

The Beasts and the False Prophets

Chapter 13

“Satan’s strategy for conducting his war against the woman and her offspring (12:17) is now presented. It centers on the other two members of the false trinity, the beast from the sea (13:1–10) and the beast from the earth (13:11–18). The first beast is the military and administrative head of the empire, and the second beast is the head of the one-world religion centered on worshiping the beast and the dragon (the “false prophet” in 16:13). The dragon gives the beast his authority and his throne (13:2), so the beast in effect is his “son,” a parody on Christ as Son of God. As such, the beasts conduct the final war against God and his people and demand universal worship.”

Osborne, Grant R. Revelation: Verse by Verse. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016. Print. Osborne New Testament Commentaries.

I. The first beast

A. The appearance and identity of the beast. 13:1-3

1. The beast somewhat resembles the beast of Daniel 7.

a. The beast arises from the sea.

Revelation 13:1 (ESV) And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.

Daniel 7:2 (ESV) Daniel declared, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.

Daniel 7:3 (ESV) And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.

b. However, in Daniel the beasts are 4 in number and in Revelation it is a single beast.

Daniel 7:3 (ESV) And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.

Revelation 13:1 (ESV) And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.

c. The lion

Revelation 13:2 (ESV) And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.

Daniel 7:4 (ESV) The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it.

d. The bear

Revelation 13:2 (ESV) And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.

Daniel 7:5 (ESV) And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.'

e. The leopard.

Revelation 13:2 (ESV) And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.

Daniel 7:6 (ESV) After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

f. The ten horned beast.

Revelation 13:1 (ESV) And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.

Daniel 7:7 (ESV) After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

2. The beast exists in the form of governmental powers and the individuals that occupy those "heads" of power.

Revelation 13:1 (ESV) And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.

- a. There are 7 heads or individuals.

Revelation 13:1 (ESV) And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.

Revelation 13:3 (ESV) One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.

- b. The 10 horns represent ruling powers.

Revelation 13:1 (ESV) And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.

- B. The success of the beast.

1. One of the leaders was killed.

Revelation 13:3 (ESV) One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.

Rev 13:3 (NASB) And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;

2. The leader came back to life.

Revelation 13:3 (ESV) One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.

Rev 13:3 (NASB) And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;

3. The people were amazed.

Revelation 13:3 (ESV) One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.

4. The beast was believed.

Revelation 13:3 (ESV) One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.

5. The dragon was worshiped.

Revelation 13:4 (ESV) And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

C. The power of the beast.

1. His power is supplied by Satan.

Revelation 13:4 (ESV) And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

2. His power is universally acknowledged.

Revelation 13:4 (ESV) And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?”

3. His power is self-proclaimed and self-engrandizing

Revelation 13:5 (ESV) And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.

4. His power is limited to a period of three and one half years.

Revelation 13:5 (ESV) And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.

D. The program of the beast. 13:6-8

Revelation 13:6 (ESV) It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

1. It is a program directed against the saints.

Revelation 13:7 (ESV) Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

2. It is a program that encompasses the entire world.

Revelation 13:7 (ESV) Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

3. It is a program that will be successful.

Revelation 13:7 (ESV) Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

4. It will result in a wide spread worship of him.

Revelation 13:8 (ESV) and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

5. The success of the program will be limited for the true believer will not be deceived.

Revelation 13:8 (ESV) and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

6. It is not just a civil program but a religious program as well.

Revelation 13:8 (ESV) and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Rev 13:8 And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

7. It is a program that is ultimately directed against God.

Revelation 13:6 (ESV) It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

E. The pronouncement against the program of the beast.

1. The pronouncement serves as warning to the followers of the beast.

Revelation 13:9 (ESV) If anyone has an ear, let him hear:

2. The pronouncement serves as an encouragement to the saints.

Revelation 13:10 (ESV) If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

II. The rising of the second beast out of the earth. A deceptive beast.

Revelation 13:11 (ESV) Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.

Revelation 13:12 (ESV) It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.

A. His description and identity.

1. His description

Revelation 13:11 (ESV) Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.

- a. The fact that he looks like a lamb speaks of his being meek and mild and even may allude to his representing himself as messiah.

Revelation 13:11 (ESV) Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.

- b. The fact that he spoke as a dragon speaks of his deceptiveness and that he is in fact not good but evil.

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

2. His identity

I think that we must understand this second beast as a human being.

Revelation 13:18 (ESV) This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.

B. His power

1. His power is similar to that of the first beast in that it is Satanic in its source.

Revelation 13:12 (ESV) It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.

2. His power is primarily religious and secondarily governmental.

Revelation 13:12 (ESV) It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.

3. His power is persuasive as opposed to solely autocratic.

Revelation 13:12 (ESV) It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.

4. His power is miraculous in nature.

Revelation 13:13 (ESV) It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people,

5. His power will deceive many into thinking that he represents God not Satan.

Revelation 13:14 (ESV) and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

C. The powers described.

1. He will do great powers that are intended to be signs.

Revelation 13:12 (ESV) It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.

Revelation 13:13 (ESV) It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people,

2. He will be able to make fire come down out of heaven as Elijah did.

Revelation 13:13 (ESV) It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people,

3. The signs will deceive many into worshipping and following him .

Revelation 13:14 (ESV) and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

4. They will make an idol to the one who had received the fatal wound.

Revelation 13:14 (ESV) and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

5. God allows the idol to come to life.

Revelation 13:15 (ESV) And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.

D. The mark of the beast.

1. The inhabitants of the earth will have to take the mark of the beast in order to buy and sell. This is a mark of ownership.

Revelation 13:16 (ESV) Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead.

Revelation 13:17 (ESV) so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.

2. The mark of the beast is antithetical to the mark of God's people.

Revelation 7:3 (ESV) saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."

Revelation 22:3 (ESV) No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.

Revelation 22:4 (ESV) They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

3. The mark of the beast is described.

Revelation 13:18 (ESV) This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.

- a. This is the source of the greatest amount of speculation surrounding the study of the book of Revelation.
- b. This is the antichrist referred to in the scriptures.

1 John 2:18 (ESV) Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.

Matthew 24:23 (ESV) Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it.

Matthew 24:24 (ESV) For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

Matthew 24:25 (ESV) See, I have told you beforehand.

Matthew 24:26 (ESV) So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it.

Matthew 24:27 (ESV) For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

- c. The wisdom and understanding is not in figuring out ahead of time what the mark is or who it represents. The wisdom and understanding is to not accept the mark when it is presented. For the believer, it will be incredibly apparent when the time comes what is indeed taking place.
- d. An idol coming to life, that represents a false prophet that was killed, is going to be hard to miss.

III. Concluding remarks:

- A. A key element to this narrative is the fatal wound of one of the heads of the beast.
 - 1. It is mentioned three times in the narrative.

Revelation 13:3 (ESV) One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth

marveled as they followed the beast.

Revelation 13:12 (ESV) It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.

Revelation 13:14 (ESV) and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

2. It is the primary reason that he gets such a following.
3. It is intended to be a miracle akin to the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. It is essential to understand that the only reason the beast has such powers is because God allowed Him to do these things.

1. God allows the beast to utter blasphemies and exercise power.

Revelation 13:5 (ESV) And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.

Revelation 13:6 (ESV) It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

2. God allows the beast to conquer the saints.

Revelation 13:7 (ESV) Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

3. God allows the beast to receive universal worship.

Revelation 13:7 (ESV) Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

Revelation 13:8 (ESV) and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

C. We should keep in mind the significance of all of this for the believers.

1. We are to listen to the point of the warning.

Revelation 13:9 (ESV) If anyone has an ear, let him hear:

2. God has appointed us to these things.

Revelation 13:10 (ESV) If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

3. We are called to a life of faith and endurance.

Revelation 13:10 (ESV) If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

- D. We should learn a great lesson from this passage.

1. Truth is not be discerned from power alone.
2. Truth is to be discerned from the message that is associated with that power.
3. Does the power lead us to worship the true and living God. Or does that power lead us away from the true and living God.