

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 13

Introductory Notes

- We continue this parenthetical section that began in Chapter 12.
- This section is marked by seven “persons”: the woman (Israel), the dragon (Satan), the man-child (Christ), Michael the angel, the remnant seed of the woman (Jewish believers in the Tribulation), the beast out of the sea, and the beast out of the earth.
- Satan is the great counterfeiter. Here is revealed the other members of his “unholy trinity” (Satan as father, Antichrist as son, False Prophet as spirit).

Outline

- The Beast from the Sea - vs. 1-10
- The Beast from the Earth - vs. 11-18

Notes

- vs. 1 – “I stood” – some claim this should read “he stood” and place it at the close of Chapter 12 to refer to the Dragon. This would make the appearances of the Dragon and the two Beasts *chronological*, but the best interpretation is that they are *simultaneous*. The statement that John is “upon the sand of the sea” shows a separation between the first five persons (which are viewed from heaven – 12:1,3,7,10) to these last two (which are viewed from earth – 13:1,11). The change in perspectives is in 12:9-13 when the Dragon (Satan) is cast from heaven to earth.
 - The image of the sea suggests the tumultuous state of godless mankind (Isaiah 57:20) and perhaps the literally the Mediterranean Sea to suggest where the Beast will arise.
- **(6) Beast from the Sea** – the Antichrist and his empire
 - vs. 1 - ten horns, seven heads, ten crowns - see Daniel 7:24
 - The heads are seven successive rulers – 17:10-11
 - The horns are ten nations and the crowns their represented authority – 17:12-13,
 - The Antichrist is the “little horn” of Daniel 7:8
 - vs. 1 - blasphemy - likely refers to his claim to deity – Daniel 7:25, 11:36; II Thessalonians 2:3-4
 - vs. 2 - compare the description of the animals to Daniel 7. This is the revived Roman Empire, the amalgamation of all world powers before it.
 - vs. 2 – who’s the real power behind the Beast? The Dragon (Satan).

- vs. 3 - there are quite a few opinions to this verse, especially when compared to 17:8. Some think the Antichrist will be a resurrected dead person (Judas, etc.), some that it refers to the death and rebirth of the Roman Empire or its imperial government.
 - I agree with J. Vernon McGee, who thinks this is a “resurrection” of the Antichrist. Likely an event in the middle of the Tribulation.
- vs. 4 - looks like the return of deifying rulers, like the Romans and others did.
 - Satan’s boast of Isaiah 4:12-14 is realized as he is worshipped like God.
- vs. 5 - 42 months = 3 1/2 years, the last half of Tribulation
- vs. 6 - note the key characteristic of the Antichrist - words of blasphemy
- vs. 7 - the worldwide power and purpose of the Antichrist – Daniel 7:23
- vs. 8 - the unsaved on earth give in to the Antichrist’s claims of deity.
- vs. 9-10 - the promise of God is that the wicked will not go unpunished
- **(7) Beast from the Earth** - the False Prophet and his unified religion
 - vs. 11 – “out of the earth” – as the first Beast came from the chaotic sea, this Beast comes from a more stabilized situation, probably out of the domain of the first Beast.
 - “lamb” speaks to his demeanor (gentleness) and also an echo of Christ.
 - “two horns” shows less authority than the first Beast’s ten.
 - “spake as a dragon” – speaking the will and hatred of the Dragon.
 - vs. 12 – a mockery of the Spirit’s function of exalting Christ – John 16:13-14
 - vs. 13 - his great miracle is copying Elijah and the Two Witnesses in 11:5
 - vs. 14 - image of the beast - a false idol, perhaps part of the Abomination of Desolation in Daniel 9:27
 - vs. 15 - “power to give life unto the image” - “life” is literally breath or spirit. This is a different type of idol that “miraculously” comes to life.
 - Is this supernatural or some sort of technological trick? I am not sure.
 - vs. 16-17 - “the mark of the beast” - I think we lose track of the significance of the mark by trying to identify what it is. EVERY unbeliever has it. It is a mockery of the seal of God – Revelation 7:3, 9:4; II Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 4:30
 - vs. 18 - Here come the conspiracy theories! Tattoos, bar codes, RF chips, vaccines... and the list goes on, and on, and on, and on, and on...
 - Many attempt to use *gematria* (assigning numerical values to letters to find hidden meanings) to identify who this is. There are so many possibilities (e.g., Nero, the pope, or the Roman/Latin people) that it seems unlikely.
 - I personally am not sure this is a puzzle for us to solve. I think it is something that will be clear to those in the Tribulation.