

Revelation Chapter 13 – Beasts from the Sea and Earth.

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. ² Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of a bear*, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ³ And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. ⁴ So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” ⁵ And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. ⁶ Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. ⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰ 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 the faith of the saints. ¹¹ Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. ¹² And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³ He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. ¹⁴ And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. ¹⁵ He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶ He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number *is* 666.

Introduction

We are now back in the book of Revelation after our Easter series in Matthew’s Gospel.

The important thing to remember about the book of Revelation is contained in Revelation Chapter 1: v. 1-3.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, ² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. ³ Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.

It is clear from these verses that Revelation is a prophetic book which foretells about future events.

The information was given by Jesus to an Angel and then passed on to John.

Therefore, throughout the book I will always take the “Futurist View” as opposed to any of the other interpretations that some scholars present.

Chapter 13 of Revelation fits neatly into two sections.

In v. 1-10 we have the appearance of the “**Beast from the sea**”

And in verses 11-18 we are introduced to the “**Beast from the earth**”

Although we will deal with these “Beasts” separately, they are nevertheless inter-connected.

Brief Overview of the beast from the sea – v. 1-10.

In John’s vision he was standing on the sand by the sea and he saw a beast rising up out of the sea.

1. The Beast had 7 heads and written on each head were names that blasphemed God. One of these heads seemed to be fatally wounded, but then it was suddenly healed. The whole world marvelled at this healing.
2. The Beast had 10 horns with 10 crowns, one on each of the horns.
3. The Beast looked like a Leopard, but had Bear’s feet and a lion’s mouth.

The Beast was given power and authority from Satan to do anything he wanted for 3.5 years.
The Beast made war with the saints (believers in Jesus Christ) and defeated them. (v.7)
Everybody in the whole world worshipped the Beast, except those whose names were written in the lamb's book of life.
The believers were told to be patient and to use this as an opportunity for endurance and faith.

The first thing that I want to say about these verses is that the vision that John had was 'similar' to the vision that Daniel had in the book of Daniel chapter 7.

The vision that Daniel received happened about 600 years before John's vision.

Although it is not exactly the same text as in Revelation, it does have all the same characteristics.

The advantage of the Daniel text is that we are given an interpretation of Daniel's vision.

We always need to interpret the Bible from the Bible, rather than our own personal views, therefore it will be helpful to refer to the Daniel text when we are trying to understand the text in Revelation.

I will divide verses 1-10 into three sections.

1. Description of the Beast – v. 1-3.

Firstly, we need to go to Daniel Chapter 7. v. 1-8

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head *while* on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.² Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.³ And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.⁴ The first *was* like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.⁵ "And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and *had* three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'⁶ "After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.⁷ "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It *was* different from all the beasts that *were* before it, and it had ten horns.⁸ I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, *were* eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

Secondly we need to read Daniel Chapter 7: v. 23-27.

(All N.K.J. Bible Version)

²³ "Thus he said:

'The fourth beast shall be
A fourth kingdom on earth,
Which shall be different from all *other* kingdoms,
And shall devour the whole earth,
Trample it and break it in pieces.

²⁴ The ten horns *are* ten kings
Who shall arise from this kingdom.

And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from the first *ones*,
And shall subdue three kings.

²⁵ He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High,
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
And shall intend to change times and law.

Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand
For a time and times and half a time.

²⁶ 'But the court shall be seated,
And they shall take away his dominion,
To consume and destroy *it* forever.

²⁷ Then the kingdom and dominion,
And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,
Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.
His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom,
And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

In Daniel's vision, the lion, bear and leopard were characteristics of the first three beasts.
John however sees something that puts them all together into one "Beast".

All of the characteristics of these beasts are put into one.

It is like putting all the worst people you can imagine in history into one person.

One of the worst emperors in New Testament Bible times was "Nero" who used to place Christians in his large garden, cover them with tar and set them alight as human torches at night.

To the Jewish people, Hitler who commanded the death of millions of Jews in the second world war was one of the worst people in their recent history.

We now have ISIS and radical Islam who are killing Christians world-wide.

So what John is seeing here is the actual "Anti-Christ", who will be the worst ever person in history.

He will have characteristics of all the other worst people in history.

I am sure that there is a lot more that we can discover from the habits and characteristics of leopards, lions, and bears.

However, what we do know is that a leopard is very crafty and cunning when he kills his prey.

A lion has very powerful teeth and a bear has very big feet.

Judging by the physical characteristics of these animals, the future "Anti-Christ" is going to be very cunning, subtle, and deceptive.

He will have a big mouth, and walk all over people with his big bear like feet.

The description of the beast includes 7 heads, 10 horns, and 10 crowns.

Daniel tells us that this person will be the head of a world power that will rule the earth.

This person and his power will be different from all the other world powers in the past.

There will be 10 Kings that will rule this "Empire"

It will be like one world power, split up into 10 nations.

After the one world power, comprised of 10 kings, the anti-Christ will be raised up and he will speak words against God.

We are told in v.3 that one of the beast's heads appeared to be killed.

However somehow the person was healed.

This appears to be some sort of death and resurrection trick by the beast.

This death and resurrection trick is going to attract the attention of the whole world.

We are also told that each head would have a blasphemous name.

In the Roman Empire, Caesar worship was very common.

People used to have to acknowledge that Caesar was God, or Caesar is Lord.

The worst of these people requiring worship was a man called "Caligula".

He took his divinity seriously and insisted that he should be worshipped by everybody in the world.

Caligula insisted that an image of himself be set up within the holy of holies in the temple in Jerusalem.

He set up an army to try and do this, but suddenly died before it could happen.

(Reference – Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews 18: v. 18)

The one thing to be aware of in the future is any head of any super power, claiming to be divine or requiring worship or total obedience to themselves.

2. The Activity of the Anti-Christ – v. 4-8.

The question we are going to ask here is, what is the “Anti- Christ” going to do? We are told two things in Revelation and one extra thing in the book of Daniel.

1. The Anti-Christ will blaspheme God – v. 5.

The Anti-Christ is going to blaspheme God for 42 months.

In Daniel 7: v.25 we are told that He will speak pompous words against the “Most- High”. The Anti-Christ is going to be very open and awful.

2 Thessalonians Chapter 2: v.4. (N.K.J.)

⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

It has always been Satan’s ambition to be like God.

(Isaiah 14: v.14. – the origin of Satan)

¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,
I will be like the Most High.’

2. The Anti- Christ will persecute Christian believers – v.7.

The Anti-Christ will make sure that every Christian believer in the world is persecuted and killed. The Anti-Christ will perceive these Christians as a threat to his authority. Although the Anti- Christ will overpower the believers physically, he will not overpower them spiritually.

Romans 8 : v. 38-39.

³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. The Anti-Christ will change times and Law – Daniel 7: v.25.

This is a very interesting point because it has started to happen now, at least in England and parts of America.

The early stages of these changes will make it easier for the Anti-Christ in the future.

In the U.K. they have been trying to change the name Christmas and replace it with the word “Winter Festival” for years.

In some areas of the U.K. they have succeeded.

This Easter, a large organisation that is funded by public donations, called the National trust, tried to remove the word “Easter” from their usual “Easter Egg Hunt”

In the U.K. it is a tradition for parents and organisations to hide Easter Eggs in their garden, or organised open spaces, and for children to search for them.

The chocolate Easter Egg has always been a symbol of Christianity.

It started with real eggs being painted red to represent the blood of Jesus. (Still done in Hong Kong)

The outer shell represented the sealed tomb.

In the early days, children used to roll real eggs to represent the stone that was rolled away from the tomb where Jesus lay.

There was an outcry in the press and public media and the National Trust had to place the word “Easter Egg” back on their web-site.

(Praise the Lord for protesting Christians)

The Blasphemy laws in the U.K. apply to all other religions except Christianity.

You can blaspheme Jesus Christ but you can’t say anything against the Koran or the prophet Mohammad, even if it is correct information.

In the U.K. we are now at the stage that quoting the Bible in a public place is not socially acceptable, and people have been arrested for defending Bible truth in public. This type of changing times and law has been going on in the U.K. for about 10 years now. We are told that we are now living in a post truth society and eventually everything is going to be against what the Bible teaches **because it is absolute truth.**

It is clear that the Anti-Christ will abolish all Jewish and Christian festivals.

If you examine the core of Islam, it desires to eradicate Christianity and the Jewish people.

What we read in our Bible today is actually starting to happen in a big way in order to prepare the way for the Anti-Christ.

4. The Anti-Christ will be worshipped by everyone, except believers in Christ – v. 8.

It is clear in verse 8 that the Christians who will be alive on this earth when the Anti-Christ is here will be very strong and courageous.

These believers will not worship the Anti-Christ, but everybody else will.

Before we close this section we need to notice v.10.

This is a difficult verse to understand. I will try and make it simple.

The verse is made up of two quotations.

It begins by quoting some words from Jeremiah Chapter 15: v. 2.

Jeremiah 15: v. 2

² And it shall be, if they say to you, ‘Where should we go?’ then you shall tell them, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Such as *are* for death, to death;

And such as *are* for the sword, to the sword;

And such as *are* for the famine, to the famine;

And such as *are* for the captivity, to the captivity.”

The idea from the context of these verses is that there is no escaping the decree of God.

The verse also connects with what Jesus said in Matthew Chapter 26: v. 52.

⁵² But Jesus said to him, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.

Taking all these verses into consideration the word of God points out three things.

1. If being a Christian and being faithful to Jesus means that you are put in prison, then you must accept it.

So whatever is involved in following Jesus, we must accept, however difficult that might be.

2. Christianity can never be defended by force

Jesus said that once you take up arms and fight a physical war with people, then you have moved out of the spiritual into the physical.

We are told in Ephesians Chapter 6: v.12 that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness.

2 Corinthians 10: v.3-5.

³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

We can’t defend the gospel by using violence.

3. One of the weapons the Christian can use against the Anti -Christ is patience and faith.

The Greek word that is used here for patience is the word “hupomone”. This word actually means, not doing nothing, but turning the difficult situation into the “Glory” of God.

This is what happened at Easter when Christians were killed in a Church on Palm Sunday in Egypt by a Muslim murder.

“Egyptian journalist and television host Amr Adeeb was stunned into ten seconds of silence after watching a colleague interview the widow of Naseem Faheem, the guard at St Mark’s Cathedral in Alexandria, Egypt, who was killed in a suicide bomb attack on Palm Sunday.

“The Copts of Egypt are made of steel!” he finally exclaimed.

“If it were my father, I could never say this.

These people have so much forgiveness. But this is their faith and religious conviction. These people are made from a different substance.

“May God have mercy on Naseem Faheem. He is a hero and a martyr and a great example to all of us.”

On Palm Sunday, the guard redirected a suicide bomber through the perimeter metal detector at the cathedral, and was probably the first to die when the terrorist detonated a 12kg explosive. Sixteen people, mostly women and children, were killed but the guard’s action saved the lives of dozens of people inside the church.

Police identified the terrorist as 22-year-old Mahmoud Shafiq Mohammed Mustafa.

We now need to move on to the second half of Chapter 13 where we are introduced to the **“Beast from the earth”**.

We can identify this beast from his description and from his work.

1. The description of the Beast from the earth – v. 11.

The beast is described as having two horns like a lamb and he spoke like a dragon.

We can easily identify the voice of the beast from the use of the word “dragon”.

Revelation 20: v.2. (N.K.J.)

² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

Horns like a lamb is a little more difficult to understand.

Traditionally a lamb is a gentle animal and not like a beast in any way. However, a lamb with horns is a different matter.

This suggests somebody who appears gentle, but is in fact very dangerous.

Jesus described people like this as wolves in sheep’s clothing.

They give the appearance of being gentle and genuine but they are not.

2. The work of the beast - v. 12-18.

This beast is very active. He is involved in lots of things.

a) He encourages people to worship the Anti-Christ, that is the beast from the sea. – v.12.

b) He performs great miracles. Through his miracles, he deceives people. He can even make fire come down from Heaven. -v.13.

Q. Why fire from Heaven?

We need to turn back to Revelation Chapter 11: v.5.

Here we are told of two witnesses, probably Moses and Elijah who had power to destroy their enemies with fire from their mouths.

Satan would want to produce the same miracles that God’s witnesses were able to do.

Jesus warned the disciples in Matthew Chapter 24: v.24 that during the end times false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

These signs and wonders will be very convincing.

We need to beware in these days of the signs and wonders movement. Recently in the U.S. there was a Sign and wonders convention. Their advertising slogan was "Unity through Signs and wonders" The two beasts in our passage would be happy to join that convention. The problem is, the convention was run by professing Christians. One of our lecturers at Bible College over 30 years ago used to say " When a miracle happens, don't say praise the Lord, say where did it come from? When you are satisfied that it has come from God, then you can say praise the Lord. What he was saying is be discerning when it comes to the supernatural. Jesus tells us to test preachers by their life-style and not by their miracles. (Matthew 7: v.20)

- c) He persuades people to make an image of the beast.
- d) He gives power to that image so that it will speak.
- e) He makes a law that if you don't worship the beast then you will be killed.
- f) He commands that everybody receives a mark on either their right hand or their forehead. If you don't receive this mark, then you are not allowed to buy or sell.

You might be surprised to discover that there is a company trading today called "Positive ID" They have the technology to implant a microchip into your body, which is able to monitor the health of your body. It can diagnose an illness before the symptoms appear. On the screen there is a picture of somebody having such an implant. At the moment the technology is being used for good purposes but it can easily be switched by the "Beast from earth" and everybody will be forced to have an implant. Your location and ability to buy and sell could be controlled by one person. It will be like the micro -chip in your body being your credit card. Fifty years ago you would not have thought this possible, but it is here today and has been possible for 17 years now.

Finally in v.18 the beast is given a number, it is 666.

I am not going to join the list of people who over many hundreds of years have tried to identify the "False Prophet" by the number 666.

We have enough information about him to recognize him when he arrives.

I hope that we will not be around when he operates his satanic power on this earth.

The only thing I will say is that Islam was fully established in 666 A.D. and what it stands for fits in with all that Islam does and believes today.

They have killed more than 1 million people in recent times for not worshipping their God.

They also say according to their Sharia Law that you should only buy and sell with people who keep the Muslim Law.

Conclusion and Application

What can we take away from this message that will be of positive value to our lives today and throughout Golden week?

1. **You need to make sure that you are on the winning side of this spiritual battle for your soul.** Satan wants to deceive you into following him, but God wants to rescue you from Satan's clutches.

Jesus said in John 8: v.32 " ...you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."

Briefly I want to tell you what the Bible teaches is the truth about yourself.

- a) You were born into this world under the curse of sin. You have a sinful nature that is under the control of Satan.

- b) God, who is 100% Holy and created this world, also created mankind for a personal relationship with Himself.
- c) The first man that God created, disobeyed God and broke the spiritual connection with a Holy God. Because of this, your relationship with God is broken. There is no way of fixing this relation by yourself.
- d) The good news is that God has fixed this problem for you. He sent His Son Jesus Christ into this world to die on a cross and take the punishment that you deserve for your sin.
- e) God is offering you today to be rescued from the power of Satan and sin.
- f) All you need to do is to REPENT of your sin and put your faith and trust in Jesus. This is hard because you need to admit your sin. But there is no other way.
You also need to turn from your sin and acknowledge Jesus as your Lord and manager of your life. You need to forsake all in order to follow Jesus.
- g) Once you believe the truth, you will be set free.
Jesus knows your heart, so you can't fool Him, it must be a real commitment to follow Jesus and to trust in His death as a substitute for your death and punishment for sin. After the service you can have an opportunity to talk and pray with somebody about becoming a Christian.

2. If you are a Christian today, be encouraged that in the end ONLY JESUS wins the battle.

It is easy for Christians to get discouraged when they are in the battle of life. However, knowing that we are on the victory side, helps us to be encouraged.

Close with 1 Corinthians Chapter 15: v. 57-58

(N.K.J.)

⁵⁷ But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.