

## "THE BOOK OF REVELATION"

### Chapter Thirteen

This chapter reveals two agents the dragon (Satan) would use in carrying out his war against the people of God.

The first is **the beast from the sea**. Described by John as having seven heads and ten horns, there were ten crowns on his horns and on his heads a blasphemous name. The beast was like a leopard, with feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion. One of the heads of the beast appeared mortally wounded, but was healed. To this beast the dragon gave his power, his throne, and great authority, and all the world marveled and worshiped the beast. Given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies against God, His name, His tabernacle, and those dwelling in heaven, the beast was also granted to make war against the saints for forty-two months. All on the earth worshiped him, except those whose names were in the Lamb's Book of Life. With this description of the beast and his activities, John gives a word of caution to the saints (1-10).

John then saw **the beast from the land**, having two horns like a lamb and speaking like a dragon. With the same authority as the first beast, this second beast causes all to worship the first by deceiving them with great signs. Telling them to make an image to the first beast, he was given power to make the image speak and put to death those who would not worship it. This second beast also causes all to receive a mark on their right hands or on their forehead, without which they cannot buy or sell. John then adds a word of wisdom, in which he tells those with understanding to calculate the number of the beast, which is the number of a man: **666** (11-18).

The identity of the first beast from the sea becomes clearer when we get to chapter seventeen. I agree with those who say this beast from the sea is the Roman Empire, personified in its persecuting emperors. The beast from the earth or land may represent the Roman Concilia, a committee set up in Asia Minor where the seven churches were located to enforce emperor worship at the time the Revelation was given (Summers). This they did by requiring a certificate that proved the bearer had been seen sacrificing to the idol of the emperor, without which one could not buy or sell in the marketplace.

The significance of 666 should not be underestimated, as John encourages those with understanding to calculate the number. Unfortunately, through many ingenuous and fanciful ways people have come up with the number to represent just about anyone (e.g., the Pope, Hitler, Ronald Reagan). Keeping the context of Revelation and its time in view, the number 666 may be a cryptogram referring to "Latinos" (which in Greek can be calculated to 666); and in turn points to the ruler of the Latin or Roman empire (Schaff, *History Of The Christian Church*, Vol. 1, p. 177). In Hebrew the number can be calculated to mean "Nero Caesar" (Adams). Taken more symbolically, the number may simply signify evil raised to its highest power (Hailey, Summers) as was the case in emperors like Nero and Domitian.

### POINTS TO PONDER

\* The two "beasts" that Satan would use in making war against the saints

- \* The number of the beast and its mark consistent with the context of Revelation

## **OUTLINE**

### **I. THE BEAST FROM THE SEA (1-10)**

#### **A. THE BEAST DESCRIBED (1-3a)**

1. Seen by John as rising up out of the sea
2. Having seven heads, ten horns, with ten crowns on his horns, and on his heads a blasphemous name
3. Like a leopard with feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion
4. His power, throne, and great authority given him by the dragon
5. One of his heads was mortally wounded, but healed

#### **B. THE ACTIVITY INVOLVING THE BEAST (3b-8)**

1. All the world marveled and followed the beast
  - a. Worshipping the dragon who gave authority to the beast
  - b. Worshipping the beast because of his apparent invincibility
2. What the beast was given
  - a. A mouth speaking great things and blasphemies
  - b. Authority to continue (make war) for forty-two months
3. With this authority:
  - a. He blasphemed God, His name, His tabernacle, and those dwelling in heaven
  - b. He was granted to make war with the saints and overcome them
  - c. He was given authority over every tribe, tongue, and nation
  - d. All who dwell on earth would worship him, unless their names are in the Book of Life of the Lamb

#### **C. A NOTE OF CAUTION (9-10)**

1. If anyone has an ear, let him hear
2. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword
3. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints

### **II. THE BEAST FROM THE LAND (11-18)**

#### **A. THIS BEAST DESCRIBED (11)**

1. Seen by John as coming up out of the earth
2. With two horns like a lamb, but speaking like a dragon

#### **B. THE ACTIVITY OF THIS BEAST (12-17)**

1. He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence
2. He causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast
  - a. Performing great signs, making even fire come down from heaven
  - b. Deceiving the world by the signs
3. He tells the world to make an image to the first beast
  - a. To which he is granted power to give breath
  - b. So the image could both speak and cause those who do not worship it to be killed
4. He causes all to receive a mark on the right hand or on their

foreheads

- a. Without which none can buy or sell
- b. Which is the name of the beast, or the number of his name

**C. A NOTE OF WISDOM (18)**

- 1. Let those with understanding calculate the number of the beast
- 2. For it is the number of a man: His number is 666

**REVIEW QUESTIONS**

**1) What are the main points of this chapter?**

- The beast from the sea (1-10)
- The beast from the land (11-18)

**2) What physical characteristics of the beast from the sea are mentioned? (1-3)**

- Having seven heads, ten horns upon which are ten crowns
- Upon his heads a blasphemous name
- Like a leopard, with feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion
- One of the heads with a mortal wound that had been healed

**3) What did the dragon give the beast from the sea? (2)**

- His power, his throne, and great authority

**4) How did the world respond to the beast from the sea? (3-4)**

- They marveled and followed the beast
- They worshiped the beast

**5) What else was given to the beast from the sea? (5)**

- A mouth speaking great things and blasphemies
- Authority to continue (make war) for forty-two months

**6) When he opened his mouth, what did the beast blaspheme? (6)**

- God's name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven

**7) What was granted to the beast from the sea? (7)**

- To make war with the saints and to overcome them
- Authority over every tribe, tongue, and nation

**8) Who would worship this beast from the sea? (8)**

- All who dwell on the earth, except those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life

**9) What note of caution is given at this point? (9-10)**

- If anyone has an ear, let him hear
- 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 faith of the saints

**10) What were the physical characteristics of the beast from the land? (11)**

- Had two horns like a lamb, and spoke like a dragon

**11) What did the beast from the land do? (12-14)**

- Exercise all the authority of the first beast in his presence
- Cause the earth and those in it to worship the first beast
- Perform great signs, even making fire come down from heaven

- Deceives those on the earth by the signs, telling them to make an image to the first beast

**12) What was granted to the beast from the land? (15)**

- Power to give breath to the image of the first beast
- So that the image would both speak and cause those who would not worship it to be killed

**13) What did the beast from the land require all to receive? Why? (16-17)**

- A mark on their right hand or on their foreheads
- So no one could buy or sell unless they had the mark or name of the beast, or the number of its name

**14) What note of wisdom is given at this point? (18)**

- Let those with understanding calculate the number of the beast
- It is the number of a man; his number is 666