

Revelation 13

Ecclesiastes 1:9 - *That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done, And there is nothing new under the sun.*

The big thing to watch for in chapter 13 is counterfeit. I tell young people all the time, is it God's truth or is it some flawed copy of God's truth. When people follow a flawed impression or counterfeit copy of God's truth then Satan or haSatan, which means the accuser, has all sorts of ammunition to accuse them. When people fall into haSatan's traps they fall into a never ending web of accusation that will drive their behavior into deeper and deeper apostasy.

Let's look at the scripture – Here Dr. Liebenberg says something interesting. Remember that Chapters and Verses weren't added to scripture until the 1500's and we tend to compartmentalize things by what we've been given rather than reading it as it was written. So, he suggests that the first part of chapter 13:1 should be the end of Chapter 12 ¹⁷ **And 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 ^[c]Christ.** Some translations, say Then "I" stood on the sand of the sea, but in Greek it is actually "he." So the NIV actually gets it right this time because it clarifies and says, The dragon stood on the sand of the sea.

13 Then ^[a][the dragon] stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having ^[b]seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

The sea is sometimes a metaphor for masses of humanity. Sometimes it has a heavenly connotation, but it can't here because he has been cast out of heaven. Or it could just mean the beach. It seems from verse 3 that it means the masses because all the world marvels and follows the beast.

One theory that Dr. Liebenberg poses is that this beast could be a system, like a political system, or a religious system, but I would pose and here I go getting away from the sources, that it is a popularity system. When I hear follower in this day and age, and it is hard to extricate myself from this day and age, I think of influencers who have millions of followers. Just says, this creature or system or demon or whatever it is, possessed human, will have all the world as followers.

So, this beast rises up from the sea and it has seven heads, which is a very Godly number, ten crowns, again a Godly number, but on his heads a blasphemous name. In other words, this creature will look good to the masses, he will look righteous and holy, and godly, but he is a counterfeit. Also, he is described very similarly to Satan in Revelation 12:3 but here the crowns are on his horns, not on his heads, we'll talk about that in chapter 17. But, by his description you can tell that he is the same type of creature as Satan, although he is under the dominion of Satan.

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.

This beast has all of the symbolic qualities of basically every empire that conquered Israel going back to the time of Nimrod in Genesis. The leopard is associated with Nimrod and the Greeks, the bear is associated with the Persians, the lion is associated with the Babylonians. Daniel has visions about four beasts with these traits.

It could be that this beast is an alliance between all of those beasts who have been trading control of the middle east for thousands of years.

The dragon gave this beast his power, throne, and authority. So, whoever or whatever this beast is, it is the face of the dragon that the world will see and follow. It is not Satan, but the surrogate of Satan to the masses.

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.

There have been a ton of theories here. Was this a pope or a president or some other world leader who had an assassination attempt and was miraculously healed so it gave him mystical, supernatural credibility that the world lusts after?

Another theory is that this is a religious system of some kind that essentially died and came back to life. Will religious Christianity die? The Roman Catholic Church? Mainline Christianity? Islam? Or will Zoroastrianism come back? There's been a big push for that in the mainline Christian church and I really shouldn't say something without a source, but I remember years ago a BYU professor who said that LDS had more in common with Zoroastrianism than Christianity.

In any case it is a counterfeit. Who's head was wounded with a thorn of crowns. Who died and rose again, not for world domination, but for world salvation? This beast is a counterfeit of Y'shua. How do we know this? What does the world do after they marvel at the beast? They worship the dragon, who counterfeits God the Father, from the Garden of Eden he's been doing that, because of the power he gave 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?”

What is interesting here is that if the whole world worships the beast it means that he has made himself look enough like the messiah that both Jews and Muslims will worship him.

⁵ And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to ^[c]continue for forty-two months.

Just like the beasts in Daniel this beast is given a mouth to speak. This seems to indicate that this demonic creature is given a human host or an entire organization with a human host at the top of it. He speaks great things, and blasphemies, but it isn't going to last for very long. 3.5 years is all. So, the happy happy joy joy time for the world with this counterfeit will last about the same length of time that Y'shua had his ministry.

⁶ Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

So, here is where Jews and Muslims will start to wake up about this beast. The messiah must fear and honor God. This beast blasphemes God. There will be a departure.

⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every ^[d]tribe, tongue, and nation.

The word for saints is hagiohn. Hagios means holy or set apart. This could mean the priests or imams, the “holy men” or whatever the equivalent is at the time who won't put up with an idol of the

beast being put in the temple to be worshipped. But that's what he'll do, that is the biggest blasphemy of the tabernacle. He'll "overcome" them. I don't know if that means he kills them all in the war, or they eventually just surrender to him. Looking ahead there will be captives. Or, it could mean, if you remember, the Christ followers out in the world that didn't seek refuge with the woman and weren't under that sphere of protection. The devil is kicked out of heaven and remember he sends the beast with wrath because he knows the time is short. So, the saints probably are those unprotected Christ followers in the world.

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.

We've talked about "earth dwellers" before. They are the people who will not repent. No matter what God does to show them His power, no matter what seals, or trumpets or bowls, they simply will not turn to God. That is almost everyone who is left on earth at this time. They are literally "hell bent" to reject God and choose anything else out of pure rebellion.

This is where we stop today. We'll have to pick it up in two weeks because our film crew is unavailable until then. So, see you in two weeks.

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 [e] 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 ^[f]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 ^[g]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.