

**The Book of Revelation**  
**Lesson 16 - Revelation 13**

1. Chapter 13
  - 1.1. Satan is pictured to us as a beast. We find the forces of Satan are also shown in terms of being beasts; literally, "wild beasts," an indication of the fierceness and lack of care Satan has for the well being of mankind.
  - 1.2. In Revelation 12, we see the world as it wars against Christians. Satan also wars against God.
2. **Rev. 12:17 - And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus:**
  - 2.1. Now extremely angry, Satan turns to direct his attacks against the saints - those who keep the commandments of God, and who have the testimony of Jesus Christ.
  - 2.2. **Chap 13** gives details as to how he plans to do this
    - 2.2.1. Satan uses "Agents" who he can manipulate for his purposes.
    - 2.2.2. Satan must use resources; he has to use men in furthering his purpose.
      - 2.2.2.1. The warning given by the Lord to the disciples was to **"beware of men" (Matt. 10:17)**.
      - 2.2.2.2. We need not fear any supernatural and miraculous action Satan would wish to take, for he is not given that liberty. He must work through men, and whatever these beasts represent, they represent the actions and intents of men as they do Satan's work`.
    - 2.2.3. Satan is the deceiver of the whole earth (**Rev. 12:9**), and we are told that the whole world **"lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19)**
      - 2.2.3.1. Satan has a worldwide influence.
    - 2.2.4. To accomplish his purposes on the earth, his work is here said to be done by the power of two beasts; the whole earth is thus involved, in that one beast riseth out of the sea (**Rev. 13:1**) and the other comes up out of the earth (**Rev. 13:11**).
    - 2.2.5. The whole of the earth is affected by Satan and his work.
3. **Rev. 13:1 - and he stood upon the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns, and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy.**
  - 3.1. The King James Version reads "I stood upon the sand of the sea"; however, the better textual evidence is "the dragon stood upon the sand of the sea." The American Standard Version and most modern versions translate it this way.
  - 3.2. The first attack is by the beast out of the sea.
    - 3.2.1. The key to understanding the beast out the sea is Daniel seven where four great beasts out of the sea are described. They represent four great kingdoms.

- 3.2.1.1. The sea in **Isaiah 17:12** represent nations as **Revelation 17:15** confirms.
- 3.2.1.2. The beast out of the sea represents the persecuting power of Satan operating in and through nations of this world and their governments.
- 3.2.1.3. At the time of this writing, it was the Roman Empire, but it would include all the nations that have persecuted Christians.
- 3.3. The first beast is presented, and we note these items concerning it:
  - 3.3.1. **His nature:** This is pictured in terms of heads, horns and crowns, and is correctly viewed as combining "brutality, ruthless power, persecuting energy and evil" in this world.
  - 3.3.2. **His work:** This is seen as blasphemy (**Rev. 13:11**), speaking great things and blasphemies (**Rev. 13:5**) and opening his mouth in blasphemy against God, his name, and all holy things (**Rev. 13:6**).  
The source of his power: It is given him by Satan, to whom he owes his power, his seat, and his great authority.
- 4. **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 throne, and great authority.**
  - 4.1. These characteristics are the same as the four beasts in Daniel seven, but here they are all combined into one terrible beast. These represent nations that oppose the church throughout history.
  - 4.2. This terrible beast represents all the brutal, ruthless power that governments use to persecute God's church.
- 5. **Rev. 13:3 - And [I saw] one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast;**
  - 5.1. **His resiliency:** Wounded by that which would be thought to be a death-blow, this powerful force recovers and has the whole world in wonder.
  - 5.2. The Lord has already provided an end to Satan's hold on men. But because his time is short, Satan and his forces work all the harder.
  - 5.3. Just as the church will be preserved until the end, so will the forces of Satan. The forces of Satan will be defeated, but not until Jesus comes the second time.
- 6. **Rev. 13:4 - and they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? And who is able to war with him?**
  - 6.1. Mankind has a propensity to glorify and show reverence to power.
  - 6.2. Worship God only (**Matt. 4**)
- 7. **Rev. 13:5-6**
  - 7.1. **Rev. 13:5 - and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months.**
    - 7.1.1. It is emphasized again and again that the beast does not have power of his own; he is given it by the dragon, Satan.

- 7.1.2. It should also be pointed out that God, the Supreme Power, limits him. Here he is limited to “forty-two months.”
- 7.1.3. That he is going to speak great things against God reminds one of **Daniel 7:8, 20, 25**. Blaspheming is slander directed against God.
- 7.2. **Rev. 13:6 - And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, [even] them that dwell in the heaven.**
- 7.2.1. The beast slanders and reviles God; this is what blasphemy is. To blaspheme his name is to slander all that God is.
- 7.2.2. His tabernacle refers to the church (**Revelation 21:3**).
- 7.2.3. Them that dwell in the heaven would be the entire heavenly host.
- 7.2.4. The beast is opposed to all that is good and right and declares it openly.
8. **Rev. 13:7 - And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.**
- 8.1. **His influence:** He has an influence for evil upon all, except for those whose names are in the book of life (**Rev. 13:8**). These, as already seen, are those who keep God's commandments and live faithfully (**Rev. 12:17**).
- 8.2. Satan intends to make war with the saints and to overcome them. But while his influence extends to all tongues and nations (**Rev. 13:7**), the faithfulness of the saints is their protection.
- 8.3. That he is given power to make war with the saints and overcome them reminds one of **Daniel 7:21**. He does make war. He puts some of them to death. He persecutes others. But in the real sense those who remain faithful even while being put to death are the victors as 12:11 indicates. By the authority given him and by persecuting the saints, the beast gains power over every tribe, people, tongue and nation.
- 8.4. This exercise of power shows that this must not be limited to just one period of time, but includes all of the oppressing governments against the church.
9. **Rev. 13:8 - And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, [every one] whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain.**
- 9.1. Satan has his followers and those who do not follow the will of God worship at the feet of Satan.
- 9.2. The last part of this verse poses a problem for the religious world.
- 9.2.1. First, it can be translated that the righteous had their names written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. This same idea is taught in **Ephesians 1:4-11**. It does not mean that individuals are predestined to be in the book or not, but that **holy people** (the sealed) would be written in this book, and each one by his choices and actions decides which book he will be in.

- 9.2.2. Second, it could be translated that Jesus was slain before the foundation of the world. This also is a Bible thought as seen in **1 Peter 1:20**. This means that Jesus' death was planned or determined before the world was created.
10. **Rev. 13:9 - If any man hath an ear, let him hear.**
- 10.1. All men should hear God's word, believe it and obey it.
11. **Rev. 13:10 - If any man [is] for captivity, into captivity he goeth: if any man shall kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.**
- 11.1. This scripture spurs the church into action; it is to take in the persecution by the beast. The RSV rightly converts the first part of the verse, "If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes."
- 11.1.1. This means that the Christian must be ready to accept the realities of life. He must realize that God is in overall control and accept what comes to him without complaint or loss of faith.
- 11.2. The second part of the verse teaches the same thing that Jesus taught in **Matthew 26:52**, "All who take the sword will perish by the sword."
- 11.2.1. The church is to fight with spiritual weapons (**Ephesians 6:10-18; II Corinthians 10:3-5**), not with carnal weapons.
- 11.2.2. God will take care of those who kill in the right manner.
- 11.2.3. The Christian may not always understand why something is happening to him, but he can rest assured that God knows and God is with him.
- 11.3. Introduced here are also the patience and faith of the saints.
- 11.3.1. This attitude of humble submission is the patience and faith of the saints.
- 11.3.2. Patience is unwavering endurance in the midst of persecution.
- 11.3.3. Faith is the steady trust in God that he will be with Christians and never forsake them, regardless the event.
- 11.3.4. The promise is, that for all of Satan's influence and power in this world, and for all the chaos, damage, hurt and death he has occasioned, he who had led many into captivity will himself be taken captive (**Rev. 13:10**).
- 11.4. Satan cannot win; he is destined to lose and those who stand with God shall be the victors in the end.
- 11.5. Christians have that faith, and that truth provides for them patience.
12. **Rev. 13:11 - And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto lamb, and he spake as a dragon.**
- 12.1. John sees another beast, which is the second beast. He is coming out of the earth. He looked harmless and had just two horns like a Lamb. But he spoke like the dragon which means beguiling and deceitful, as Satan is the father of liars (**John 8:44**).

- 12.1.1. **His nature:** He is also pictured with horns, but his deceptive nature is seen in that while the speech is as a dragon, the appearance is like that of a lamb. Satan had earlier been noted for his ability in disguise
- 12.1.2. **2 Cor. 11:14-15 - And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.**
- 12.2. The presence of a second beast lets us know that Satan has more than one tool with which to do his evil work.
- 12.3. This beast is identified in **Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10** as the false prophet.
- 12.3.1. Remember Jesus warned of false prophets looking harmless (**Matthew 7:15**).
- 12.3.2. The beast out of the earth represents all false religions and false philosophies that have plagued the church. In the first century it represented paganism and the Roman Concilia, which were dedicated to having all men worship the emperor. It would include all false religions throughout the Christian Age, which have opposed God, the church and truth.
13. **Rev. 13:12 - And he exerciseth all the authority of the first beast in his sight. And he maketh the earth and them dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed.**
- 13.1. **His work:** He has all the power of the first beast, and he lends his influence to causing the world to follow that first beast. If the first beast was simply "the world," then this beast, in his particular work, has the effect of causing men to be "of the world," even though their labors might be religiously motivated.
14. **Rev. 13:13-14**
- 14.1. **Rev. 13:13 - And he doeth great signs, that he should even make fire to come down out of heaven upon the earth in the sight of men.**
- 14.1.1. He deceives the people by doing great signs as in **2 Thessalonians 2:9 and Matthew 24:24**. The fire coming from heaven was to deceive people into thinking that he was speaking from God.
- 14.2. **Rev. 13:14 - And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him 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 who hath the stroke of the sword and lived.**
- 14.2.1. **His deception:** He is pictured in terms of great "wonders, miracles," etc. Being in the service of Satan, the works performed are not true miraculous manifestation, but Satan is seen by Paul as having "power, signs and lying wonders" (**2 Thess. 2:9**).

14.2.2. He deceived those that dwelt on the earth by the signs he did. He did not deceive the Christians. These were not true signs. They were false, imitation signs, given to deceive. They were different from the true miracles from God (**Acts 8:5-13**). He commanded those he deceived to build an image to the beast out of the sea.

14.2.3.

14.2.4. The second beast represents false religion -- the realm of "false faith and false Christ's. All who know their Bibles also know that religious error simply means that its supporters are still "in the world" and in the service of Satan.

### **15. Rev. 13:15-17**

15.1. **Rev. 13:15 - And it was given [unto him] to give breath to it, [even] to the image to the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed.**

15.1.1. The decree was given that those who do not worship the image shall be put to death. We have seen throughout history where it was a capital offense not to worship the emperor or leader. All of this is a part of the process to deceive and to force people to worship and serve the beast.

15.2. **Rev. 13:16 - And he causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead;**

15.2.1. The small and great, the rich and poor, the free and bond are terms that taken together mean everyone. The mark of the beast was to be on their right hand or their forehead. This is the opposite to the sealing of the saints by an angel of God in chapters 7:3; 9:4 and 14:1.

15.2.2. The idea is that this symbolizes their belonging to the beast and the rejection of obedience to the Almighty.

15.3. **Rev. 13:17 - and that no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, [even] the name of the beast or the number of his name.**

15.3.1. The mark was the name of the beast or his number.

15.3.1.1. The idea is that if you did not have this mark, you could not do the necessary business transactions to live. This signifies economic boycott.

15.3.1.2. Those who resisted the mark being put on them were Christians who were willing to die for their faith and allegiance to their Lord. All others willingly submitted to the mark.

15.3.1.3. Rather than trying to find the time in history that this actually happened, realize that this is any pressure and boycott that evil men put on righteous men.

- 15.3.1.4. The mark of the beast is no more visible than the seal on the forehead of the righteous. However, you can see in the life and character of each into which category they fit.
- 15.3.1.5. Every accountable person bears the seal of God on his forehead or the mark of the beast.
- 15.3.2. So what is this mark?
  - 15.3.2.1. Consider the following contrasts/comparisons:
    - 15.3.2.1.1. God's seal was placed on the 144,000 which was a symbolic number representing "all the faithful";
    - 15.3.2.1.2. The beast's mark was placed on all earth dwellers – small and great, rich and poor, free men and slaves – not one was missed.
    - 15.3.2.1.3. The seal indicated that the saved belonged to God and were protected by Him;
    - 15.3.2.1.4. The mark indicated those who belong to the beast and look to him for protection.
  - 15.3.3. Neither seal NOR the mark are literal! They are simply a visual representation of the saved and the lost respectively!
- 16. **Rev. 13:18 - Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man: and his number is Six hundred and sixty and six.**
  - 16.1. Probably more has been written concerning this verse than any one single verse in the book of Revelation.
    - 16.1.1. There are many conflicting theories concerning this number and the larger commentaries list these.
      - 16.1.1.1. Many well thought of commentators believe the number 666 is identified with the "Lateinos," a Latin King who was reputed to be the founder of the Latin Empire. "Lateinos" means Latin man. The Catholic church has been very much been a Latin church.
      - 16.1.1.2. However, in my opinion, the best conclusion is that this does not designate a certain person, but rather it is the number of the beast given in man's numbers.
  - 16.2. The numbers in Revelation – all the numbers – are symbolic. We cannot pick and choose.
    - 16.2.1. The number seven is the complete number or perfect number. The number six was one short of seven, so it represents incompleteness or imperfection. The number is intensified to 666.
      - 16.2.1.1. The number 6 symbolically denotes imperfection or evil or deception (since it is one short of the perfect "7")
      - 16.2.1.2. Often in Revelation concepts are emphasized or intensified by repetition
    - 16.2.2. This number denotes imperfection, incompleteness and complete failure. The idea being that as powerful and as invincible as the dragon and the beasts seem, they are doomed to failure.

- 16.2.3. The number of the beast, six-six-six, stands for the complete and total failure of all human systems and efforts opposed to God and Christ all are doomed to ultimate and complete defeat and failure.
- 16.3. This explanation is in harmony with the theme and purpose of Revelation.
- 16.4. Those who are faithful to God will triumph.
- 17. **Chapter 13** outlines the work of Satan in opposing the mission of Christ and his followers. Satan must use men by any means at his disposal. His means are presented as two beasts.
  - 17.1. Regardless of the identifying features in the chapter, point-by-point, one overall fact does stand out as being true: The world and the powers of the world, including all civil power, are used by Satan in opposing Christ.
  - 17.2. The religious world, the world of religious error, is used by Satan to keep men away from Christ. While they purport to be spiritual, because they are not obedient, they still serve the world.
  - 17.3. Those who are faithful to God will triumph. Students of God's word, Christians, realize this principle. Those who oppose God and follow the "dragon" and the "beasts" think that Satan will triumph, but they are mistaken. The dragon and the beasts are doomed to failure. This fits in with the overall theme of the book, which is the final triumph of Christ and his saints.
- 18. Children of God must ALWAYS be prepared!