

Wednesday Teaching Series
Revelation 13

The Book of Revelation
Lesson #14-the Two Beasts

Introduction: The last verse of chapter twelve or first verse of Chapter 13 (some translations) sets the scene for this section.

NKJV: "Then I (John) stood on the sand of the sea."

NASV: "And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore"

- AV understands the subject to be John
- Textual evidence supports the NASV (dragon)

NOTE: In Chapter 12, the Dragon was unable to reach the woman.

Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 12:13-17 NKJV

- So now, he calls on his wicked cohorts to destroy her offspring.
- Standing by the sea summoning his henchman from the troubled water.
- Two beasts (one from sea, one from the earth).
- Beast from the sea is a grotesque, seven-headed monster who combines characteristics of a leopard, lion, and bear. The world worships him and the Dragon who gives him his authority. The beast is allowed to blaspheme God and exercise his authority for 42 months. He is permitted to make war with the saints and conquer them. Those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life worship the beast.

- Beast from the earth is less terrifying in appearance but able to deceive people by his power to work miracles. He demands worship of the beast and from people to take the mark of the beast in order to buy and sell. Those who refuse will be put to death.

I. The Beast from the Sea (13:1-10)

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Revelation 13:1 NKJV

A. Out of the Sea

1. Suggested by Daniel's vision of beasts out of the sea (Daniel 7:3)
2. Sea may relate to Gentiles (talked about this earlier).
3. Probably because ancient people viewed the sea as the habitat for evil deities.

B. Heads, Horns, Diadems, Blasphemies

NOTE: Will discuss in more detail in Chapter 17

1. Allusion to Daniel 7

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts. 2 Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. 3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. 4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. 5 "And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!' 6 "After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. 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. 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 there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words. Daniel 7:1-8 NKJV

- a. Babylon (Belshazzar)
 - b. Medo Persia (Artaxerxes; Nehemiah)
 - c. Greece (Alexander the Great)
 - d. Rome
2. Diadems (royalty or authority) but on horns; not heads because authority comes from brute force.
 3. Seven heads stresses relationship to the seven-headed Dragon of 12:3
- C. A revelation of the Roman Empire (1st readers). Revised Roman Empire which will be the power of the end times.
1. Blasphemy on heads; Emperors of Rome assumed titles of deity.
 2. Augustus “one like the gods”
 3. Nero on coins “Savior of the world”
 4. Domitian “Our Lord and our God”
- D. Who is this beast?
1. Possesses Satan’s authority (v. 4)
 2. Blasphemes the names of God (v. 5, 6)
 3. Wars against the saints (v. 7)
 4. Receives worship of the pagan world (v. 4, 8)

The Roman Empire as the persecutor of the church (to John)

- On the land from the sea just as Romans did when they invaded the Mediterranean.
- The Spirit of imperial power that claims religious sanction for its gross injustices.
- But more than that, a Revived Empire

Mounce: “For John the beast was the Roman Empire as persecutor of the church...yet the beast is more than the Roman Empire...the beast has always been and will always be in a final intensified manifestation, the deification of greater authority.”
(Eschatological Anti-Christ)

E. The Beast’s Description

Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. Revelation 13:2 NKJV

NOTE AGAIN: Daniel 7

1. Amalgamation of all the previous evil empires.
2. True power will come from Satan (Dragon).

F. The World marvels at the Beast

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. Revelation 13:3 NKJV

1. Mortal wound and survival
2. Many think one of the Roman Emperors
 - Caligula; taken with serious illness and survived (later set up statue of himself in the temple) see v. 6
 - Nero; killed himself in June of 68 (rumor persisted for years that he was still alive and would someday return to lead a mighty army).
3. But the text does not say the head was restored (the King) but the beast.
4. Probably the revival of the Roman Empire thought to be dead.

G. Worship of the Dragon and the Beast

So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" Revelation 13:4 NKJV

H. Blasphemy of the Beast

And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. Revelation 13:5-6 NKJV

See also:

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 there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words. Daniel 7:8 NKJV

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. Daniel 7:20 NKJV

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. Daniel 7:25 NKJV

"Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. Daniel 11:36 NKJV

1. Duration of Blasphemy:

He will blaspheme for 42 months but it is not necessary to limit his call to this time period. Probably whoever heals the revived Roman Empire will come into power before the 7 years begin; enters covenant with Jewish people, then breaks covenant and rises to world domination.

Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. Revelation 6:1-2 NKJV

The pulling together of force.

2. Objects of blasphemy

- a. Name of God
- b. Dwelling place
- c. Those who dwell in heaven

Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 2 Thessalonians 2:4 NKJV

1. War against the Saints

It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. Revelation 13:7 NKJV

NOTE: The ones victorious over the Beast

And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. Revelation 15:2 NKJV

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Revelation 12:11 NKJV

True victory: love not life unto death.

J. Universal worship

All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Revelation 13:8 NKJV

K. Required endurance of the Saints

If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Revelation 13:9-10 NKJV

Ultimately God will have victory over the Beast

II. The Beast out of the Earth (13:11-18)

A. The Emergence and Power of the 2nd Beast

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. Revelation 13:11-15 NKJV

1. A deceiver; elsewhere called false prophet (16:13; 19:20; 20:10)
2. Horns like a lamb; attempt to convey gentle harmlessness

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. Matthew 7:15 NKJV

3. Dragon like speech; deceptive, beguiling, like serpent in Eden.
4. Role is to get people to worship the beast (so empowered to work miracles).
5. Image of the Beast (could be technology).

B. The Mark of the Beast

He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. Revelation 13:16-18 NKJV

1. Only way to carry on daily activity
2. 666
 - a. No consensus has been reached
 - b. Many explanations (Roman Emperors deity, ect.)
 - c. The number of man (incompleteness)

Conclusion:

1. Chapter 12 introduces the Great Dragon.
2. Chapter 13 has two forces (Beast and False Prophet).
3. Unholy Trinity
4. Stage is set for final encounter.
5. We know the outcome but not yet received.
6. Already; not yet.
7. When conquering Messiah returns; it will be finished!