

THE TWO BEASTS: Revelation 13

Revelation 13 introduces two beasts and the mark of the beast. Prophecy preachers waste their time speculating on their future arrival and form because scripture identifies them for us. When the Father resurrected Jesus from the dead, He completely defeated Satan, including these two beasts who receive their authority and power from Satan.

Revelation, chapter 13, in its entirety (NASV):

And he stood on the sand and the seashore [a more accurate translation, "And I stood on the sand of the seashore" (John is in position to get a good view of what would be happening). One other introductory note . . . if your translation uses the word "earth" throughout this chapter, the actual word is "land." Other verses in Revelation translate this word as "land" (e.g., John saw an angel who stands with one foot on the "land" and one foot on the sea). We will use the word "land" instead of earth in this chapter].

And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were *like those* of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole land (earth) was amazed *and followed* after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemes against God, to blaspheme His name and **His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven** (verse 6).

Verse 7, And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. And all who dwell on the land 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. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone *is destined* for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance (patience) and the faith of the saints.

Verse 11, And I saw another beast coming up out of the land; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of

the first beast in his presence. And he makes the land and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.

Verse 14, And he deceives those who dwell in the land because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell in the land to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And he causes all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and *he provides* that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, *either* the name of the beast or the number of his name.

Verse 18, Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six."

If God's purpose for John's writing is to describe events occurring thousands of years in the early church's future, Revelation would have meant nothing to these suffering churches John is writing to. Modern preachers who try to match circumstances described in Revelation to current events fail to teach the book's important truths about Jesus, Rev 1:1, "the things that must soon take place" reveal "Jesus Christ." Revelation is a book of facts about Jesus. It is not a book of prophesy forecasting future events just before Jesus Returns. Revelation reveals Jesus and what the Father wants His church to know about Jesus through all millenniums.

Like any other book in scripture, Revelation reveals truths about Jesus to these early churches that are directly applicable to any church until Jesus Returns. Eccles 1:9, "That which has been is that which will be, and that which has been done is that which will be done. So, there is nothing new under the sun."

This study focuses on how the early church might have understood John's writing. They would have understood: 1) this letter is from God-to-them just like any other letter from one of Jesus' Apostles, 2) God never changes and neither does His word, and 3) the correct answer to anything they did not understand in this writing could only be found in other scripture. **Looking to sources outside of scripture to understand Revelation is like being outside the safety of the city walls in Rev 22:15, "But outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually**

immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”

John sees two beasts; the first is from the sea, the second is from the land. This is not new. The book of Job uses similar symbolic terms to introduce an animal from the sea and another animal from the land.

Both beasts from Revelation are instruments of the dragon. Revelation specifically identifies the dragon as Satan. Satan gives the first beast its power, throne, and authority. The second beast exercises all the authority of the first beast making both beasts instruments of Satan.

For reasons we will explain in a few minutes, the first beast out of the sea stands for **human government, The State, which in John's day would have been the Roman Empire**. The second beast arising out of the land having two horns as a lamb but speaks as a dragon is **human religion**, the false prophets, or the false church, **which in John's day was apostate Israel**. Different beasts may arise throughout history, but Jesus will destroy all of them (most recently the Kaiser and Hitler). Scripture tells us why there are no exceptions to Satan's perpetual defeat.

When the early church applied scripture to understand this, they would have understood the first beast **coming out of the sea as the Roman Empire**, with all its destructive power directed against the early believers in Christ. They would have understood the beast from the land with its two horns as the **Old Covenant Jewish system** that rejected and crucified Christ by applying all its religious force to kill Christ, persecute and destroy the Apostles, and anyone professing Christ as King in violation of Roman law.

John identifies seven basic truths about the first beast that comes out of the sea.

Daniel 7:3, is interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream (King of Babylon 605-562 B.C.), "I saw four great beasts coming up from of the sea," the same way John's first beast was "coming up out the sea." Daniel's first beast was like a lion (verse 4), the second resembled a bear (verse 5), the third a leopard (verse 6), and the fourth is not identified but is "dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong . . . (having) 10 horns" (verse 7). **Daniel 7:17, "These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth.**

Dan 2:31, sees these same kingdoms as being "a great statue . . . verse 39, And after you (Babylon) there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then a third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so,

like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces . . . verse 44, And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.”

Daniel identifies by name the first 3 kingdoms in correct chronological and historic order: 1) “Babylon,” 2) “Medo-Persian” Empire, led by Cyrus II invaded Babylon from the east in June 539 B.C. capturing Babylon’s capital with Daniel becoming a trusted advisor to the Medo-Persians and, 3) “Grecian” Empire.

Daniel died around 538 B.C. at about age 85. Long after his death, the Roman Empire chronologically followed the Grecian Empire when Rome conquered Greece in 146 B.C. and remained in power through John’s day when God fulfilled Daniel’s prophesy in Dan 2:44 “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom (Christ and His church) which will never be destroyed . . . that will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms.” Christ, in His wrath, did this when He used the Vandals to defeat the Roman Army in 455 A.D. causing Rome’s total collapse in 476 A.D.

History confirms Daniel accurately identifies by name the first three beasts in correct chronological order. History confirms the fourth chronological kingdom was the Roman Empire (Daniel’s fourth beast).

Daniel’s animal characteristics of his first three beasts (lion, bear, leopard) match John’s animal characteristics of his first beast (leopard, bear, lion) meaning Rome had the characteristics of its three predecessor kingdoms. The unique ten horn physical feature on Daniel’s unidentified fourth beast matches John’s ten-horn characteristic on his first beast.

When scripture plainly tells us Daniel’s beasts “ are four kings” (kingdoms), John’s first beast, with its matching animal descriptions and unique physical feature, is also a king (kingdom).

Rome rose to power 100+ years before Christ and was the kingdom to which the Jewish High Priest pledged “we have no King but Caesar” (John 19:15). Christ, again in His wrath, as “ruler of the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5), used the same Roman Empire in 70 A.D. to destroy the entire Old Jewish system, including its priesthood.

In scripture, the sea represents peoples and nations. It is out of these nations and the conglomerate of people from these nations that the Roman Empire arose. Revelation 17:15, "And he said to me, ‘The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.’" After talking about the first beast in general terms, John then identifies **the waters (the sea) as**

peoples, nations, and tongues. Isaiah 57:20 says, "But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud."

John's first beast has **seven heads and ten horns**. Rev 17:9-10 identifies the seven heads, "Here is the mind which has wisdom. The **seven heads** are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they **are seven kings**; five have fallen, one is, and other has not come, and when he comes, he must remain a little while . . . verses 11-12, And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is *one* of the seven, and he goes in to destruction. And the **ten horns** which you saw **are ten kings** who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings from the beast for one hour."

Consistent with recorded history, the **seven heads represent seven Roman Caesars. Nero is the one who is and there are others to follow. The ten horns, which are ten kings, are the governors of the ten Roman providences.**

John "saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed . . . and they worshiped the dragon." Genesis 3:15 prophesied that the seed of the woman would crush (bruise) the head of the serpent and the serpent would bruise His heel. When Christ came into the world, died on the cross, was raised from the tomb, ascended into heaven, and took His seat on the right hand of the Father, scriptures tells us that in doing that, Christ defeated the power, dominion, and authority of Satan. Christ struck a death blow to Satan's head in fulfillment of Gen 3:15. It looked like a fatal wound because, in its early days, christianity swept across the Roman Empire so fast and so strong it looked like it was going to take over and destroy the Roman Empire.

But something happened described many places in the New Testament. I Timothy 4:1-2, "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times (which we identified by scripture earlier to be the Old Covenant Jewish system, and not Christ's Second Coming) some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron."

II Timothy 3:1-5, Paul later describes the lies these deceitful spirits, doctrines of demons, and hypocrisy of liars, "But realize this, that in the last days (of the Old Covenant people who rejected Christ) difficult times will come (this actually took place in Paul's time because of the context in which he gives it). Men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (we read this and say what an accurate description of the times we are living); holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its

power (these are religious people); **avoid such men as these.**" In Timothy's day, religious people held to a form of godliness but denied its power. **We should still avoid such men today.**

1 John 2:18-19 identifies the events that slowed the spread of the gospel, "Children, it is the last hour (the Old Jewish system); and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us (this is contemporary to the early church), but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, in order that it might be shown that they are not of us." If you want a complete picture, read the problems Paul faced in the book of Acts with false doctrine and people being unfaithful. Read I and II Corinthians discussing the additional problems Paul suffered through. Read all of Paul's epistles. For the most part, they talk about people who were falling away from the faith and how sin was coming into the life of the early church.

The near fatal death blow to the first beast (and dragon) occurred when Christ died on the cross, but the beast's wound healed. Hypocrisy came into the early church (the wound healed), and the Roman Empire again received power resulting in the church's persecution. The church struggled eventually experiencing the Apostle Paul's death and many others.

The second beast comes out of the land . . . Rev 13:3, "The whole land was amazed and followed after the beast." We said scripture identifies the land as the land of Israel, apostate Israel. Throughout scripture, Israel is said to dwell in the land. Rev 13:8, "And all who dwell in the land 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 . . . verse 12, He makes the land and those who dwell in it to worship the beast . . . verse 14, And he deceives all those who dwell in the land because of the signs which are given him to perform in the presence of the beast."

Recall what the people in the land said concerning Christ when He was before Pilate, "We have no King but Caesar." All the land turned to the beast. They repeatedly rejected God's Messiah giving their allegiance to Caesar. John 19:12, "the Jews cried out, saying, 'If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out *to be* a king opposes Caesar . . . verse 15, **The chief priest answered, 'We have no king but Caesar.'**"

John 8:44, Jesus stood before these Jewish religious leaders with their followers present and told them, "You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father." Strong words directed to Israel and the Jewish leaders of His day.

Revelation calls them “a synagogue of Satan.” Rev 2:9, "I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are **a synagogue of Satan.**" Rev 3:9, "**Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews, and are not, but lie---behold, I will make them come and bow down to your feet, and to know that I have loved you.**" Claiming to be Jews, Jesus called them “a synagogue of Satan.”

If you want to know who is a true Jew, read the first and second chapters of Romans. Rom 2:28-29, Paul says, "For he is not a Jew who is a one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God." A true Jew is not one who is a fleshly descendant of Abraham. He is one who has faith in Abraham's God. **Many direct descendants of Abraham said they are Jews, but they are not.**

The “land” (entire nation of Israel), rejected the Messiah choosing instead to pay homage to the beast. They worshiped the beast by giving their allegiance to the Roman Empire. Authority was given to this beast (Roman Empire) to speak arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for 42 months. John emphasizes it was “given to him” . . . telling us this beast could only do what God allowed him to do for a short time (42 months).

Rev 13:7, “And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.” Forty-two months (1,260 days) represents a short period of time in scripture. Forty-two months is a symbolic figure signifying a time of sadness when evil and the enemies of God come into power and exercise that power for a short time.

In the Old Testament, forty-two months passed from the time Elijah came on the scene until the time that he met the false prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. This was a time of famine and distress in Israel.

Rev 11:3, 1,260 days (42 months) were given to the Lord’s two-witnesses to prophesy in sackcloth before the beast from the abyss overcame them and killed them (Rev 11:7). God allowed this for only a short period.

Rev 13:18, listen as John gives us a positive identification of the second beast, "Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding (John expected them to understand by giving them this number) calculate the number of the beast, for the

number is that of a man (remember this statement); and his number is 666.” If the early church knew this number, they knew who the beast was.

Continuing to use scripture to interpret Revelation, “Here is wisdom, let him who has understanding.” Get this . . . I Kings 10:14, the number 666 is first introduced at the height of King Solomon’s reign, introduces, “Now the weight of gold which came into Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold.”

Going back to I Kings 10:1, the Queen of Sheba heard of King Solomon’s fame concerning the name of the Lord so she visited Solomon to test him with difficult questions . . . verses 4-6, she was so overwhelmed by his answers, by the things she saw in his house, including the stairway by which he went up to the house of the Lord that “there was no more spirit in her” . . . verse 7, after seeing all Solomon’s splendor, glories, and the greatness of his empire, she said, “behold, the half was not told (to) me. You *exceed in* wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard (about you).”

It was at this exact point in history when verse 14 mentions 666 talents of gold, that Solomon's reign began its downward spiral. Scripture tells us why Solomon spiraled.

Deuteronomy 17:15-17, Moses identifies the three requirements for a good king and a healthy kingdom, "You shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses, one from among you and your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. Moreover, he **shall not multiply horses for himself**, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall never again return that way.’ **Neither shall he multiply wives for himself**, lest his heart turn away; **nor shall he greatly increase silver or gold to himself.**"

1 Kings 10:14-25 describes how Solomon multiplied his gold from 666 talents of gold to being “greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom” . . . verses 26-29 describes how he multiplied horses, gathered chariots, and horsemen (1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen) . . . chapter 11:1-8 describes how he multiplied wives in violation of Moses’ three edicts.

Here is wisdom and understanding: The mark of both a king and a State in the dragon's image became 666, which is a State in defiance to the law of God (Rome in John’s day). Rev 13:8, "Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man." That meant something significant to the early church. John did not expect the early

church to determine the name of a government official thousands of years in their future. Such thinking would have been foolishness beyond imagination.

Applying wisdom and understanding: The mark of the beast . . . christians get so upset about the mark. On the contrary, the mark of the beast is a reason for rejoicing, not fear. Rejoice because the mark of the beast is 666 and not a 7, which in scripture is the perfect number. Seven (7) is the number of totality; the number for divine fullness.

Rev 13:18, “6” is the number of a man. Man was created on the sixth day. At the beast’s most powerful point, the beast (in any millennium) is no more than a man and will never be anything more. In scripture, man is always a 6 or a series of 6s. No man, besides Christ, will never be a 7. Man can be a 666, 0.6, 699.999, but he will never be a 7. The beast (from Daniel’s day until Christ Returns) will always be a man. Christ, “Ruler of the kings of the earth” will always defeat and destroy the beast in any millennium.

What does that say? It told the early church Nero, and any successor, would always be nothing more than a man, never a god as Caesar proclaimed. That means any man's plan for dominion will never be fulfilled. The beast will never permanently overcome or take charge because he has the number of a man (666) . . . the beast will never become a seven. **As the body of Christ, the church will always be a 7! The church will always be victorious.**

Until Christ Returns, all persecutions to God’s church by Governments, Religions, or unimaginable future creations by man cannot change the fact the church will always win because it is a 7 in Christ. The mark of a man is 666 meaning man will always be defeated. It may take a millennium for the church to win as with the Roman Empire, but the church will always win over any Empire, including all changes-for-the-worse to American democracy, including its demise should it reject Christ.

Knowing this should be as meaningful to us as it was to any Apostle or early believer in the days of the books of Romans, Ephesians, Galatians, Corinthians, or Acts. In any millennium, and until Christ Returns, the church will face a world with evil governments, false religions, false churches, false prophets, and the woes from Satan anytime God gives Satan power or authority to act for a specified time.

Here is wisdom: Because we know Jesus is ruling, we can have patience and perseverance and be faithful to Jesus through everything, including our own death.

That is the first beast.

The **second beast** that comes out of the earth has horns like a lamb and speaks like a dragon, is **identified in Rev 16:13 and 17:20 as the false prophet.**

The Israeli people today are not the religious people of the Old Testament. Never think for a moment that the Jews in the day of Christ fulfilled what the Old Testament demanded of God's people. They were apostate by rejecting Christ from the very beginning of Christ's ministry. Modern Jews are no more God's people today than they were when they crucified Christ and were later wiped-off the face of the earth in 70 A.D. Do not be fooled by modern preachers, televangelists, and alleged biblical scholars who declare Jews living in Palestine today are still God's chosen people.

God's chosen people today are His New Covenant believers in Christ, His church. God's Kingdom was taken from the Old Jewish system because they rejected their Messiah preferring to pay homage to the first beast, Rome. The Old Jewish system became a part of the beastly system, so, God gave His Kingdom to a nation bearing fruit (Matt21:43).

To the second beast, apostate Israel, Jesus said, "You are of your father, the devil." How does a dragon speak? He uses deception, agility, and seduction. His speech is designed to always deceive. He is a liar, slanderer, blasphemer, and deceiver. Matthew 24:24, Jesus said, "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect." They are portrayed coming on the scene in John's day as the second beast who looks like a lamb but speaks like dragon (identified as Satan).

Acts 8:9, "Simon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city, and astonishing the people of Samaria, claiming to be someone great . . . verse 20, But Peter said to him . . . verse 21, your heart is not right before God." Later Simon joined Thaddaeus in Persia where Simon was martyred being cut in half by a saw.

Acts 13:8, "Elymas the magician who opposed them (Barnabas and Saul) seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith."

Acts 19:14, the seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, all opposed the Apostle Paul and his doctrine. Most of the suffering the Apostle Paul experienced was not caused by Rome. Rome did not persecute, beat, or run him out of town. In fact, Roman representatives apologized to Paul when they put him in jail for unlawful reasons. The Jews, not Rome, stirred up the multitudes and gathered the mobs that caused Paul to be stoned at Lystra, but not killed (Acts 14:19-23). The Jewish leaders ran Paul out of town and hounded him throughout his ministry.

Apostate Israel, the second beast, exercised the authority of the first beast, Roman Empire, and made those in the land (Israel) worship the first beast. It performs great signs making fire come down from heaven in the presence of men, but not in the presence of God. **The saints are the ones who appear in God's presence in the book of Revelation.** Rev 13:6, “His tabernacle, *that is*, those who dwell in heaven.” These are the ones who are dwelling spiritually in heavenly places (Eph 2:6).

Now is the time to enjoy heaven by faith. Stop missing it!! We are already there. Do not hope you will someday go to heaven . . . by faith, enjoy heaven now in the land of the living. After Jesus Returns, we will not go to or be in heaven, we will back here on a redeemed earth in our new body (our hope is our new body) judging angels, judging the world, and serving God. Stop missing it!! Later in this study, we will provide scriptural proof of this fact that preachers have missed for 2,020 years and counting.

The second beast performs its signs and miracles before men and before the dragon. **Many supernatural events that took place in Revelation take place in the world today just as it did back then “before men and the dragon.” But, none of these supernatural events take place before God. Do not believe something just because it is supernatural.**

The mark of the beast on their forehead and right hand.

Revelation tells believers we have been sealed, set apart so we might be identified and protected. For the beast, it is a mark, not a seal. The mark identifies them because the mark is on their forehead and right hand.

The forehead signifies their mind and thought life. Their hand signifies their service. They who are deceived by the false prophets are going to first be deceived in their minds and it will come out in their lives by what they do.

Learn this: The church has two enemies: government and religion. The beast coming up out of the sea, the State, secular power, Rome in John's day. The second coming up out of the land is false religion, apostate Israel in John's day.