasn't the first person to bear the number of the Beast in his name. When we get to that chapter we will see that Nero's name adds up to 666 in Hebrew, and it makes sense since he too wears the mark of the Beast. But interestingly, so did the other two people that the Beast possessed. Both Vespasian's name and Titus' name adds up to 666. In fact, their names add up to 666 in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. And I will walk you through all of that when we get to those chapters. But the point I am making now is that if the beast is a demon who enters into and controls Nero, Vespasian, and Titus, then it all makes sense. The kingdom he rules can be named after him and the people he possesses can be named after him, but the demon is the Beast. This verse makes that crystal clear.

B. This parallels earlier demonic beings that moved emperors (see 6:1-8; 9:1-21)

In any case, it should not seem at all unusual that a demon will be assigned to a ruler. In chapter 6 we saw that every previous ruler of Rome had a demon assigned to him. And as more and stronger demons came in with their armies to supplement the previous demon, the emperors kept getting worse.

II. The word "the" in the beast" points us to a specific beast in Scripture - Daniel 7's fourth beast.

And this is exactly what the book of Daniel anticipated would happen. Daniel predicted that one of the fallen angelic princes would take charge of Rome just like there was a demonic angel assigned to Persia and another one

assigned to Greece. They were the rulers of those empires. So on that note, let's go back to the second phrase of verse 7 and look at that next clue.

Notice that the text doesn't say, "a beast," but it says "the beast." It is the dominant beast of that time period. G. K. Beale's commentary says about that word "the,"

The definite article τό before θηρίον ("beast") is one way of specifying that this is not just any opponent of the saints but the one that Daniel prophesied. And Revelation 12, 13, and 17 will further describe this beast through more allusions to Daniel 7.²

And most commentators totally agree with Beale's statement. John wants us to see the beast as being the specific beast of Daniel 7, who was also a demon. And Daniel 7 gives us a boatload of information on what the nature of the Beast really is. I'm not going to give you all of that information, but I want to at least introduce you to it.

When I preached through Daniel 7 in the 1990s, I taught that the four beasts represented the four world empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Well, that is true as far as it goes - the empires are named after the demonic beasts that ruled them. But Daniel 7:17 is quite explicit that the four beasts are first and foremost four kings who come up out of the earth - in other words, out of the Abyss. They were in the heart of the earth before they began to rule each kingdom. I had missed that, but it makes perfect sense. There was no one human emperor who lived long enough to rule each empire from beginning to end. There were several human emperors who ruled rather than just one. But Daniel speaks of one ruler per empire. That makes no sense unless you see those kings as demons. It doesn't hugely affect my interpretation or application of Daniel, but it does smooth out some rough edges. Even though I don't agree with most of what Duncan McKenzie has written, he clued me into this interpretation. And it is perfect. And it was the ancient Jewish interpretation.

And Duncan McKenzie has also changed my interpretation of the three horns and the little horn of Daniel 7:8, and it has proved to be a huge help in understanding the book of Revelation. It for sure resolves the timeline that we will be looking at toward the end of our chapter. So, just in case any of you remember what I said on Daniel 7 twenty years ago, let me eat humble pie and correct myself. I was wrong.

If you turn to Daniel 7 I will give you a sneak peak that will help you to understand some later portions of Revelation that have puzzled a lot of

² G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 588.

people. And I should point out that there are differences in the descriptions of the beast in Revelation 13 and 17 - specifically in the crowns, because each vision is emphasizing different features. But let's look at Daniel's description of this demon. Daniel 7, beginning to read at verse 7.

Dan. 7:7 "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

And this is where I made a mistake when I preached on Daniel. I thought these ten horns were ten contemporary provincial kings, and dated them earlier. And while there were ten provincial kings that Daniel also addresses (the ten toes of the statue in Daniel 2), these ten horns actually rule the beast as a whole; in other words, they are emperors. This and other clues have made me change my mind and say that they refer to ten sequential rulers or powers, starting with Julius Caesar. That definitely smooths out the time sequence. And I have given a chart in your outlines of those ten rulers in Rome. They are

- Julius Caesar (49-44 BC)
- Augustus (31 BC - AD 14)
- Tiberius (AD 14-37)
- Gaius, or Caligula (AD 37-41)
- Claudius (AD 41-54)
- Nero (AD 54-68)
- Galba (AD 68-69) - a pretended emperor
- Otho (AD 69) - a pretended emperor
- Vitellius (AD 69) - a pretended emperor
- Vespasian (AD 69-79)
- Titus (AD 79-81)

Now, the horns 7,8,9 were illegitimate (never officially approved), and were displaced by Vespasian as the seventh emperor and with Titus being the eighth legitimate emperor. Now, Titus was the general at that time, but he was definitely the power behind his father's throne, and therefore was immediately named as emperor. So the left chart shows Daniel's ten horns or powers, and the right side of the chart shows the same people but only numbers the legitimate emperors. So the right hand chart reflects Revelation 17 and the left hand chart reflects Daniel 7. In any case, in Daniel 7, verse 8 speaks of an eleventh horn - a little horn - he is little because he is not yet on the throne, but he is the prince that Daniel 9 will refer to, Titus. Verse 8 says, Dan. 7:8 I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots... And it is key to the interpretation that horns 1-6 were not plucked up. Nero and the previous emperors had died, but they were not plucked up. They

were still on the beast. As bad as they were, they continued to be considered legitimate emperors. Who were the three horns plucked out by the roots? Titus displaced the generals Galba, Otho, and Vitellius (who had proclaimed themselves emperor) and overthrew them. Once they were plucked up by the roots, there were only eight emperors. And of course, that's what history tells us. And when we get to chapter 17 of Revelation, we will see how the numbering here perfectly fits the puzzle of the sixth, seventh, and eighth rulers. But in any case, speaking of Titus, verse 8 continues:

...And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

These are symbols of the demonic manifestation in Titus. Verse 9 goes on to describe exactly what the last half of Revelation 11 will describe:

Dan. 7:9 "I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; Dan. 7:10 A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened. Dan. 7:11 "I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. Dan. 7:12 As for the rest of the beasts, [and he is talking here about the demonic rulers of the previous empires who were still hanging around and who had not been consigned to the Abyss - "as for the rest of the beasts"] they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

So even though the demonic beast behind Nero and Titus would be consigned to the Abyss two times in Revelation 17, the rest of the demonic rulers who had preceded that beast would be allowed to stay free and would continue to fight the saints even after AD 70. This is a key that resolves some of the last puzzles of Revelation 17. Persecution will continue under Vespasian's sons, Titus and later, Domitian, even though the demonic beast who had ruled Rome was bound in the Abyss in AD 70.

Flip down to Daniel 7:16 where the angel gives an interpretation of this vision.

Dan. 7:16 I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: Dan. 7:17 "Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth.

Now, one of the things that I hadn't noticed before was the grammar of "out of the earth." The Abyss and Hades are in the heart of the earth, and the beasts who rule Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome were four demonic kings who came up out of the Abyss - out of the heart of the earth. And though the fourth beast was bound back in the Abyss more than once, the first three beasts ruled the entire time that their empires lasted and at least continued to be around even after the fourth beast is bound. Verse 18

describes what happens in AD 70:

Dan. 7:18 But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.' Dan. 7:19 ¶ "Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; Dan. 7:20 and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows. Dan. 7:21 "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, Dan. 7:22 until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. Dan. 7:23 "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be A fourth kingdom on earth, So you can see that just like Revelation, Daniel shows that the kingdom itself is often named after the demon that rules it. So Daniel 7 says that the Beast is a king who comes up out of the earth; the Beast is also the empire named after that demon; and the Beast is also the rulers that the Beast possesses. And almost every commentator of every school of thought notices this fluctuation between at least an individual beast and a corporate beast. So speaking of the kingdom of Rome, it says, "The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth..." Earlier he had said it was a king; now he says it is a kingdom. He says,

Which shall be different from all other kingdoms,
And shall devour the whole earth,
Trample it and break it in pieces.

Dan. 7:24 The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings. Dan. 7:25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. [That's three and a half years] Dan. 7:26 "But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever. Dan. 7:27 Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

So, just as Revelation 11 does, Daniel 7 gives the kingdoms of the world to Christ in AD 70. And it is in AD 70 that the individual Beast, the demon, is bound in the Abyss.

Once you see that the beast is a demon, everything else opens up. But the main point here is that commentators point out that the word "the" in "the beast" points us to the Scriptural fourth beast of Daniel 7, and it is imperative that we have that demon beast in mind when we read the rest of this book.

III. The word θηρίον (= "beast of prey") distinguishes this beast from other beasts in the book. The symbol is helpful by pointing to the following facts:

The next point is that the word for beast in the Greek is θηρίον, and that word helps to distinguish this beast from the living creatures of heaven and from Christ as the Lamb. And I have put down four implications of that word θηρίον, which Pickering translated as the "beast of prey."

A. A θηρίον is always an unclean animal (unlike Christ the Lamb)

First, a θηρίον kind of beast is always an unclean animal, unlike the Lamb and unlike the creatures in heaven. It is a perfect symbol of demons. Demons are unclean as were the pagan empires they ruled.

Interestingly, once a pagan empire got converted and the demon beast got cast out, that empire was no longer called a beast in Scripture. For example, once Nebuchadnezzar lost his demonic insanity, became converted, and devoted his kingdom to Jehovah, that kingdom was no longer called a beast. Instead, the beast was lifted up, its wings torn off, it was transformed, was made to stand on its feet like a man, and a man's heart is given to it. But until that happened, it was likened to an unclean animal.

We should never look at these ancient empires with admiration. We should never see their wisdom as neutral; it is a demonic wisdom. We should never immerse our children in their demonic literature. I'm not saying you can't study it, but certainly don't bathe in it and make it a part of your worldview as some classical education does. See what stands behind those bestial empires - a demon. It's demonic wisdom.

B. A θηρίον is always a flesh eating animal (unlike Christ the Lamb)

Second, a θηρίον beast is always a flesh eating animal, unlike Christ the lamb and unlike the creatures in heaven. This gives it a destructive nature. It seeks to devour and destroy Christ's kingdom and Christ's people. It is the very nature of a θηρίον beast to be opposed to Christ and His Word. So when Scripture describes pagan nations as being bestial, we should not put our trust in them. Christians who trust in civil governments are like these people who get a pet lion and find the pet to be totally tame and totally safe until one day the lion's true nature comes out and it mauls and eats the person. It's happened quite a number of times.

And it is imperative that we see modern pagan civil government as dangerous when it is in the hands of demons. As George Washington said, "Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force; like fire, a handy servant and a dangerous master."

Well, it is a particularly dangerous master when demons govern it. Never give more power and more responsibility to a civil government that is pagan. Put it on a leash. The likelihood is that the inner demons will use the government to devour and destroy that which is good. We have been giving enormous power to our central government during my lifetime, thinking falsely that it will serve us. What a perfect image of how foolish it is to put your trust in princes.

C. *A θηρίον is always a fierce animal, as Daniel 7:7 describes*

Third, a θηρίον beast is always a fierce animal of prey. So that is why Pickering translates it as beast of prey. And of course, Daniel 7:7 describes Rome as being fierce. It drives me crazy that Christians admire Greece and Rome so much when God has nothing but negative things to say about those empires.

D. *A θηρίον is always connected in Scripture with fear and danger*

Fourth, a θηρίον beast is always connected in Scripture with fear and danger. It is not to be admired, imitated, loved, or followed. Instead, the book of Revelation calls us to replace all θηρίον-type-kingdoms with the rule of Christ. He's not opposed to civil government. Revelation will later speak of godly civil governments. But any modern kingdom, including America, which throws off the laws of Christ and the rule of Christ is reverting to the nature of a beast. Why? Because some demon will fill the gap. And we should always see the demonic behind the weird things that go on in Washington, DC. People are flabbergasted that the Republicans got elected on a promise of cutting debt and then immediately proposed a 9.7 trillion dollar increase to the debt over the next ten years. They are flabbergasted that Republicans who won on a promise to abolish Obamacare have immediately turned around and given us a restored Obamacare. But realize that these and many other irrational things are likely being driven by the demonic. God gave us this book in part to change our view of civics. Too many Christians have a naive view of civics.

IV. The phrase "that comes up out of" shows he had previously been bound.

But let's look briefly at the next major clue. The phrase, "that comes up out of," shows that this beast had been previously bound in the Abyss. And this reintroduces the subject that we dealt with in previous sermons that God unleashes demons as judgments when the church is faithless and he allows demons to be once again bound in the Abyss or bound in regions of earth when the church is faithful to the Lord and when it engages in spiritual warfare. As has already been mentioned, this demon was bound at least three times. He was bound sometime in history before these events. We aren't told when. He is bound once again in AD 68 when Nero dies. And Revelation 17 indicates that he would be bound once and forever in AD 70 along with another demon. I can't get into the details of that this morning, but it is a clue that just as other demons can be unleashed and/or bound, even a fierce demon like the Beast can be unleashed for judgment and bound by believers in history. Though it is only hinted at here, it will become much more clear as the book develops. A strongman of a region must be bound before his kingdom can be plundered. That's what Jesus said in the Gospels. And before Rome could be plundered after AD 70, the strongman of Rome had to be bound in AD 70. And from that time forward, the strongmen of country after country began to be bound and other demons began to be bound in the Abyss. The early church fathers like Athanasius spoke of this binding of Satan and the victorious march of the church. It is an important clue on where this book is headed. That's all I will say for now on that subject.

V. The phrase, "When they finish their witness" hints at a first century timing. (cf. 17:7 - "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the Abyss and to go into perdition.")

The next clue deals with timing. The very first phrase of verse 7 says, "when they finish their witness." Based on the timing of the two prophets that we have studied in the last two sermons, this hints at a first century timing. Of course, the whole verse hints at that, so I don't really need to dwell on this much. But if you see the beast as being future to us, then you are ignoring the context of the beast. And John was told in Revelation 17 that the beast was "about to come" up out of the Abyss once again. That "about to" could only be first century.

VI. The clause "will make war with them, overcome them and kill them" points back to Daniel 7:21-22 and indicates three things:

But look at the next clause. The clause, "will make war with them, overcome them and kill them" is almost identical phraseology to Daniel 7:21-22. So virtually everyone says that this is at least an allusion to those two verses. So let me read them again. Daniel 7:21-22 says this: "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made favor of the the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom." Notice that the time to possess the kingdom comes after the tribulation, not before it. In other words, it comes in AD 70, not in AD 30. In any case, this clause highlights three facts about this beast that will help us as we keep reading in the book.

A. This demon moves a human war effort against humans on earth

The first fact is that this demon was moving human war efforts against humans on earth. Yes the demon is a spiritual being, but he works through flesh and blood. When Paul said that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood" he was not denying that flesh and blood humans persecute the church. They do. He was just saying that we cannot ignore the true cause of that persecution - demons. Paul is simply saying that the ultimate victory can only be won as we engage in spiritual warfare. Until the demonic strongman is bound, we cannot plunder his house. And the demonic king of Rome was moving Rome to promote his evil purposes. So John makes us realize that even though there is a demon involved, real humans were involved as well. And that becomes obvious as we continue reading in the book of Revelation. We already saw in Revelation 9 that millions of demons were moving the flesh and blood armies of Vespasian and Titus.

B. This demon hates what the prophets stood for

The second fact is that this demon hates what the prophets stood for. And if demons make war against the prophets who bring God's revelation, you can be certain that they will make war against the revelation itself. It is no wonder that the Soviet Union and China tried to eradicate all Scripture from their realms. You could see a demonic hatred for Scripture in those communist empires. It is no wonder that our demonic universities try to push Christians out of academia, and if they can't succeed in that, they mock and

slander the Scriptures. Many Universities have become incredibly hostile to the Bible. Why? Because the demons who govern such institutions recognize the threat of the Scriptures, and they hate the Scriptures. Scripture has systematically been removed from America's court rooms, class rooms, civics, and other parts of public life. We shouldn't be surprised by that. We need to see life through spiritual eyes and to recognize that we must wrestle with demons.

C. It will therefore not be surprising when the beast makes war against all the other followers of Christ

The third fact that this clues us into is that it should not be surprising to see that the beast will also make war against all the other followers of Christ. Daniel prophesied that he would. Revelation will go on to describe that persecution by the Beast. So I think you can see that this first introduction to the Beast is helpful in interpreting the rest of the book. I hope that you will find the introduction to the Great City to be just as helpful next week.

VII. But at the same time, this verse gives hope because the sequence of Revelation 11 (persecution of the saints in verses 1-14 leading to heavenly judgment in favor of saints, the saints inheriting the kingdoms, etc. in 11:15-19) is the same sequence as Daniel 7 (the beasts war in Dan. 7:7-8 followed by judgment, saints inheriting kingdom etc. in verses 9-14; and sequence reiterated in the interpretation of 7:15-27)

But even though this is a scary verse, it is also an encouraging verse. By describing the beast in the context of Daniel 7's prophecy, it immediately lets the reader know that this beast is destined to soon be bound in the Abyss, and his kingdom is destined to soon be given to the saints and eventually be taken over by the saints. Very very soon (in other words, AD 70), God's court room will open, the books will be opened, thrones will be set, and the kingdom will be given to the saints. As I pointed out before, the forty years from AD 30 - AD 70 parallels the forty years from Israel's exodus from Egypt to the crossing of the Jordon River. Yes, the kingdom was legally established in AD 30, but the territories of all kingdoms were given to the saints in AD 70. And we will look at that turning point in the last part of this chapter as God's judgments give the saints the basis for victory over the demonic rulers. While there is realism on the danger of this beast and the

martyrdom of Christians, there is also hope that is being established.

Now, that hope is taken away when people put thousands of years between verses 14 and 15. To fail to see that the whole chapter is fulfilled in the first century is to rob the church of the note of victory that Daniel and John have given. Everything in this chapter is tightly fitted together. And when we get to the end of the chapter, I think you are going to see that it is incredibly encouraging. Well, may God bless you as you take on our modern bestial state through grace and the application of the Scriptures by faith. Amen.