

AMERICA - SUPERPOWER OF PROPHECY

As the prophecy of Revelation thirteen continues John beholds a second beast arise, but unlike the first beast, this one is seen "coming up out of the earth" (Revelation 13:11). Since the first beast which arose out of the sea represents the rise of that power in a heavily populated area, (See "The Beast from the Sea", p. 107) it would stand to reason that to rise from the earth would represent just the opposite, or that this power would arise in a sparsely populated area. John beholds this beast as it is "coming up" or gradually arising about the time the first beast receives its wound, or about 1798. As one power goes down another, completely different, arises.

Many commentators have found in this description of a beast with two lamblike horns a reference to the American bison, or buffalo. This is a definite possibility, for what more fitting animal could be used to symbolize the United States than one that is native to it.

In this symbolic beast we find a striking figure of the rise and growth of our own country. The lamb-like horns, symbols of youth, innocence, and gentleness, well represent the character of our government, as expressed in the two fundamental principles upon which it was founded, republicanism and Protestantism.

The U.S. Constitution, article IV; section 4, reads in part: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government." Article VI: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." The first Amendment begins; "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Our country is indeed a youthful one that has grown relatively peacefully and in a sparsely populated area. The first permanent English settlement was made in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. The Mayflower reached our shores in 1620 and by 1701 the population of the American colonies totaled 262,000. By 1749 it had reached 1,046,000, and by 1775 it had grown to 2,802,000.

"The struggle of the American colonies for independence began in 1775. In 1776, they declared themselves a free and independent nation. In 1777, delegates from the thirteen original States - New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia - in Congress assembled, adopted Articles of Confederation. In 1783, the War of the Revolution closed with a treaty of peace with Great Britain, whereby the independence of the United States was acknowledged, and territory ceded to the extent of 815,615 square miles. In 1787, the Constitution was framed, and by July 26, 1788, it was ratified by eleven of the thirteen original States; and on the 1st of March, 1789, it went into effect. The United States thus began with less than one million square miles of territory, and less than four million citizens."¹

Here we can see most vividly the gradual growth of our youthful nation, in a country of very few inhabitants and which was in no way connected to the first beast.

God has greatly blessed this youthful nation of ours to the extent that we are now the greatest nation in the world. However, it is not because of what we are, but rather what we

¹Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 573-574

are to become that has caused God to include the United States in Bible prophecy.

In order to further distinguish that this second beast is a symbol of the United States, we need only to consider the following points found in Uriah Smith's notable work *Daniel and the Revelation*.

"The power symbolized by the two-horned beast must be some nation distinct from the powers of the Old World, whether civil or ecclesiastical. It must arise in the Western Hemisphere. It must be seen assuming a position of prominence and influence about the year 1798. It must rise in a peaceful and quiet manner, not augmenting its power and expanding its territory, as other nations have done, by aggressive wars and successful conquests. Its progress must be so evident as to strike the beholder with as much wonder as would the perceptible growth of an animal before his eyes... It must exhibit before the world, as an index of its character and the elements of its government, two great principles which are in themselves perfectly just, innocent, and lamblike. It must perform its work after 1798."²

As can be seen, all of these specifications are conclusively met in the history of the United States. However, even though this two-horned beast represents our great country of America, the major role it is to play in this prophecy is yet in the future for it must exercise "all the power of the first beast." (See "The Church of Thyatira", p. 21; "Death Riding a Pale Horse", p. 47; "1260 Years of Persecution", p. 109; "War with the Saints", p. 112). This second beast is also to form an image to the first beast and cause all of the inhabitants of the earth to "worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed" (Revelation 13:12,15).

It is hard to believe that a country which was founded on the principle of religious liberty for all people will at some time in the future betray its lamb-like appearance and speak as a dragon. Nevertheless, for years religious leaders in America have been "persistently working to the end of establishing and enforcing religious standards by law."³ Today such great religious bodies as: the National Council of Churches of Christ, with a denominational membership totaling 42,000,000; the Churches of Christ United, with 25,000,000; the Lord's Day Alliance, with 18,000,000; and the World Council of Churches, with 400,000,000 are all adding their support to this ever so subtle movement.

One day soon the churches of America will unite, not only with one another, but with the secular power to sustain a false and compromised religion. The day is coming when the state will use its power to enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church. When this takes place, then America will have formed an image to the beast.

Do not be deceived; while the ACLU and other such organizations which claim to promote the separation of church and state concern themselves with such trivium as the nativity scene or the Ten Commandments in schools, the real enemy is ignored and left to gather strength and ground until eventually it will be too late to stop it. These organizations need to concern themselves with the real issues of church and state, rather than attempting to give us a state with no God; but alas, they shall not. This prophecy too shall be fulfilled and even now the faint image of the beast can be seen materializing.

² *Ibid.*, p. 582

³ *Ibid.*, p. 594