

Revelation Lesson 13

Revelation Chapter 13

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Introduction: We continue our study of the book of Revelation this week as we get into Chapter 13. The 13th chapter of Revelation is a continuation of chapter 12. Recall, in chapter 12, five personalities was mentioned: (1) ***“the great woman”***, (2) ***“the great red dragon”***, (3) ***“the man child”***, (4) ***“Michael”***, and (5) ***“the remnant of the woman”***.

Two more personalities are described here in this chapter bringing the total to seven: (6) ***“the beast out of the sea”***, and (7) ***“the beast out of the earth”***. Understanding who these personalities are and who or what they represent is essential in understanding much of what will be coming to pass in the later 42 months of the 7-year tribulation, known also as ***“the great tribulation”***.

I. The First Beast

Rev 13:1 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.

John describes the sixth personality of the Tribulation. John evidently is transported in spirit back to the earth where he stood on the sea shore. There, he saw “a beast rise up out of the sea.” The following context makes clear this beast is symbolic of a far greater entity. Revelation 17:8-18 presents what seems to be a related but separate explanation of this beast. In short, it is a definition of the antichrist. Revelation 17:15 seems to parallel 13:1.

There, the many waters are described as ‘peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues’—in other words, the mass of humanity. There are other portions of scripture where the sea typifies the world (people). This beast is described as ‘having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.’ There has been much speculation concerning these details and certainly much confusion. Notice, there are parallels here to chapter 17 where the great whore is described. There, the seven heads are described as seven mountains. However, there clearly is a distinction between the beast here and the woman there.

There also are clear similarities between the beast described here and the fourth beast of Daniel’s prophecy in Daniel 7:24. One view which seems to

synchronize with each of these several portions of Scripture is that the seven heads are the seven major ruling eras of the world from the beginning of the world's system from Babel onward. Revelation 17:10 tells us that John lived during the time of the 6th head which was Rome. Moving backward, the first head would be the world era after the flood beginning with the original Babylonian state founded at Babel. This may extend to and include perhaps the Egyptian era. Then came the Assyrian empire. Next clearly is the Babylonian empire of the day of Daniel. Then came the Persian, Greek, and the Roman Empire of John's day.

The fractured, revived Roman/European union of the first half of the Tribulation is the seventh. See Revelation 17:10-11. John apparently saw the beast as the culmination of what has been the system man has cultivated for himself with the help of Satan. The ten horns along with their accompanying ten crowns seem to parallel the ten horns of Daniel 7:24 where they are described as 'ten kings that shall arise.' Daniel's several prophecies indicate a tenfold division of the final form of the revived Roman Empire. These ten kings evidently are the rulers over that tenfold division. Daniel seems to indicate that these ten kings (leaders) will be the political base from where the antichrist rises to power. They apparently are the political and cultural descendants of the old Roman world. That today is essentially what is known as the western world.

The name of blasphemy on the heads of the beast evidently is the godless nature of the world's system down through the ages. The titles worn by various pagan emperors of these eras down through the ages have routinely been blasphemous. This beast has long historical and prophetic roots. It clearly is a pervasive system of government. Yet, as the chapter will unfold, the beast is also an individual who is energized by the power of the devil. In short, the beast is both a system and a person who heads the final form of the system.

It should be noted that the word translated as beast throughout this chapter is (yhrion) therion and has the literal sense of a wild savage animal. The word translated as beast in chapters 4 and 5 (referring to the angelic creatures before the throne of God) is (zwon) zoon and has the sense of a 'living creature' or 'being.'

Rev 13:2 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.

John goes on to provide further description of the beast. The three wild animals symbolized are the same three used to symbolize the three empires or eras of world power prior to Rome in Daniel 7:4-6. There, the leopard depicted the swiftness of Greece under Alexander; the bear the brute force of the Persian empire; and the lion the voracity of Babylon.

These qualities have characterized empires of the world's system down through the ages. They apparently will so characterize its final form and leader during the Tribulation. As noted above, the beast is a system. However, it clearly also is personified in a satanic personality. The beast is spoken of directly as a person here. Moreover, the empowering and energy of this leader comes directly from "the dragon" who is the devil. See 12:9. It is the dragon who gives him "his power, and his seat, and great authority."

The word translated as seat (yironov thronos) is most frequently otherwise rendered as 'throne.' Implied is governmental power and authority as noted. He will be a world ruler.

Rev 13:3 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.

John goes on to describe, one of the beast's heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. The ensuing context will make clear the deadly wound was inflicted not upon an era of government, but upon the personality called the beast. The text will make clear this leader is the antichrist. In a way not defined, he is mortally wounded and appears to die. Yet, clearly implied here and in the following context, he appears to rise from the dead.

The end of verse 4 hints his portrayed death may have been in battle. It alternately may have been by assassination. The world is astounded. Here is one who seemingly can rise from the dead and come back to fight again. The word translated as world (gh ghay) actually refers to the 'earth.' The entire earth is amazed at the presumed power of this one.

Rev 13:4 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?

Subsequently, 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? This individual, the beast, not only personifies the final form of the world's system as its satanically inspired leader, he also takes on religious qualities. Mankind begins to worship him. It may be that he advances himself to the world (and to Israel in particular) as the long awaited Christ, proving himself so by his advertised death and resurrection.

In addition, the devil, which empowered the beast, is worshiped by the world as well. Devil worship will no longer be the domain of the back alley and the occult.

In that day, he will present himself to the world as God. See II Thessalonians 2:1-12.

2Th 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2Th 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

2Th 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

2Th 2:5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

2Th 2:6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

2Th 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

2Th 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

2Th 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

2Th 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

2Th 2:12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Many will believe that lie ensuring their damnation. The cry of the day will be, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" The word translated as war (polemew polemeo) can also have the sense to 'fight.' The hint is that he has seemingly been killed in battle and then rises from the dead. See also 17:8.

Their conclusion for the most part is: *How can you fight someone like that? He must be god. Therefore, worship him.*

Rev 13:5 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.

As the antichrist reaches the height of world domination, he is evidently given, by Satan, the ability to speak grand and blasphemous things. His powerful speech allures the world and cause many to believe that he is God. This power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. The word translated as power is (exousia) excousia. It has more of the sense of 'authority.'

The thought evidently is that God allows him to so blaspheme for forty-two months. The greater thought apparently is that the antichrist is allowed power to spew his blasphemy for the final three and one-half years of the Tribulation. He took the first half to rise to power. He then seats himself in the newly built temple at Jerusalem announcing to the world he is God. God permits this blasphemy to last only until the end of the Tribulation.

Rev 13:6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Rev 13:7 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 antichrist with seeming impunity opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. During the final 42 months of the Tribulation, he apparently wastes no opportunity to blaspheme God, His name, His tabernacle, or those in heaven. Precisely what tabernacle mentioned here is not clear. It may be the Temple of God in heaven. However, it may refer to the recently built Jewish temple in Jerusalem. That seems more likely.

The antichrist publicly appropriates the name of God and His temple to himself. He also seemingly defies the power of God in heaven to do anything about it.

In Verse 7, we find the Anti-Christ 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 word saints often refers to Israel. God providentially took steps to preserve them as indicated in 12:13-16. However, 12:17 does in fact note that the devil in that day will also make war with the believing remnant of Israel. As God's covenant people turn to Christ, they may just may be

ferociously hunted down by the forces of the antichrist and put to death, perhaps by beheading as noted in 20:4.

This vehement persecution extends to all kindred's, and tongues, and nations; in other words, every corner of the earth. People can and will be saved during the Tribulation, but they in all likelihood will be killed. Consider the disposition of the Jews since the fall of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.

Rev 13:8 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.

As the final stages of the Tribulation continue, all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him. Through the great power and influence he exerts, the antichrist will deceive the majority of the world to worship him. These are they whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The unsaved world will worship the beast. Their names are never written in the book of life because they never turn to him. They receive the mark of the beast and doom themselves before God. Of interest is the mention of "the book of life of the Lamb." This is one of two places in the Scripture where the book of life is mentioned in the context of the Lamb. The other is Revelation 21:27.

Of additional interest is mention of the Lamb 'slain from the foundation of the world.' The word translated as slain (sfazw sphadzo) is conjugated as perfect tense and passive voice. The Lamb has been slain from the foundation of world. The word translated as foundation (katabolh katabole) literally refers to 'conception' and by metaphor, the laying of a foundation. The thought is of 'beginning.' The word translated as world (kosmov kosmos) though in some cases referring to the physical creation most frequently refers to the system of ungodliness.

The Lamb of God was slain from the conception of the world. Implied is that when sin entered and the world as a system began, the Lamb of God was slain in the mind of God already.

Rev 13:9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

Rev 13:10 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 the saints.

As in the seven messages to the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3, a warning is made, If any man have an ear, let him hear. The warning evidently concerns the following text.

The warning apparently in verse 10 is the folly of God's people resisting in that day. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. To try and go on the offensive against the forces of the beast, taking them into captivity, will only lead to defeat. To defend oneself with force will only bring sure death.

In contrast to such ungodly behavior, John notes, Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Rather, the distinctive of God's people in that day is to by faith patiently endure whatever comes.

II. The Second Beast

Rev 13:11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

Rev 13:12 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.

John saw a second beast coming up out of the earth. (The seventh personality of the Tribulation). This second beast will prove to be the false prophet. This title is not mentioned directly until 16:13, and then again in 19:20 and 20:10. It seems clear that this second beast is one and the same with he who is called the false prophet in the passages noted. Whereas the first beast was primarily political in nature, the second one will be primarily religious.

He having two horns like a lamb (a young male sheep) bespeaks his mildness in distinction to the violence of the first. Most counterfeit religious leaders take unto themselves an air of piousness and harmlessness. The chief one, the false prophet, will drip with phony piety and pacificism. Nevertheless, he speaks on behalf of the devil which is the dragon. He, like the first political beast, 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.

Mention is again made of the worship of the first beast, the antichrist. As his vicar, the false prophet forces the world to worship his leader. Again, mention is also made of the supposed wound unto death of the antichrist and his recovery.

Rev 13:13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

Rev 13:14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth 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.

John further records that the False Prophet has the ability to do great wonders. He is granted by the power of the devil the ability to do miracles. Moreover, to make clear his power, he on occasion calls down fire from the skies. To the unregenerate world, this must surely be the power of God. Paul warned in II Thessalonians 2:11-12 that God will allow them in that day “strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned.” The lie very well may be that the beast is God and His Messiah. The false prophet is granted the ability to perform other miracles to further that deception.

It is clear that the devil has the ability to perform miracles to deceive. The false prophet further directs those on the earth that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. The word translated as image (eikwn eikon) conveys the idea of a ‘likeness’ or a ‘statue.’ No effort is spared to further the deception about this evil one who through the power of the devil convinces the world he has risen from the dead.

A further hint to how he died is indicated in that it was by a sword. Moreover, it is hinted that he really did not die, but only was wounded. Nevertheless, the world is manipulated into thinking he did die and arise.

Rev 13:15 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.

The false prophet, to further the deception, had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should speak. Of interest is the word translated as life (pneuma pneuma). It is the common word for ‘spirit.’ It also can have the sense of ‘breath’ and that is the likely sense here. This image not only appeared to breath, but also to speak.

The greater truth is that the likeness of the beast created by the false prophet has the very resemblance of life. Precisely where and how this image is used is not clear. However, he will cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Rev 13:16 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:

Rev 13:17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

One of the great mysteries of Revelation is revealed.. The false prophet (not the

antichrist) orders that all on the face of the earth, regardless of rank or position, all are given a mark either on their right hand or on their foreheads. The word translated as mark (caragma charagma) is used of placing an owner's brand upon his livestock. The idea of branding is not so much in view, but rather the thought is of having the mark of ownership of the devil. Precisely how this mark is imprinted is not noted. There has been endless speculation as to exactly what this mark might be.

Though the false prophet is the one executing the order of the mark, it is nevertheless clear that it pertains to the antichrist. It evidently is the visible indication the one possessing the mark has given allegiance to the beast. . Another ominous purpose of this mark is that "no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

In that day, no commerce of any kind will be possible without the mark, name, or number of the beast upon one's hand or forehead. It may be that the threefold mention of the mark, name, and number of the beast is the composite of the mark itself. It may include the name of the beast as well as his number.

Rev 13:18 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 through the Holy Spirit conveys a note of wisdom. *'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.'* The initial thought is, 'Let him that has a mind calculate the number of the beast.' It first is "the number of man."

Throughout Scripture, the numerology of man apparently is six. It is the number of imperfection. Moreover, the number of the beast is 666. There has been endless speculation as to the significance of this number. One thing seems clear. It is the number of the antichrist. Some have speculated that it may be some sort of triple, six-digit, identification number, or a version of a triple, six-digit form of a universal product code (UPC) bar code. Whatever form this mark takes place, it evidently will include the name, symbol, and ID number assigned by the Antichrist to every last man, woman, and child on the planet.

Revelation 14:9-11 indicates anyone receiving this mark will be is damned forever. Of further interest is the comment in 15:2 that a great multitude will refuse to receive this mark leading to their martyrdom. As to the timing of the mark, it may be that it is not implemented until the antichrist has full power over the earth. This seems to be the final three and one-half years of the Tribulation.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.