

“666”

Most people understand that the human body, though made up of millions of different parts, is unified. The body is unified by connective tissue (skin, muscle, sinew, etc.) that binds everything together. But, when it comes to historical and present happenings, their minds are blind. Much of this is due to selective cultivation of views manipulated by elite groups (today – homosexuals, ‘greens’ and Muslims). For example, the persecution of Christians in the West is abundant and widespread, yet few outside the churches ‘see’ it.

They do not know just how widespread it is, and how hateful anti-Christians are. They only see the tip of the iceberg. Nor do they ‘see’ what connects the motley collection of evils together – Satan. They do not recognise this, because they do not truly believe God exists! Nor can they understand just how evil our present-day leaders are. And these leaders, led by the nose by homosexuals in particular, through foul organisations like Stonewall, order their employees (government controlled groups, such as police, judiciary, hospitals, civil servants, etc.) to carry out their evil laws. None of them can see that what they do is exactly the same mindlessness as was found in Hitler’s fascist Germany, or Stalin’s Marxist Russia. And no doubt all of them say “I am only doing my job”.

Be assured, the works of Satan are profuse and getting worse. They are enforced by government employees, and by private companies, and even charities, all clamouring to be seen as ‘broadminded’, ‘inclusive’, and ‘diverse’... only inclusive does NOT include Christians. They even show great pride in being lauded by Stonewall, which awards the equivalent of bottle-tops as ‘rewards’, and they turn a blind eye to Muslim intimidation and violence. What we read in this chapter is blatantly obvious to anyone with an eye to see. But, it takes courage to speak out against it.

Satan is now charging furiously and fast, wreaking havoc and evil on a global scale. And, as the second ‘beast’ in this chapter shows, he will even work through ‘soft’ people and groups, such as religious organisations and churches. The Roman pontiff has proved this only recently, by upholding the vile homosexuality movement. While most people refuse to speak out, or do not know what is really happening, Christians suffer and are stunned into silence. The two beasts shown here may already have arisen in the past... we can choose almost any foul rulers or groups who fit the description, but they will arise time and again in almost every age. In particular, they will come back to full power soon, probably in our own lifetime. And those without discernment will join them, hating and attacking anything of God. Whose side are you on? God’s or Satan’s?

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John had another vision and once again a beast arose with seven heads and ten horns. There was a crown upon each horn. In the previous chapter we saw a beast with seven heads and seven crowns, with ten horns.

Many see the beast in chapter 12 as being the same as the beast depicted in Daniel 7:7, 24, but I see no necessary connection. (By 'necessary' I mean that the Revelation account is not diminished if we do not see such a connection). The Daniel text gives us ten horns, but with an additional smaller horn that tore out three of the ten bigger horns, leaving just seven horns. The smaller horn was a king who attacked and subjected three of the more powerful kings to himself. Also, the smaller horn had a mouth and eyes, just like a man.

In the Revelation account there is no direct comparison. Yes, we may say that after the attack by the smaller horn or king, there were seven left...and there are seven heads and crowns depicted in Revelation 12. This *might* be seen as the ten horns minus the three that were crushed by the smaller horn. In which case the 'heads' must be synonymous with 'horns', otherwise there is no connection at all. Even then, the beast seems to appear different in form. (See my studies in Daniel).

In verse five below the beast in verse one is given a mouth, so this is again a possible link with the Daniel beast. Also, mention of a leopard can be linked, if we wish, with Daniel. Even so, there is no 'necessary' link. The summation is this – I urge great caution when trying to connect one text with another, especially when they are prophetic. There may, or may not, be a connection. One may, or may not, be a repetition of the other. The latter may, or may not, be the culmination of the former. If the latter is an exact description of the former, then we may state that the both are the same – but only if their circumstances and end results are the same.

So, there is either a causal or a casual link, or none at all. If causal, then one is the *same* as the other. If casual, then one is

possibly

linked with the other, but not necessarily so; if none at all, well, it is

speculative

and has no place in fixed dogma. Therefore, I am not saying there is no link between the Daniel

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beast and this one. I am merely exercising caution lest we make an human theory out of what is plain, and then make a speculation out of what is symbolic and partly hidden from us.

It is quite possible, for example, that the smaller horn or king, which is said in Daniel to be the final big kingdom, will be vanquished. During its reign it will try to change 'times and laws'. It is more than feasible that this 'kingdom' is the European Union, which is avidly destroying the individuality of countries and replacing their laws and ways with its own. (2013 note: It may also be the wicked, Marxist UN, which has, since the original writing of this study, shown its desire to rule the world).

But – 'feasible' is not necessarily 'equal'. If there is a direct link, then so be it. If there is such a link it will only reinforce the truth and will neither add nor subtract from it. That is why I say it is not necessary to have such a link, for the depicted action ascribed to both texts will (or might have already) come about, regardless of what we make of them!

Verses 1-3

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.

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.

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."

There appears to be no specific reason why John should be standing on a sea shore. Sometimes, the sea is symbolic for the mass of unbelieving peoples, but such an idea makes

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no difference to the vision itself. The important factor is the beast that arose out of the sea. The beast, **therion**, has a metaphorical meaning in this case, and refers to a violent man of unsurpassed brutality, who is savage and easily roused to viciousness. At a time when it is not 'correct' to say so, this could easily be applied to, say, Islamic extremism, which is supported by over fifty Islamic countries. Yet, it could primarily have applied to an emperor such as Nero.

Overall, though, I would again say there is no necessary link here. It is possible that such a meaning is accurate, but Islam is only one of many groups currently fighting for supremacy. And, under them all, is the continual struggle by Rome to gain ascendancy by many means, both foul and legal. The European Union is the 'legal' arm of Rome, even though the EU uses dictatorial means to achieve its legal requirements. Note that the meaning of 'beast' is vital, for it refers to unsurpassed violence. At the moment, Islam fits this picture fully. But, so does the almost-complete homosexual supremacy.

The 'heads', **kephale**, are prominent or supreme, and can mean actual people or a single person who takes full control. The horns are symbolic of strength and courage, but can also mean an altar. Whilst we may suggest that true Islam (as opposed to moderate Islam), which is violent, has immense strength, it cannot be said to have courage, for it works by stealth and evil. (2013 note: Though, now, it works openly, hostile to all freedom, decency and peace).

The crowns speak of civic worth or military valour, neither of which can be applied to the terrible and awful actions undertaken by Islamic terrorists today. A crown also speaks of kingly rule and authority. The only rule and authority shown here must be from Satan, allowed by God for a season and without any power or authority of its own. The name of the beast ('upon his heads') is 'blasphemy'.

Blasphemy is a word much misused today and is often used to refer to almost anything done by unbelievers or even by Believers. The word has a far more specific meaning. 'Blasphemy' is the slanderous attack against the name of another person (whether God or a man). It means to speak evil against the person, without good cause. When used of God, it means to be impious or to speak and act directly against God, as if to cause Him injury or defamation.

Any cult or occult movement that rejects God's word is a direct attack upon Him, as well as any individual who dares to oppose Him publicly and directly. This can be done by abusing scripture or rejecting its authority and teaching others to follow. It can also refer to pagans who openly defy God and His existence. Note the claims of charismatics recently, that 'Lord Maitraya' is the

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Christ and claims that Christ will appear before men time and again on charismatic platforms. This is blasphemy! (2013 note: There has also been a very sudden rise in atheistic attacks on God and His people... atheists are 'fools' according to God, but they can still do great damage!).

Verse one, then, when taken as a whole, seems to tell us that one (a man or a movement) will arise to oppose God, his word, and His will. As we have pointed out before, the modern Labour political parties are enshrined in godlessness and a desire to make God extinct (2013 note: This now applies to ALL political parties and countries, except, at the moment, for certain African states). Which is why I find it amazing that Christians can actually vote into power a political system that sets out to destroy Christian belief and Biblical laws! But, that is the nature of deception. And it is the nature of people, even Christians, to *desire* to be deceived if they so wish it for their own ends, or if they do not want to act in holiness. And so outright violence and hatred towards God and Christians is now rampant.

The beast had the appearance of a leopard or panther, which is fierce by nature. Its feet were like the paws of a bear, a reflection of power and continuous strength, with self-satisfaction (from the root word of 'bear', *arkeo*). The beast had a mouth like that of a lion, signifying its might. To this beast the dragon (Satan) gave great power. This is the same 'power' or *dunamis* referred to in connection with the power of Christians, etc. Thus, the power of this beast will be immense and miraculous, sufficient to induce people into thinking he or it is *all* -powerful.

Do not be deceived, friends! This is the power claimed by charismatics today. It is the same power they say was in the Toronto Blessing and which they say will increase in days to come. We will see this increase in supernatural power in our own lifetimes.

When this great miraculous power is shown to the people of earth, many will succumb to its lure and will assume it is from God. But, it will be from Satan, who will be unleashed for a season only. During his time he will cause many to be deceived and to follow his path. (2013 note: It is also the same power forcibly claimed by Barack Obama in the USA, though we are still unsure as to his own sustainability, which may only be short). Note the rapid increase in global, violent Islamicisation.

Many who now stand as Christians will also fall, as we have said before. They will fall under the

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crushing influence of miracles so great that they will be called godly! They will be those folk who *thought* they stood, but who steadfastly ignored all the signs and warnings. They refused to look at the signs and to interpret them properly, and even told true believers to be silent.

They will be those who thought that 'some parts' of the Satanic movements (Toronto and others, possibly even political parties, or the current ruler, homosexual Stonewall) were 'good'. They are those who gave quarter to these movements and people, lending sympathy. They are Christians who rejected the warnings of the watchmen and let the enemy into their city by the front door as well as at the back. ***They will fall, soon, unless they now turn back and repent, to stand firm on the Rock, God Himself.***

Note again – it is Satan who gives this individual or movement power; 'his seat' and 'great authority'. His 'seat' is his throne or base of rule. The authority is that which comes from having such a universal centre of power. It will closely resemble God's power in the eyes of most people, because of its supernatural, miraculous mode of action. But, it will be Satanic.

It is my belief that this brutal reign has already started in its infancy. It *will* come to pass, and soon, so do not place your trust in riches, or status, or power, or your personal desires. Place it entirely in God and Him alone, for He is your only refuge. And certainly do not trust religious movements and people!

One of the beast's heads seemed to John to be sufficiently wounded that it would die. Yet, Satan healed the wound. Again, such a meaning can be given to Rome, which has come close to oblivion on occasions, yet its glory was revived and it now goes on in strength. We cannot, however, say with any certainty that this wound or its head was to do with Rome.

All we can tell is that a massive movement of Satan will arise, maybe under one evil man (perhaps a pope, or someone evil like an Obama), and that it will seem to come very close to total defeat. Then, Satan will heal the breach and the man or movement will come back to life in such a fashion as to make people think it was of God/good.

The miraculous nature of the healing will be so phenomenal as to draw many people into Satan's clutches. Whether this near-death experience is literal (someone dying) or metaphorical (the near extinction of a church, state, or movement), we cannot yet say. Is it possible that the

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reference is to the charismatic movement? It was close to defeat and oblivion and its leaders knew that if they did not produce something 'supernatural' out of their magician's hat, the people would leave in droves.

Then came the iniquitous Toronto Blessing, which caused millions to take in a sharp breath and to join its ranks, city by city. If this is the case, then the prophecy has already begun. It is certainly true that 'the world wondered after the beast' when the Toronto Blessing overwhelmed the churches. The same wonder is now attached to the Alpha course and millions are being dragged by rings in their noses to their spiritual slaughter. Is all this the meaning of the prophecy? I am not sure.

Verses 4-9

1.

"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?"

2.

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.

3.

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

4.

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.

5.

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.

6.

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If any man have an ear, let him hear.”

Christians cannot believe that they can be deceived, even though it is patently obvious that many are. They have a kind of insularity, telling them that their salvation protects them from all evil. Let them be told that they are protected only when they obey God. No Christian is protected – except by a special sovereign mercy of God – if he or she deliberately ignores God and His word and enters the dragon’s temple to do his bidding!

It is worth remembering the way that God sent violent hordes against Israel when they forgot Him and followed other gods. He put to death even righteous men, such as Uzzah, whose only crime was to stop the ark from falling off a cart. How much moreso will He bring down those believers who deliberately throw in their lot with unbelievers and Satan’s false spiritual movements? Beware and be wary! Live as a soldier waiting for the attack of an enemy, always alert.

Do not be fooled. Do not ‘wonder after the beast’. Treat it with contempt and call on God for His protection, for the next step after ‘wondering after the beast’ was the *worshipping* of the beast. It is but a minor step from giving ‘house-room’ to something, and then adopting its tenets. The slightest sympathy with Rome leaves one open to its lies. The smallest leeway given by Christians to charismatic error is the ‘chink in the armour’ Satan will use to lure them into his fold. He will do it by suggesting that ‘some of charismaticism is error, but there is also a lot of purity and truth’. The same goes for political parties.

My friends, fruit comes from one root. An apple grows on an apple tree. You do not find peaches and apples on the same tree. Nor do you find righteousness and holiness growing on the same tree as sin and falsity. They are incompatible because their roots are different. Scripture leads us to know that the tares and the wheat look the same until they are finally grown to maturity. But, they have different roots and uses. One is for holiness and the other is for burning.

Take just one tenet or claim of charismaticism to heart and you will take in its entirety (the same goes for political and social movements). The seed you eat will grow in your belly into a soul-cancer and it will devour you from the inside, unawares. So, take heed – do not accept *any thing*

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from a false fold, even if it appears to be 'good', for it will only be an image of good, not the real thing. Just one concession will lead to worship. You cannot mix truth and error. If something teaches error, even in a small way, reject it totally, not just in part.

People will worship Satan, who gave power to the beast, and they will also worship and follow the beast. Just as people asked 'who is like God?', they will ask 'who is like the beast?' They will look upon his awesome, demonic power and will be willingly deceived. They will come to believe that with such power no-one can oppose him. They will listen to his every word and eat whatever food he gives them. They will think they also have similar power, but they will just be deluded pawns.

The beast will speak as a man and he will say terrible things that oppose God publicly and openly, with a venom not known hitherto on such a vast scale. He will say 'great things'. That is, his words will be many, and one saying will follow another, in such volume as to overwhelm the senses. At the same time he will perform many miracles to fool the people. They will follow even though his words will directly contravene and oppose God and His word (for example, something atheists and charismatics have done since they began), in a manner openly blasphemous and vile. All this will last only three and a half years (or, a very short time).

During that time his blasphemy will be infamous, yet his followers will grow and bay for more. As the Romans cried out in blood-lust for 'bread and circuses' so charismatics and atheistic peoples will cry out for more and more delusion. Like drug addicts they will want to feed their lust for spiritual deception and godless power, with even greater deceptions and 'gifts'. Many will call themselves 'Christians' and yet will defame God's Church and word, and all that is heavenly.

The beast and those who follow him will 'make war with the saints' to 'overcome them'. As I have warned before, this *will* come to pass. Those left standing after the 'wave' of the Toronto Blessing did so more by God's mercy than by their own spiritual strength. They ignored and continue to ignore all calls to truth and to repent. They continue as ever in their reformed status, believing it will afford protection in days to come. This is error and folly; Satan will soon roar in their faces.

They must repent now of their traditions and turn back to God in wholeness. They must enter into continuous reform and leave behind their traditions and denominational beliefs. Only God alone can satisfy! If they do not do so, they *will* be swept away when the next 'wave' comes,

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which will be any time soon... the beast
make war on them and
will

will

overcome them, for it is written by God's own hand! Do you really wish to be conquered by Satan?

This power to overcome Christians will be world-wide (2013 note: We now see this starting in growing severity). It will come upon all nations and churches, and only those who are inwardly a
nd

outwardly armoured will stand against the great flood or wave of evil. The demons of hell will wash over them time and again, tearing at their very hearts until they submit. Only those who are resting in the Lord- alone will be safe in their souls. All who are His will indeed enter heaven – but not all will pass the test of this earth when the beast begins his evil work against them, and so they will testify to evil and not to God while they are still alive.

ALL that dwell on the earth will worship and obey the beast. Not just a few. By 'all' is meant all who are unbelievers, as the text says: "all... whose names are not written in the book of life...". Christians will be deceived, too, and will sadly follow on, just as we see them pathetically entering into charismatic and other 'worship' because they are deceived into thinking it is all of God, and that politicians they vote for, though atheistic or sexual deviants, are worthy to represent them.

Do you have an ear? Then please listen and obey God!

Verse 10

1.

"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of saints."

Here is the one hope for Christians... after three and a half years the great beast will himself be oppressed and taken captive by God. Those who used violence against people will themselves be killed. This is the 'patience and the faith of the saints'. Christians who remain true will place all their trust in God and be steadfast and loyal, waiting for God's retort, and retort He will, convincing them that their trust in Him was founded on truth. (2013 note: today we are

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overwhelmed by both homosexuality and Islam, but their time is short and we must look to their downfall).

Verses 11-18

1.

“And I beheld another another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

2.

And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

3.

And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

4.

And deceiveth them that dwell by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

5.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

6.

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

7.

And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the

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number of his name.

8.

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.”

John then saw yet another beast which, this time, arose out of the earth. Probably, this means ‘the earth as opposed to the heavens’ in that the beast was fully of Satan, not of God. This beast had two horns ‘like a lamb’. (In Daniel there was a beast that had two horns of a ram). It seems that the only significance in this is that the horns looked like those stubby horns of a male lamb. Though his horns were of a lamb (appearing to be ‘meek’?), his power and voice were of Satan, vicious and loud.

His power and authority were just like those of the first beast, and it seems that his main purpose was to make the peoples of the earth obey the first beast, ‘whose deadly wound was healed’. I am not sure if this wound was inflicted when the captor was then held captive, or when those who killed with the sword were themselves killed. If so, the first beast was almost put out of action, but then the dragon (Satan) gave him new life to continue the fight.

Does this mean we will see a short lull in the power of the beast (whether a single man, a group of rulers, or a movement), and then a renewal of his power? (Even this possible interpretation still fits the charismatic scene today. It could also fit the homosexual and the Islamic scene). The meaning is uncertain, but we can see that though the beast’s power has a set-back, his return to power will be greater than before, and more vicious. Christians should never rest from being alert!

The second beast went on to do more marvellous things than had been seen before, including bringing down fire from the heavens at his direct command. Of course, this will make many more believe in his power, and those who were previously swayed will be convinced, except they have genuine holy discernment. Almost everyone will be totally deceived (verse 14) by a vast wave of miracles coming from this Satanic power. They will be so convinced by this power, the people will build an image to the beast. Does this mean a statue (or a movement)? Or, some other emblem of Satanic power? Will it be a statue of the Christ? Whatever it will be, it will be encouraged by the beast, now given new life by Satan.

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The beast will be able to give 'life' to the image of the beast (whether this image will be to deceive in the form of Christ, or in the true likeness of Satan, I do not know), so that the image will speak and command that those who will not submit to him will be put to death. Do not think this is fanciful. Roman Catholics have wielded such evil powers for centuries. Muslim extremists do so in many countries today. Communists have done so all through the last century to now. To 'kill' can also mean to deprive of the means of life, so perhaps the command will include direct murder as well as with-holding the means of life, such as food or ability to grow food, income, etc.

To ensure that his wishes are completely followed the beast will put his mark on everyone, no matter who they are. This may be an 'inward' mark of the soul, but it seems more likely, given the structure of the text, that this mark will be far more obvious. A 'mark' means an imprint, such as can be made by a stamp, on the head or the right hand. It is akin to the brand put on horses.

Of course, a 'mark' can now be made invisibly: an example is the marking of property by an 'invisible' ink one can only see if it is placed under ultra-violet light. Another means could be by computer chip placed into a person's head or some other part. Another way could be to make everyone wear a 'tag'.

Note that the British government plans to do away with vehicle taxation and to replace it with a device that plots every driver by satellite. They will then be charged a road tax according to the kinds of roads they use and the extent to which they drive. That is real 'big brother' surveillance! People can already be followed when they use credit cards, bank cards, and 'loyalty' cards, etc. There are many ways, then, that people can be marked, so do not think it is just a myth.

It is plain that only those who have this mark will be able to live and eat, etc. This suggests that others may not succumb and will therefore die of starvation or by some other mode of death. Whether money will by then be eradicated, I do not know. Even if money still exists, it will not be able to buy anything without the accompanying 'mark' of allegiance to the beast or ruler or ruling body. It is always possible, of course, for a 'black economy' to run alongside the mainstream market, but perhaps the sophistication of the means of marking people will be such that buying 'under the counter' will be almost impossible.

Only those who have the mark of the beast will survive. The mark will be distinctive and so we

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are all called to watch for this mark arising. That is, we must look for the 'number' of the beast's name. 'Number' is *arithmos*. This can be either a fixed number or an indefinite number. We are warned to watch for and understand this number by having knowledge of what is going on... 'Here is wisdom'. Those who understand will 'count the number of the beast'. That is, to calculate or reckon the number or means of marking. The number given in this text is the 'number of man... 666'.

What does this mean? The 'number of man' refers to the human ways of using numbers. Will everyone have the same number as their mark? This does not seem likely because it can easily be counterfeited. The 'number of man' simply appears to mean that the number will be as many as there are men. What is the number '666'? It is the 'number of the beast' himself. As the 'number of men' is great, so will be the means of giving each man a number. Today, we see this possible method in the provision of computer-generated numbers, which can run to indefinite and endless figures, with each man having his own personal identification number. (By using Hebrew numbering some have said the number equals the name of Nero; we cannot say so with certainty).

Most already have such a number, which can be cross-referenced with many other personal numbers... through bank accounts, local council residency numbers, taxation numbers, credit card numbers, and so on. Thus, the personal number, though different in numerals, will be generated by the computers of the beast/ruler, whose own number (or numerical equivalent) is 666. Will this be the means of identifying people? I do not know if this is what is meant by the 'mark' but it is more than a high possibility.

Please note that there are countless theories as to what is meant by the number 666. It is as well not to be too perplexed by it, because many theologians have tried to unravel it, and failed! We are not given the meaning in scripture. Just remember that 'number' can mean either a fixed number or an indefinite number. If we look at the number 666, we see that it is the 'number of the beast'... probably simply meaning that he has his own special number under his own scheme of marking. Others will also have one of many indefinite numbers, ranging from one to many millions.

Because we can arrange numbers in such a way as to make them reducible to just a handful, and yet identify millions – bank cards are an example – a simple plastic card or electronic implant can identify each one of us. We can even have our movements plotted by a distant satellite! Looked at in this way, we can see how 'normal' the marking by Satan can be in reality.

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The picture given in this vision is of a massive 'takeover' by Satan, through human agents, who will all be driven by demonic power. There will be either an individual or a group that will lead this Satanic coup, which is allowed by God for a very short period. The beast or ruler will cause many to die and to starve or somehow be punished for not following the 'system'.

The beast or ruler, or ruling body, will be uniquely identifiable with his/its own number or mark (here referred to as 666). All others will be equally marked or identifiable for checking and punishing purposes. Some will not subject themselves to this system and so will be refused basic means of life, such as food, etc. Are those of 'wisdom', who understand this system, thereby called to avoid the system? I do not know – but it is clear that some will do so.

Summary

There are many theories concerning the meaning of this chapter. I have ignored these in favour of a simple interpretation – that two men or movements will arise (or perhaps have already arisen), here called 'beasts'. The overall picture in this chapter is of an unleashed Satan, who will run amok, trying to destroy believers.

The first beast came out of the sea, and seems to be a movement or group of leaders who openly hate God – hence its name, 'blasphemy'. The word used here for blasphemy, *thērion*, can mean a wild animal, but the metaphorical meaning applies: a brutal, ferocious, bestial man. He (or they) will rule with intense wickedness, caring nothing for God or His people. He or they, then, can be termed 'antichrist'. This first antichrist (person, rulers, or movement) will receive a blow to almost kill it, but will survive. This reminds the Church that though they pray and an antichrist appears to be finished, it/he will not be completely erased, but will again rise up, with even greater ferocity (a lull before the storm, when Satan 'regroups').

Whoever or whatever this beast is, he/it will have immense power, such as has never been seen before in wicked people or movements. Because of its power it will dazzle and force others to follow. The sheer power of the antichrist will draw men to it/him, and people will obey and worship it/him, whether out of admiration or absolute fear and dread. Already we see environmental movements that worship Gaia, plus a wide variety of New Age movements, plus wicked men who reveal and demand the things of Satan... Obama, Blair, Cameron, *et al.* But, it would seem to me that someone/something far worse is to come.

People will side with the beast, thinking it better to be allies than foes. They will be in awe of

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his/its power and amazing miraculous feats. Words associated with him/it will be blasphemous and utterly godless. Again, we are seeing this today... but it will only last a relatively short time. I cannot over-emphasise that the main feature of this beast is its blatant blasphemy and outward hatred for God and His people, which will get worse and worse. So much so that believers will be overcome in every country on earth. Only a very few, who are saved, will remain faithful to God.

After a short time this power will cease and the beast will die, killed through his/its own violence. Thus, believers will see that God has intervened. But, it will not be over, for a second beast will arise out of the earth. This time, it seems to me that he will be more ferocious than the first beast, but will have an image or appearance of something more peaceful and acceptable. This is when discernment must be used fully, for this beast is worse. This beast will command fire to descend from the sky, wreaking panic and fear, and making them think he/it is supreme, above God.

By performing miracles he/it will win over the people, and will demand a statue (?) be built to honour the first beast, whose wound was inflicted by a sword (weapon, whether spiritual or physical). Those who refuse (or, if already happened, refused) will be killed. This is unequivocal and I cannot see this to be symbolic. To me it speaks of worldwide persecution of Christians (and probably any who desire freedom rather than mindless worship) and a global worship of Satan (in many guises, including political or 'cultural').

The second beast will put into place a method of marking people who obey. Only they will be able to buy food, work, etc. The rest will be denied, because they resist. It is only by verse 18 that we discover that the beast is a man (or several men), and so a ruler.

Additional Notes

Leopard: This is an animal that acts swiftly and springs out suddenly. Some believe this described Alexander the Great. This may, or may not, apply, for Alexander gave many privileges to the Jews, rather than killing them. On the other hand, the leopard in this text has the characteristics of that animal, or of Alexander generally.

Dragon: A name for Satan, *drakōn*.

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Blasphemy: *Blasphēmia*. Destroying someone's good name; slander; godless speech. Includes false 'Christian' churches and godless political movements and people.

Second Beast: May, or may not be, Rome, given that it appears to be more acceptable to Christians and yet speaks blasphemy. I have no doubt that the 'best is yet to come' concerning Rome and its power, as it works behind the scenes to unite all manner of evil men and religions.

Miracles: Make no mistake, Satan can perform great miracles! The quality of these is very different from those of God, as I show in my literature against charismaticism... but it takes a staunch heart to continually discern the difference.

Mark (*charagma*): The Greek literally means a stamp or imprint, on the forehead or right hand. This meaning is reinforced by a second meaning – the brand on a horse to show ownership. It is possible (but only a guess) that such a mark of ownership can nowadays be given electronically, but the 'mark' definitely suggests a physical form of mark. However, in Genesis 4:15 we find God putting a mark on Cain; the word here means a sign, but of a spiritual nature. We find men with a mark on their foreheads, in Ezekiel 9:4. Here God protects men who obey – the rest are to be destroyed. It seems that Satan is using a similar form of identification, but for his own evil.

666: No-one knows the exact meaning of this number, though many men claim to have the answer!

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