

Revelation 13  
Job 40:6-41:34  
Psalm 44

“You Need Endurance and Faith”

October 6, 2019

In Revelation 13 we will hear about two beasts –  
one from the sea – and the other from the land.

“The depiction of the two beasts in chapter 13 is based in part on Job 40-41,  
which is the only OT description of two Satanic beasts opposing God...  
One is a land beast to be slain by God with a sword.  
The other is a sea dragon who conducts a war waged by his mouth...

The Job text alludes to a primordial defeat of the dragon by God (40:32 LXX),  
but also implies a yet future battle (40:19).  
which is necessitated by the sea beasts’ continued attitude of defiance...  
[Jewish] tradition held that on the fifth day of creation  
God created Leviathan to be in the sea and Behemoth to dwell on land.  
These two beasts were symbolic of the powers of evil  
and were to be destroyed at the final judgment.” (Beale, 682)

While we have largely forgotten about this,  
previous generations did not.

Indeed, back in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, an English philosopher wrote a book about this.  
Thomas Hobbes wrote his famous “Leviathan”  
about the Beast that rose from the sea –  
a political power that none could resist.  
Indeed, when you look carefully at how John describes his Leviathan in Rev. 13,  
Hobbes is eerily accurate!

And as we face the Beast – as we face the Leviathan of our own day –  
we need patient endurance –  
we need faith!

We need to remember that God is the one who governs all things.  
Even when we suffer unjustly!  
Psalm 44 speaks of how all sorts of trouble and destruction has come upon us –  
“though...our heart has not turned back,  
nor have our steps departed from your way...”  
Sometimes we can tend to think that if we are suffering,  
it must be because we have sinned!

But Psalm 44 reminds us that sometimes we suffer simply because we belong to Jesus!  
“Yet for your sake we are killed all the day long;  
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”  
If you belong to Jesus, then the Beast – Leviathan – will come after you!

Sing Psalm 44  
Read Revelation 13

### **Introduction: The Unholy Trinity: The Dragon and His Beasts**

In the first part of Revelation we saw a lot of trinitarian images.  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (the sevenfold Spirit before the throne)  
were frequently seen together  
In chapters 12-13 we see a counterfeit Trinity:  
the Dragon falling from heaven,  
the Beast rising from the Sea,  
and the Beast rising from the Land.

#### **1. The Dragon Falling from Heaven (12:7-17)**

In chapter 12, John showed us a picture of a pregnant woman who gave birth to a male child.  
There was a Dragon who sought to devour the male child –  
but the male child was caught up to God’s throne –  
and the woman was given a safe place in the wilderness.  
Then the Dragon was cast down from heaven –  
and because the Dragon couldn’t touch the Woman,  
therefore he went off to make war against her children –  
namely, those who keep God’s commandments  
and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

In other words, John has set forth a picture of the inviolability of the church  
even in the midst of persecution.  
She is the pure and unblemished Zion,  
and no attack of the dragon can threaten her.  
But at the same time, while John is calling the church to be comforted  
by the security she has in her corporate identity,  
he is also warning his readers of the attack upon her children –  
those who obey the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.  
Our greatest enemy--the dragon himself--cannot touch our Mother.  
She is preserved and nourished by the grace of God.  
Therefore we must persevere as her faithful children,  
because we will one day participate in that rest

which has already been granted to her  
in the male child which she bore,  
our elder brother, Jesus Christ.

Today we are looking particularly at the Beast rising out of the sea.

**2. The Beast Rising Out of the Sea Is a Mockery of Jesus (13:1-10)**  
**a. It Has the Dragon's Power, Throne, and Authority (v1-2)**

*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. <sup>2</sup> 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.*

Don't try to figure out a puzzle.

This is not a puzzle.

This is a picture.

Look at the picture!!

What do you see?

I saw a beast rising out of the sea.

The sea is generally portrayed in scripture as a hostile power.

The raging of the nations is often compared by the prophets to the raging of the sea.

Indeed, one of the glorious comforts of the new heavens and the new earth  
is that the sea will be *no more!* (21:1)

So this beast rises out of the sea.

Okay.

Keep watching!

It has ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems – ten crowns – on its horns.

Remember the dragon?

The dragon had seven heads and ten horns and seven diadems.

This beast has seven heads, ten horns, and *ten* diadems – ten crowns.

In other words, the beast is the image of the Dragon.  
(Like the Son is the image of the Father).

Last week we read from Daniel chapter 7,  
and we heard about the four beasts.

The fourth beast had ten horns.

And in Daniel 7, the angel explains very clearly that the beasts are four kingdoms.  
And the fourth kingdom “shall be different from all the kingdoms,  
and it shall devour the whole earth.”

And the ten horns are ten kings.

So when you think about the *beast* – don’t think of an individual.

The *beast* is a kingdom.

The *horns* – and in Revelation 13 – the *heads* may be individuals –  
but the *beast* is a kingdom.

So we have a kingdom (a *beast*) that is the image of the Dragon (the devil).

The basic point of the first *beast* is that this *beast* is a mockery of Jesus.

Just as the Father has given his power, his throne, and great authority to the Son,  
so also the Dragon has given power, throne, and authority to the *beast*.

But this is a counterfeit.

It’s not the real thing.

So while it may *look* (sort of) like the relationship between the Father and the Son  
it isn’t the same!

Greg Beale summarizes the similarities well:

“Both Christ and the *beast* have swords,  
have followers who have their names written on their foreheads (13:16-14:1),  
have horns (5:6; 13:1, 11), are slain (5:6; 13:3, 8; sphazw),  
rise to new life and are given new authority,  
have authority over ‘every tribe, tongue, people, and nation’  
(5:9; 7:9; 13:7; 17:12, 15),  
and receive universal worship (5:8-14; 13:4, 8).” (Beale, 691)

Remember, the *beast* is not a person – not an individual –

but a kingdom – and particularly, this is Daniel’s *fourth beast* –  
which is the kingdom that is “different from all the kingdoms.”

This is not just “another kingdom” –

this is that kingdom that is opposed to Christ – and yet parodies him.

This shows that “the *beast* is set up as the supreme enemy of Christ and his people.” (B 691)

So for instance, look at verse 3:

**b. It Is Healed of a Mortal Wound (v3)**

<sup>3</sup> *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.*

When you see the words, “seemed to have a mortal wound” –  
what do you think?

Well, it *didn't really* have a mortal wound...

But in chapter 5, verse 6, when speaking of *Jesus*, the language was almost identical.

In chapter 5, verse 6, it says “standing as if slain”

Here in chapter 13, verse 3, it says, “one of its heads, as if slain.”

It's the exact same word – in exactly the same construction.

Your translators (correctly) want you to think differently of the beast  
than you do of Jesus.

I can appreciate that!

I hope you do think differently of Jesus than you do of the beast!!

But you can still translate identical phrases the same way!

The point that *John* is making

is that the *beast* looks like Jesus in lots and lots of ways!

The point is that one of the heads of the beast (namely, one of the rulers of that kingdom)  
will parody Jesus in his death and resurrection.

Many have tried to identify that kingdom – or at least the particular king –  
the head with a mortal wound.

Many commentators point to Nero.

After all, Nero was a “head” of the Roman empire.

And there was a legend about Nero that he would return from death  
and regain imperial power and rule the world!

(Indeed, there were various imposters that arose claiming to be Nero  
returned from death!)

So it is quite likely that this legend about Nero plays a role in the picture.

After all, Nero was infamous for using Christians as torches in his garden –  
blaming them for the great fire of Rome

(which he himself was accused of setting!).

But we need to keep in view the Dragon, the Beasts of Job and of Daniel,

and above all, the parody of Christ.

Because Nero is merely a type and shadow of the head of the beast.

He is one among many who plays the part of the parody of Jesus.

All kings aspire to it!  
All rulers want to be worshiped and glorified!  
It's not unique to rulers!

You who are parents understand this well!  
That little child *adores you*.  
And it's easy for that adoration to go to your head!  
As the child gets older – and may not adore you quite so much –  
you may be tempted to get upset because one who worshiped you  
no longer does...

But God did not give you that child so that *you* might be worshiped and adored.  
God gave you that child so that you might teach the child to worship and adore God!  
After all, I am not worthy of my children's worship!  
I need to show them the one who *is worthy!!*

If I seek to become the object of their worship –  
then I have joined myself to the beast.

### **c. It Is Worshiped by the Whole Earth (v4)**

<sup>4</sup> *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?"*

Last time we saw that the dragon was cast down from heaven to earth.  
Satan no longer has access to the heavenly throne  
because Jesus has triumphed!  
But that means that the Dragon is particularly active and annoying on earth!

But *only* on earth.

Do you realize how important that is?  
Where are all the important decisions made?  
At the heavenly throne!

If Satan – the accuser – cannot accuse us before the Father anymore,

then our future is safe (our Mother is safe – to use the imagery of Rev. 12).  
But the beast (the kingdom of this age – the earthly power that is opposed to God)  
will continue to wreak havoc on earth.

**d. It Preaches Against God (v5-6)**

<sup>5</sup> *And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.* <sup>6</sup> *It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling,<sup>[a]</sup> that is, those who dwell in heaven.*

Notice the importance of its mouth.

We saw last time that the Dragon sent forth a river from its mouth.  
Now the Beast is “given” a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words.

Think about Jesus –  
whose voice was like the roar of many waters...  
and from whose mouth came a sharp two-edged sword... (1:15, 16)

Now the Beast is *given* a mouth...  
and it is *given him* to exercise authority...

This is a picture of preaching.  
The Beast has a message.  
If you think about it, this is how all rulers operate.  
They have a story – a message – a promise of how they will make things right!

The Beast’s message is particularly focused on blaspheming *God* –  
his *name*, and his *dwelling* –  
that is, *those who dwell in heaven*.

Who dwells in heaven?  
Our Mother.  
This is the heavenly Jerusalem – Zion – the City of the Living God.  
You – *are* – heaven-dwellers!  
And the Beast is blaspheming you.

The Beast is denouncing God – and his ways – his name – his people.  
The Beast insists on total loyalty to himself.

(And remember that the Beast is not a particular person –  
but a kingdom – an institution).

Jesus had said in Matthew's gospel,  
"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me..."

The Beast has been given authority as well –  
but the Beast's authority is temporary.

It only lasts for 42 months –  
namely, the same period as Daniel's time of sufferings.  
The time, times, and half a time – the three and a half time –  
the 1,260 days.

Half of seven years.

Seven years of suffering would be complete suffering.  
But God is merciful – and he will not give you *complete* suffering.  
Yes, we suffer – we share in the sufferings of Christ –  
we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus –  
but God will have mercy on us!  
And he will rescue us before the seven years is over!!

In chapter 12, the woman is nourished (v6) in the wilderness for 1,260 days.  
She is nourished (the same word is used again in v14) for time, times, and half a time.  
The Church – our heavenly Mother –  
is protected and cared for during the time of her children's affliction.  
If your mother is safe – then you can endure a lot!

And God's point here is clear:  
in the end... *we win!!*

But in the middle... *we lose...*

**e. It Wars Against the Saints and Rules Over the Nations (v7-8)**

<sup>7</sup> *Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.<sup>[B]</sup> And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,*

Again, when you see the word "allowed" it is the same word as the word "given"  
(both in verse 5 and in verse 7).

It was given to the Beast to make war on the saints and to conquer them.  
And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation...  
and all the earth-dwellers will worship it –



namely, those who do not belong to the Lamb.

Paul says that in Christ we are *more than conquerors* (Romans 8) –  
but in the midst of this age, it sure feels the other way around!

And John is telling you – if you feel like the Beast is winning –  
that’s because he is!!

At least according to the standards of this age.

And you see this in every generation.

Back in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Gregory of Tours tells the History of the Franks –  
chronicling the conversion of the Frankish kings,  
and the spread of Christianity among the warring Frankish nobles.  
*Everyone* is becoming a Christian!

Yay!!

And yet Gregory recounts how these supposedly Christian kings  
treat each other (and various other faithful Christians)  
in awful ways – entirely inconsistent with Christ –  
but entirely consistent with the Beast!

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century many had become convinced that the Papacy  
had become the representative of the Beast.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century many thought that the Soviet Union was the Beast.

The Beast is found in every oppressive state – every world system – every social structure  
that is hostile to the kingdom of Christ!

They may pay lip service to the name of Jesus!

They may claim to love Christ!

But their words will ultimately draw people *away* from Christ –  
because they are preaching a different gospel –  
a message that denies that Jesus is the Son of God.

And the result will be that...

*<sup>8</sup> 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.*

In verse 8, we have the first glimmer of good news in our passage!

Namely, that while all the *earth-dwellers* will worship the Beast –  
that does *not* include those whose names are written in Lamb’s book of life.

Some translations make it sound like this is saying  
that the Lamb was *slain* before the foundation of the world –  
but while that is possible grammatically,  
I think that the ESV gets it right.

The point is that this is the book of the Lamb who was slain –  
and the names were written in this book before the foundation of the world.

Of course, if you think about it for a minute –  
if these names were written in the book before the foundation of the world,  
and if the book is the book of the Lamb who was slain,  
then it is obviously the case that the Lamb’s book  
is based on the Lamb’s death.

And so while the Lamb only died *in history* –  
Christ died on the cross – he suffered under Pontius Pilate –  
at a particular time and place in history –

but the benefits of his death were *so certain before the beginning* –  
that the Lamb’s book of life could have names written in it  
before the Lamb had been slain!

Notice that the *point* of this statement is to comfort and encourage you!  
After all, this statement leads right in to:

#### **f. The Call for Endurance and Faith of the Saints (v9-10)**

<sup>9</sup> *If anyone has an ear, let him hear:*

<sup>10</sup> *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.*

God is sovereign.

He rules over all things.

Don’t worry if you are taken captive –

God's plan included that.  
Don't worry if you are slain with the sword –  
God's plan included that too!

You are called to endure.  
You are called to believe.

Then again, John had told us at the beginning of his book –  
“I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and kingdom and patient endurance  
that are in Christ Jesus...” (1:9)

Here's that same word “patient endurance” again.  
As you hear about the rule of the beast –  
as you hear about the suffering that he inflicts on the saints –  
you are called to endure patiently.  
You are called to believe in Jesus!!

I know – sometimes it looks a whole lot more like tribulation and endurance –  
and not very much like “kingdom”!

When do the good times start, Lord?  
Are you at this time going to restore the Kingdom to Israel? (Acts 1:6-8)

But Jesus says, it is not for you to know times and seasons,  
that the Father has fixed by his own authority,  
but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...”

And ever since Pentecost,  
the power of the Kingdom has gone forth in the apostolic witness.

And that power is made known to you today!  
Because Jesus *is* Lord.  
No, we do not yet see everything under his feet.  
But we see Jesus – we see him by faith –  
sitting at the right hand of God,  
crowned with glory and honor –  
because he suffered – he endured –  
he tasted death for everyone!