

REVELATION 13:1-10

Chapter 13 follows up on the dragon by describing his two helpers – the beast from the earth and the beast from the sea. The beast coming out of the sea is the Antichrist, and the beast coming out of the earth appears as the false prophet who discloses the power of deception.

In Chapter 13, we also see that the beast from the sea also has seven heads and ten horns, implying that he who is closely identified with the dragon. Together with the beast from the earth, the duo would lead the world astray with their deceptions.

Chapter 13 focuses also on the followers of Satan. Notice the repetition.

- They worship the beast (13:4, 8, 12, 15)
- They are representative of the whole world (13:3, 7, 8, 14, 16)
- They would have a distinguishing mark and number (13:16–18). The saints, however, have their names written in the book of life and belong to the Lamb (13:8b-10).

REVELATION 13:1-4

¹ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

² And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

³ And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

⁴ And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? (Revelation 13:1–4)

A. And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. (Revelation 13:1)

The first thing to note is that there is a textual variant in verse 1. Some manuscripts read: “And he stood...” [Gk: *esthathe*]. The TR has it “As I stood...” [Gk: *esthathen*]. The difference is just one letter. However, the one letter would change the identity of the person who is standing.

If the verse reads, “As I stood,” then the identity of the person is John. However, if the text reads, “As he stood,” then the person standing is the dragon.

The argument against “I stood” is that this is the only place in Revelation where John changes his position without a prior instruction from God. However, if it is not John who was standing and seeing, it would seem to be inconsistent with the rest of the chapter.

“Sand” is often used as pictures of multitudes of people (see Gen. 22:17).

“Sea” is a picture of the nations of the earth (see 17:15; Isa. 17:12; Jer. 51:13, 42, 55, 56; Ezek. 26:3).

Thus, we can take this to refer to the position of John where he observes the beast’s rise from the water.

B. And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. (Revelation 13:1)

In Revelation 13, John saw two beasts – one from the sea (13:1-10), and a second from the earth (13:11-18). The first beast is the Antichrist. The second beast is also known as the False Prophet (16:13; 19:20; 20:10).

The first beast from the sea closely resembles the dragon; both have seven heads and ten horns. The first beast was wounded and healed; he was also the object of worship. In Revelation 13, the beast could be a person and also the system of which he is the representative. It is a man because his number is that of a man (13:18). He is described in the masculine pronoun (13:8). At the same time, the beast is also a system as seen in Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. 7).

Note also the attempts by Satan to confuse Christ and the Antichrist.

	Christ	Antichrist
Both have marks on the forehead	14:1	13:16-17
Both are conquerors	5:5	13:7
Both receive worship	5:8	13:4

John saw the beast rising out of the sea (see Dan. 7:2-3). The beast’s ascension from the sea speaks of his origin and his kingdom from the nations. In other words, this beast – which is a description of his fierce and cruel nature – bears the resemblance of man.

This second beast arises from the earth/land (13:11), and this has caused to suggest that the second beast – the False Prophet – to be Jewish in origin. This idea is based on the contrast between the sea (which signifies the Gentile nations in the OT), and the earth/land, which has the idea of “land of Israel” (see 11:18).

C. **And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. (Revelation 13:1)**

Like the dragon (12:3), this beast from the sea also has seven heads. There are several things to note about this dragon.

- The heads represent seven world kingdoms, which culminate in the beast as the seventh head which has “not yet come” at the time of John’s writing (17:10).
- The beast with seven heads is ridden upon by the Harlot (17:3).
- The seven heads are “seven mountains on which the woman sits. They are seven kings” (17:9-10).
- One of the heads of the beast receives a deadly wound which is healed (Rev. 13:3).



In Daniel’s vision, he sees four beasts, which, when taken together, have seven heads (Dan.

7:3-7. In Daniel 7 the first, second and fourth kingdoms are said to have one head, but the third beast has “four heads” (Dan. 7:6), making a total of seven heads in all. This means that the kingdom of Revelation 13 is a composite kingdom because of the seven heads.

D. **And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. (Revelation 13:1)**

The beast in Revelation 13 also has ten horns. The explanation of the ten horns are given in Revelation 17:12-13. This is similar to the ten horns which Daniel saw on the fourth beast (Dan. 7:7, 20).

E. **And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. (Revelation 13:1)**

In Revelation 12:3, the dragon had seven crowns on his heads. Here, the beast’s crowns are on its horns. Upon the seven heads of the beast, the name “blasphemy” is inscribed. There is a textual variant. Some texts have it as singular – “name of blasphemy.” Other texts have it as plural – “names of blasphemy.” In either case, the blasphemous name or names are an indication of the character of the beast (Dan. 11:36; Rev. 13:5).

F. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. (Revelation 13:2)

Here, John reverts to Daniel vision in Daniel 7. In Daniel 7:4-7, there were four beasts – lion, bear, leopard, and the fourth that was comply descried as “dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly” (Dan. 7:7). These beasts depict four successive world empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

In Revelation 13:2, John combines the first three beasts into one to denote all the world powers hostile to Jesus Christ. The order of the beasts are changed from lion, bear, and leopard in Daniel 7 to leopard, bear, and lion in Revelation 13. The explanation for this is that Daniel was writing at the time when Babylon was in power, and he was looking forward. John, on the other hand, was writing from a historical perspective, and he recorded what was nearest to him in time.



The leopard is known for its speed and stalking prowess, and its swiftness with which it attacks its preys. The bear is known for its powerful paws that is able to tear its victims part. The lion is characterised by the its mouth, which symbolises cruelty as it kills and devours its preys. Put together, the three animals picture speed, power and savagery.

G. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. (Revelation 13:2)

John adds that “the dragon gave him [the beast] his power, and his seat, and great authority” (13:2). This means that Satan is the force behind the Antichrist, empowering the Antichrist to take the place that belongs to God and his Christ.

What is the relationship between the beast and Satan?

- Satan gives the Antichrist power to do all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders (2 Thess. 2:6, 9).

- Satan gave the beast his throne, which is not limited to any one permanent location on earth.

H. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. (Revelation 13:3)

In verse 3, we read that one of the seven heads was killed. The Bible did not tell us who killed one of the heads of the beast. In verse 14, we read that the head was killed by the sword.

Who is the head that was wounded to death and healed? There are several views.

- One of the seven Roman emperors, possibly Nero. This is the Preterist position.
- Satan
- Leader of the seventh empire
- A satanically controlled leader yet in the future who will come as the Antichrist.

There are some who oppose the idea of the head being slain and brought back to life because, as they claim, resurrection is the power of God alone. So they take the word “as” (13:3) to mean “the appearance of,” implying that the head does not die but only has the appearance of death and was later brought to life.

In the Bible, we also read saints have raised the dead (1Kings 17:21; 2Kings 4:34; Acts 9:40; 20:10). If God empowered the saints to do so for His purposes, He could do the same to allow Satan to deceive the unrepentant (2Thess. 2:11-12). It would seem to be reasonable to see this as a real miracle, although miracles alone do not prove that the one who works the miracles is God (2Thess. 2:9).

I. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. (Revelation 13:3)

The word “wound” is translated “stripes” (Luke 12:48; Acts 16:23; 2 Cor. 6:5; 2 Cor. 11:23) and “plagues” (Rev. 9:20; 11:6; 15:1, 6, 8; 16:9, 21; 18:4, 8; 21:9; 22:18). The emphasis is on the death (fatally wounded) and resurrection (was healed) which is the reason for the people to wonder after and worship the beast (Rev. 13:12, 14).

J. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? (Revelation 13:4)

The worship of the dragon is in response to the miraculous healing of the beast. “They” refers to “all the world” (13:3; see 17:8). The whole world would marvel at the beast. They would worship the dragon and the beast. The worship of the dragon and the beast are essentially the same.

It is interesting to note that the word “worship” appears five times in this chapter (13:4, 8, 12, 15). The first and only time, “worship” is ascribed to Satan, and the other

four times, “worship” is directed at the beast. We will see that in Revelation 13, the beast is in the forefront, doing the work for the dragon; whereas the dragon is present but always in the background.

K. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? (Revelation 13:4)

“Who is like unto the beast?” This is a familiar refrain borrowed from the Old Testament (Exod. 15:11; Ps. 35:10; 71:19; 113:5). When this question was asked of God, the implication is that God is unique, and there is no other God (Isa. 45:5-6).

When this question is asked of the Satan, the implication is the same. Satan wants to be unique and above God. He wants to occupy God’s place, and he appears in the form of the beast.

The second part of the question – “Who is able to make war with him?” – implies that he is all-powerful. Again, this is Satan trying to replace God with himself.

REVELATION 13:5-10

⁵ And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months.

⁶ And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

⁷ And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

⁹ If any man have an ear, let him hear.

¹⁰ He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. (Revelation 13:5–10)

A. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. (Revelation 13:5)

The real source of power behind the beast is Satan. From verses 2 to 7, the words “given” or “gave” appear several times.

- The dragon gave the beast his power, and his seat, and great authority (13:2).
- The dragon gave power to the beast that led to his being worshipped (13:4).
- The dragon gave eloquence to the beast to speak great things and blasphemies (13:5).
- The dragon gave power to the beast to continue for 42 months (13:5).
- The dragon gave authority to the beast to make war with the saints (13:7)
- The dragon gave power to the beast over kindreds, and tongues, and nations (13:7).

B. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. (Revelation 13:5)

The phrase “a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies” is borrowed from Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. 7:8, 20, 25). In the context of Daniel, it was the little horn – the Antichrist – who spoke great things. In Daniel 11, we have a picture of the content of these great things (see Dan. 11:36-39).

The duration of his blasphemy activities is limited to 42 months. Forty-two months or three and a half years is the same as 1,260 days. These references appeared earlier in two preceding chapters where John noted that the Gentiles would trample the holy city for forty-two months and the two witnesses would prophesy for 1,260 days (11:2-3; 12:6, 14).

Based on what John has said, the Antichrist will be

- a man
- indwelt by Satan.
- a gifted orator, an intellectual genius, possess great charm and charisma, and have immense leadership power.

C. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. (Revelation 13:6)

In verse 6, we have the objects of the beast’s blasphemy. There are three things that the beast blasphemed against.

1. Name of God

The name of a person is a reflection of his character. The names of God therefore reveals His Person. God is known by a great number of names.

- El: God (“mighty, strong, prominent”)
- Elohim: God (a plural noun, more than two, used with singular verbs)
- El Shaddai: God Almighty or “God All Sufficient.”
Adonai: Lord in our English Bibles
- Jehovah: LORD in our English Bibles (all capitals).
Jehovah -Jireh: “The Lord will Provide” (Gen. 22:14).
- Jehovah -Rophe: “The Lord Who Heals” (Exod. 15:22-26).
Jehovah -Nissi: “The Lord Our Banner” (Exod. 17:15).
Jehovah –M’Kaddeah: “The Lord Who Sanctifies” (Lev. 20:7-8)
Jehovah -Shalom: “The Lord Our Peace” (Judges 6:24).
Jehovah Elohim: “LORD God” (Gen. 2:4; Judg. 5:3; Isa. 17:6; Zeph. 2:9; Ps. 59:5).
- Jehovah -Tsidekenu: “The Lord Our Righteousness” (Jer. 23:5, 6, 33:16).
Jehovah-Rohi: “The Lord Our Shepherd” (Ps. 23)

- Jehovah-Shammah: “The Lord is There” (Ezek. 48:35).
Jehovah-Sabaoth: “The Lord of Hosts” (Isa. 1:24; Ps. 46:7, 11; 2 Kings 3:9-12; Jer. 11:20).

By blaspheming the name of God, the beast is denying the very nature of God.

2. Tabernacle of God

The word “tabernacle” means “tent.” This word appears three times in Revelation (13:6; 15:5; 21:3). The tabernacle in the OT represents the presence and the glory of God. When the tabernacle was dedicated, the glory of God covered the tent (Exod. 40:34-35).

By blaspheming the tabernacle of God, the beast is doing two things: First, he denies the presence and the glory of God. Second, the beast himself desires to dwell in God’s place.

3. Saints of God

The Beast and Satan – the father of lies – to blaspheme the God’s people, whose citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20).

D. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. (Revelation 13:7)

The first part of verse 7 is a repeat of Revelation 11:7 (see also Dan. 7:21). In Revelation 11:7 and Daniel 7:21, the beast was presented as the victor. But in the end, it is the defeated that will emerge victorious and the victor who will be vanquished. As Paul says, “in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Rom. 8:37).

The fact that it was “given unto him” to make war means that by His providence, God allows the beast to exercise authority over the saints and to rule the people on the earth. Why did God grant permission for the Beast to overcome the saints? It is given on account of God’s sovereignty and for His glory (see Exod. 9:16-17).

E. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. (Revelation 13:7)

“Power...over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations” describes the beast global control (Dan. 7:23). Up to now, there is no empire that has global control. So world domination has to be something of the future as the end nears.

F. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8)

The global control will result in global worship of the beast. “All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him” refers to unbelievers, those who do not just live physically on earth, but their affections and the desires are on the things of this earth. These

people stand in contrast to the saints – those who “dwell in heaven” (13:6; see also John 15:19; 17:14-16; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 11:13; 1Pe. 2:11).

G **And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8)**

Unbelievers who reject God’s Word and the testimony of Jesus never had their names recorded in the book of life. This means that they are followers of the devil whose final destiny they share (20:10, 15).

The names of the believers, however, have been recorded in the Lamb’s book of life from eternity.

H. **And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8)**

There are disagreements over the last part of verse 8. The question concerns whether the phrase “from the foundation of the world” should be linked to “slain” or “written.”

In Ephesians 1:4, Paul writes that God has chosen us in Christ “before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love” (Eph. 1:4). In 1 Peter 1:20, Peter writes that God has chosen Christ “before the foundation of the world” (1Pet. 1:19-20)

In the sovereignty and omniscience of God, many things were determined and accomplished before or from the foundation of the world:

- God existed before the foundation (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 90:2; Isa. 40:21).
- Christ existed before the foundation (Isa. 48:16; Mic. 5:2; John 1:1; 17:5, 24).
- Christ was loved by the Father before the foundation (John 17:24).
- Wisdom was established before the foundation (Prov. 8:23).
- Believers were predestined for salvation before the foundation (Eph. 1:4; 2Tim. 1:9).
- God promised eternal life before time began (Tit. 1:2).
- Christ was foreordained before the foundation (1Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8).
- Unrevealed secrets of God existed from the foundation (Matt. 13:35).
- The kingdom was prepared for the faithful from the foundation (Matt. 25:34).
- The blood of all the prophets was shed from the foundation (Luke 11:50).
- The Beast worshipers were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation (Rev. 17:8).

The assurance and comfort for the believer. God’s plan is secure and unchanging. What He has planned will never fail.

In verse 9, there is a deliberate and emphatic contrast between the Lamb and the Beast. These comparisons show the deliberate deception of the Antichrist.

Similarity	Lamb	Beast
Slain	Before history (1Pe. 1:17-20)	At the end of history (Rev. 13:3)
Arose from the dead	Rom. 1:4	Rev. 13:3, 14; 17:8, 11
Worshipped	Matt. 2:2; 8:2; 14:33; John 5:23; 20:28	2Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:4, 8, 12, 14:9; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4

I. If any man have an ear, let him hear. (Revelation 13:9)

This phrase is used repeatedly in Revelation 2 and 3. John's message is intended for be heard. Every person must take a personal stand for Christ or against Christ. verse 9 and 10 are addressed to the believer.

J. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. (Revelation 13:10)

In verse 10, John alludes to what Jeremiah has written (Jer. 15:2; see also 43:11). Jeremiah's words came to the people of Judah who had turned away from God, and who could no longer count on God's help and deliverance.

In John's case, he was writing to suffering Christians encouraging them to remain faithful to the Lord. The encouragement comes in two forms.

- Law of retribution/ retaliation (*lex talionis*)
If you hold someone captive, you will be held captive. If you kill someone, you will be killed (Matt. 26:52).

John is not calling on believers to hold captive those who hold them captive. Neither is he calling on believers to take up sword against the persecutors. On the contrary, John is saying that Christians must not take up the sword but permit God to be their defender. It is not Satan but God who rules on this earth: God says, "Vengeance is mine (Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30).

- Patience and faith of the saints
If vengeance belongs to God alone, the believer's response should be to be patient in suffering and faithful to God. Vengeance belongs to the Lord, and that Christian are to be patient and faithful even in the face of suffering and death (Rom. 8:35-37).