

***The Beast Out of the Sea***  
***Revelation 13:1-10***  
***Dr. Steven R. Hereford***

**INTRODUCTION**

1. We now come to the place in our study of the book of Revelation where we are introduced in full detail to the Antichrist or as 13:1 says, “The beast...out of the sea.”
2. Chapter 12 ended with Satan, who is called “the dragon,” “was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (v.17).
3. And now in chapter 13 we see him summoning two beasts who will help him with his war with God’s people.
4. It is also here where we are introduced to Satan’s unholy trinity.
5. Satan or the dragon is mentioned in verse 1, the Antichrist or the beast are also mentioned in verse 1, and then the false prophet is mentioned in verse 11.
6. This is Satan’s counterfeit of the Holy Trinity.
7. Just as Christ received a fatal wound so with the Antichrist in verse 3.
8. Just as Christ resurrected from the dead so will the Antichrist according to verse 3.
9. Just as Holy Spirit spoke of Christ and led His followers, so

will the false prophet according to verse 12.

10. Just as God is worshiped, so will Satan be worship by all the unbelieving world at this time according to verse 4.
11. The chapter begins with a sentence that “belongs as the last sentence of chapter 12, since it concludes the account of the dragon (Satan; cf. 12:9) and his war against God and His people. While some Greek manuscripts read ‘I stood,’ the older and more reliable ones read ‘he stood.’ In the 1994 and 1995 texts of the *New American Standard Bible*, the translators inserted the phrase *the dragon* in place of ‘he,’ since *the dragon* is the antecedent of the verb translated ‘he stood’” (John MacArthur, Revelation 12-22, p.41).
12. The imagery of “the sand on the seashore” depicts the nations of the world” as seen in 20:8.
13. So here “in John’s vision, Satan takes his place dominantly in their midst as if they were his rightful possession. But in reality, he is a usurper who seeks the world’s worship and adoration” (John MacArthur, Revelation 12-22, p.41).
14. Notice what John says in the first ten verses of Revelation 13 as we prepare ourselves to study these verses this morning.
15. Read Revelation 13:1-10.
16. In these 10 verses we are going to learn about the origin, description, worship, and the authority of the beast.
17. Notice first *The Origin of the Beast*.

## I. The Origin of the Beast (Antichrist) (v.1a)

After verse 1 opens with the dragon seen in the midst of the nations (remember “the sand on the sea” refers to the nations of the world, 20:8), John says he “saw a beast rising up out of the sea.”

The “beast” Gr.therion, is used in 11:7 and is used to represent both a kingdom and a person. He represents a kingdom “because of the complex description about him in the latter half of verse 1. Yet [he also] represents a person, since he is always described with personal pronouns. (E.g., “his,” “him,” “he”; cf. Vv.1-8; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2, 10). Both Daniel (Dan.7:25; 8:24-25; 11:36-45) and Paul (2 Thess.2:4) also describe the Antichrist as a person” (MacArthur).

The word for “beast” is a reference to “a wild beast” (JFB) who is pictured here as a “wild, savage, vicious monster, thus describing Antichrist as a ferocious and rapacious personality” (MacArthur).

Verse 1 continues with saying that this “beast” was “rising up out of the sea.”

This language is very similar to what Daniel saw in Daniel 7 (See vv.1-12).

There has been much discussion about what the *sea* symbolizes.

### A. He Came from the Gentile Nations

“Some argue, based on such passages as Isaiah 17:12; 57:20, and Revelation 17:15, that it refers to the Gentile nations.

B. He Came from the Abyss

But since 11:7 and 17:8 state that the *beast* comes up out of the abyss (pt), it is best to equate the *sea* with the abyss” (MacArthur) or it could be referring to both therefore emphasizing both the physical and spiritual origin of the beast.

**II. The Description of the Beast (Antichrist) (vv.1b-2)**

His family likeness to Satan is now given. He has “seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name” (v.1b).

Revelation 12:3 gives this similar description to the dragon (Satan) in his description. John says, “And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.”

The only difference in the two descriptions is when describing the beast his crowns are on his horns rather than his heads. And on his heads were a “blasphemous name.”

A. He Had Seven Heads (v.1b)

1. This phrase, which occurs with the ten horns, is mentioned 5 times in the book of Revelation (12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 9)
2. The “seven heads” refers to “seven mountains” (17:9) and “seven kings” (17:10)
3. When we saw them in 12:3 we said that this was figurative language taken from Daniel 7:7, 20, 24 which depicted “Satan’s domination of seven past worldly kingdoms: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon,

Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and Antichrist's future empire (17:9-10) (John MacArthur, Revelation 12-22, p.7).

4. So the “seven heads” then is a reference to a “revival of the ancient Roman Empire” (Believer’s Study Bible). The “seven mountains” in 17:9 is an allusion to Rome.

B. He Had Ten Horns (v.1b)

1. These are “ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast” (17:12).
2. This is the final kingdom of the Antichrist, “a ten-nation confederacy,” who rule under Antichrist.
3. Revelation 17:16 says that they “will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.”
4. According to Revelation 17:1-5 the “harlot,” the “woman,” and “Babylon” refer to the same evil system.

C. He was Like a Leopard (v.2)

1. As John looked more closely at the beast, he saw that it incorporated the characteristics of the animals from the vision recorded in Daniel 7:3-7
2. The leopard, bear, and the lion were well known in Palestine

They dramatically emphasize the characteristics of

the nations they represent.

- a) The *lion* was a fitting symbol for the fierce, consuming power of the Babylonian Empire
- b) The *bear* pictured the ferocity, strength, and stability of the Medo-Persian Empire
- c) The *leopard* represented the swift and vicious conquests, particularly under Alexander the Great

“John lists the tree animals in reverse order from Daniel, since he was looking backward in time. Daniel, looking forward in time, listed the animals and the kingdoms they represent in chronological order.

Like the indescribable fourth beast of Daniel 7:7, which represents the Roman Empire, Antichrist’s final empire will be a composite of the empires that preceded it. It will incorporate all the ferocity, viciousness, swiftness, and strength of the other world empires.

This powerful empire, unparalleled in human history, will be Satan’s last and greatest attempt to stop the reign of Christ” (John MacArthur, Revelation 12-22, p.44).

#### D. Other Descriptions of the Antichrist

1. He is seen in 6:2 as the rider on the “white horse” who “had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.”

2. In 17:11 he is described as “going to perdition (destruction).”
3. Paul describes him in 2 Thess.2:3-10 as:
  - a) “the man of sin” (v.3)
  - b) “the son of perdition” (v.3)
  - c) the one “who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temp of God, showing himself that he is God” (v.4)
  - d) “the lawless one” (v.8)
  - e) His “coming” is “according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish” (vv.9-10).
4. John called him “the Antichrist” that “is coming” (1 John 2:18)

### **III. The Worship of the Beast (Antichrist) (vv.3-4)**

- A. A Starling Event Will Help Antichrist Solidify His Hold on the World (v.3)
  1. John saw “one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed”
    - a) Some commentators argue that the head whose fatal wound was healed was a kingdom that will have been destroyed and restored. They see the death and resurrection

miracle as the revival of the Roman Empire. Antichrist, they believe, will unite the countries occupying the territory of the ancient Roman Empire into a new temple. That revival of power will so amaze the rest of the nations that they will also submit to his rule.

- (1) There are several problems with this view. One obvious problem is that while verse 3 speaks of *one* of the *heads* being slain, other passages specify that the beast himself is slain (13:12, 14; 17:8, 11).
  - (2) The personal pronoun in the phrase *his deadly wound* also indicates that one of the kings is in view, not the empire as a whole.
  - (3) It doesn't seem that the revised Roman Empire would cause the worldwide astonishment and wonder mentioned in this verse.
- b) The identity of this person has also stirred much debate
- (1) Some say it is the resurrected Judas Iscariot because both Judas (Jn.17:12) and Antichrist (2 Thess.2:3) are both called "son of perdition [destruction]."

Also Jesus called Judas a "devil" (Jn.6:70-71). The only problem is no one would recognize him since no one



would know what he looked like.

- (2) A more popular view links the death and resurrection in this passage with Emperor Nero.

It was widely believed at the end of the first century that Nero, who had committed suicide in A.D. 68, would rise from the dead.

The problem with this view is the beast would suffer a violent death at the hands of another (13:14) while Nero took his own life.

- (3) The *head* whose *deadly wound was healed* can only be the future Antichrist

John MacArthur says, “Whether his death is real or fake (cf. v.14; 2 Thess.2:9) is not clear. It may be that Antichrist is really killed, and God, for His own purposes, allows him to be resurrected. More likely, Antichrist’s alleged death and resurrection will be a counterfeit of Christ’s death and resurrection, staged, as one of the ‘lying wonders’ perpetrated by the false prophet (13:12-15; 2 Thess.2:9). Antichrist’s resurrection will also be phony, since he never really died. Or perhaps Antichrist will explain his extraordinary powers by claiming to be the reincarnation of the Christ spirit, as

some has suggested. Certainly, in a world where New Age pantheism and Eastern mysticism are extremely popular, more people would be inclined to believe in a reincarnation than a resurrection” (Revelation 12-22, pp.45-46).

2. Regardless of whether what happens in verse 2 is real or fake, “all the world marveled and followed the beast.” (See 17:8)

“Since the Tribulation will be a time where the world will experience death on a scale unprecedented in human history, Antichrist seeming invulnerability to death will win him greater, more widespread acclaim. As a result the whole earth will be amazed and follow after the beast” (MacArthur).

B. Following this Event All the World Worships Satan and Antichrist (v.4)

1. The world’s fascination with Antichrist will quickly become worship. He will encourage and demand that worship by exalting “himself above all that is called God” (2 Thess.2:4).

“Not content with acclaim, Antichrist will seek adoration; not content with respect, he will require reverence; not content with being hailed and heralded ,he will demand to be worshiped. And all those who ‘did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved’ (2 Thess.2:10) will be deceived into worshipping Him” (MacArthur).

Revelation 13:14 tells us that the second “beast” (false prophet) who “exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence” (will) cause “the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”

Albert Barnes writes, “And they worshipped the beast - That is, they did it, as is immediately specified, by saying that he was "incomparable" and "invincible"; in other words, that he was superior to all others, and that he was almighty” (Albert Barnes Notes on the Bible).

2. Not only will they worship the Antichrist but they will also worship “the dragon who gave authority to the beast” (v.4).

By worshiping Antichrist, unbelievers will actually be worshiping Satan, the real power behind him. Some will fully understand that while other will be deceived as Paul said of the Gentiles in 1 Cor.10:20:

“Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.”

“Thinking that they were worshiping the god to whom they sacrificed, the pagans were in reality worshiping the demon impersonating that god. So it will be for many people, who will think they are worshiping a supernaturally powerful leader, but in reality will be worshiping Satan” (John MacArthur, Revelation 12-22, p.47).

Satan tried to get Jesus to worship him. Remember what Mat.4:8-10 said, “Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”

3. As the whole unbelieving world worships the beast and the dragon and they will cry out in awe saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” (v.4).

“This language implies giving the beast superhuman honors. Similar language is often used of God. See Exo\_15:11; Psa\_113:5; Isa\_40:18. The dragon, cast down, receives worship through the beast” (The People’s New Testament).

The implied answer to both rhetorical questions is “No one!”

“In the political, military, and religious realms, Antichrist will reign supreme and unchallenged by earth and hell” (MacArthur).

#### **IV. The Authority of the Beast (vv.5-8)**

##### **A. It Came from the Dragon (Satan)**

1. Verse 2 States that the Beast Received Authority from the Dragon: “And the dragon gave him his

power, his throne, and great authority.”

2. Verse 4 says the world worships the “dragon who gave authority to the beast.”

B. It Came from God (vv.5-8)

1. Three times in verse 5-7 it says that the authority of the beast came from God

Verse 5a says, “And *he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.*” Verse 5b says, “And *he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.*” Verse 7 says, “*It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.*”

2. This phrase “refers to God’s sovereign control of events – God will allow Antichrist to blaspheme to give full expression to the satanic wickedness that will cover the earth at that time. He will exhibit a total disregard for the true God by continually speaking arrogant words and blasphemies” (MacArthur)
  - a) He “was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies” (v.5a).
  - b) Verse 6 begins, “Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.”
  - c) In Pauline words, he “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” (2 Thess.2:4).

- d) All of this was predicted in Daniel 7 and 11:36

In Daniel 7 - 4 times it is mentioned that the Antichrist spoke blasphemies against God. (7:8, 11, 20, 25).

In 11:36 it says he “shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods.”

- 3. Verse 7 says he was given authority to make war with the saints and overcome them

- a) Antichrist will not be all talk; he will also be capable of decisive, deadly action

“Once again the text notes that Antichrist can do only what he is given permission by Almighty God to do” (MacArthur).

- b) Because they will refuse to worship him, Antichrist will make war with the saints and overcome them

Believers in the true God will bear the brunt of his murderous fury. He will perceive them as a threat to his authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation, which...was given temporarily to him by God’s sovereignty. The result will be world-wide slaughter of God’s people.

Rev.6:9-10 says, “When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those

who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’” (See also 17:6)

4. As he makes war with the saints and overcomes them, “all those who dwell on the earth will worship him” (v.8)

John identifies those who worship the Antichrist and Satan as those “whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.. This is mentioned again in 17:8.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. John ends in verse 9 with a call for spiritual understanding: “If anyone has an ear, let him hear.”
  - a) This phrase is used 15 times in the NT (cf. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; Mat.11:15; 13:9, 43; Mk. 4:9, 23; Lk.8:8; 14:35)
  - b) This phrase is used to emphasize a particularly important truth in verse 10.
2. Verse 10 is a proverb that concludes this passage and contains important practical truth for those believers alive at the time of Antichrist’s persecution
  - a) They are to depend on God’s providence and not take matters in their own hands

- b) Those believers who are destined by God's sovereign plan for *captivity* (imprisonment) are to accept that incarceration as God's will. They are not to resist or fight against Antichrist.
- c) God's people must not retaliate against their persecutors; "there is no place now, and there will be no place then, for militant, aggressive, violent believers terrorizing their persecutors" (MacArthur)

Peter said, in 1 Peter 4:19, "Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator."

- d) Instead of reacting violently, believers must exemplify the "patience (perseverance) and faith of the saints."

They must be like their Lord "who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Pet.2:23).

- 3. John MacArthur concludes this chapter with these words:

"The message of this passage is clear. Let the monstrous beast from the abyss do his worst. Let Satan and his demon hosts have their hour. God controls the future and believers belong to Him. "In all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us" (Rom.8:37), and we will triumph on that glorious day when "The kingdom of the world [becomes] the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever" (Rev.11:15) [Revelation 12-22, p.51].