

Summary and explanation of Revelation 12 – 13

Dragon (Rev 12)	Sea-beast (Rev 13 A)	Land Beast (Rev 13B)	Meaning
<p>Dragon attacks male child</p> <p>Dragon defeated by Jesus</p>			<p><i>Satan works through Roman Empire to destroy Christ.</i></p> <p><i>Christ decisively defeats Satan.</i></p>
<p>Dragon attacks woman</p> <p>Time of persecution 1260</p> <p>The Earth or land helps the woman</p>	<p>Sea-beast attacks saints</p> <p>Time of Persecution 42 months (1260)</p> <p>Sea-beast wounded goes into captivity</p>	<p>Earth-Beast appears Initially lamblike.</p>	<p><i>Medieval church persecutes saints blasphemous claims.</i></p> <p><i>Medieval / dark ages</i></p> <p><i>Persecution stops. New World offers freedom to believers.</i></p>
<p>Dragon attacks remnant</p>	<p>Sea-beast is healed The world wonders after it</p>	<p>Earth beast speaks as dragon, performs miracles, deceives the world, Finally sets up an image to the beast and enforces the mark of the beast</p>	<p><i>Final Worship crisis brought about by global, political and economic, miracle-working superpower.</i></p>

Prophecy Guide

Daniel 2

Daniel 7

Daniel 9

Daniel 8

Revelation 12

Revelation 13

Revelation 14a

Revelation 14b

Revelation 20

Revelation 13

Revelation 13

The Dragon calls up Help

Last study we saw that the Dragon failed to destroy Jesus and then the church. So he gets to other beasts to help him destroy the remnant. The first power the dragon calls up to help in his final attack is a beast from the sea. As we study Revelation 13 we can see that it is an expansion of Daniel 7. Quickly review Daniel 7 and notice the parallels between the Sea-beast and especially the Little Horn in Daniel 7 (and by association with the Little Horn of Daniel 8).

Sea Beast (Revelation 13)

- Sea-Beast is part lion, bear, leopard, & beast
- 10 horns
- 1260 days (42 months)
- Speaks blasphemously
- Attacks temple
- Persecutes God's people

Little Horn (Daniel 7,8)

- Follows empires of lion, bear, leopard, beast
- Comes from 10 horned beast
- Times, time, 1/2 a time (1260)
- Speaks boastfully
- Attacks temple
- Persecutes God's people

By John's day most of the kingdoms of Daniel 7 (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece) had passed away. In Revelation 13 all the symbolic animals (lion, bear, leopard) that represented them are absorbed together into the Sea-beast. This is to show that much of Daniel has been fulfilled and that Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 are complementary visions talking of similar things. Revelation 13 adds some new additional insights.

Experience of the Sea-beast

Read Revelation 13:1-10. How does the Dragon help the Sea-beast (vs. 2)?

What is the period of time that the Sea-beast reigns for (vs. 5)?

What happens to the Sea-beast in verses 3, 10?

A Counterfeit Trinity

After the coming of Jesus a fuller manifestation of God was possible. The New Testament reveals that God is a wonderful Trinity. God is a loving relational God who is the majestic Father, Son and Spirit. The Devil's desire has always been to have worship because he wants to replace the Triune Most High God. The height of Lucifer's rebellion is reached in the book of Revelation when a counterfeit trinity appears on earth. The triad of Dragon, Sea-beast and Earth-Beast are an evil trinity seeking the worship due only God.

STUDY NOTE1: Comparisons of the true and false Trinity

<p>God the Father</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Scripture God the Father is first in the order of the Trinity. • The Father gives his throne to Jesus as co-ruler of the universe (Heb 1:13). • He is the great God who is enthroned in majesty and gives to us his Son and the Spirit. 	<p>The Dragon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dragon is clearly the opposite of the Father. The Dragon is first in the order of the evil trinity. • He also gives a throne to the Sea-beast (13:2). • The Dragon calls up and sends the Sea-beast and the Earth-beast to the world.
<p>Jesus Christ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus is God's holy Son. Jesus said if you have seen me you have seen the Father. Jesus is the perfect reflection and express image of God. • Jesus came to earth as our saviour and during that time he had a 3 ½ year ministry of love to humanity. • At the end of that ministry Jesus died on the cross and then rose again on the third day. 	<p>The Sea-beast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just as Jesus the Son reflects God the Father, notice that the Sea-beast looks like the Dragon (both have seven heads and ten horns). • The Sea-beast also has a 'ministry' lasting the prophetic equivalent of 3 ½ years (42 months/1260 days). • At the end of this time the Sea-beast dies and then experiences a resurrection.
<p>The Holy Spirit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Third member of the Godhead is the Holy Spirit. Jesus said the Spirit would not speak of himself but point people to Jesus. • He is the Spirit that works miracles and signs and gives prophecy to God's people. He is called the Spirit of Prophecy. • The Spirit came to earth in tongues of fire from heaven on the day of Pentecost. • He is also the Spirit (or breath of God) that gives life to the dead. 	<p>The Earth-Beast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Earth-beast is clearly the counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. This beast does not speak of himself but instead leads others to honour the 'first beast' (sea-beast) and receive its mark. • The Earth-beast works miracles and signs. He is called the 'False Prophet', opposite of the Spirit of Prophecy from God. • This Earth-beast brings 'fire' down from heaven, a false Pentecost. • This counterfeit of the Spirit of God also gives life (breath) to the image of beast and makes it live.

Miracles! Prophecy tells us that there is going to be a sudden upsurge in demonic miracle working activity. Some of it will be in the name of Christ yet the effect will be to make people disobey Christ. We cannot place our trust in miracles as evidence of God's working. This will be a powerful delusion. People who think there is no God will be confronted by miracles they cannot deny and will follow false religious powers. Already the world is becoming more and more open to any and all spirituality. Unfortunately much of this spirituality is directly opposed to Jesus or misuses him.

False Authorities on Earth

The Old Testament civil and religious society was built around three anointed groups: the Kings/rulers, the Priests and the Prophets. The evil trinity conform to this order and noticing it helps us to see how they manifest themselves in history.

The Dragon is the false King or Ruler.

In Revelation 12 we saw how the devil tried to use the Roman secular rulers to destroy Jesus. The Seven heads on the Dragon represent the totality of the kingdoms or *Rulers of the World* who oppose God and his people.

The Sea-beast is the false Priest.

The Sea-beast is a religious power that has set its priests and religious system in place of Jesus the true and only High Priest. 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4 tells us the antichrist will set himself up like a god-priest in the temple (church) of God. The Beast is a *historical church/religion that has put itself in place of Jesus*.

The Earth-beast is the false Prophet.

The Earth or Land-beast is the false prophet. A prophet's job in the Old Testament was to point people back to God's covenant and law. Instead of pointing to God's covenant, the Earth-beast points to the false law of the Dragon. It is also a false Holy Spirit or a false movement of the Spirit. The Earth Beast is *the world power that enforces the Dragon's false law*.

In terms of a fulfilment, all this imagery is telling us that the powers and authorities of the World (Dragon), will combine with a 'Christian-like' and 'priestly' religio-political power that has attempted to replace Jesus Christ, the true Priest (Sea-Beast), and they will be joined lastly by another world superpower that is like a counterfeit Holy Spirit and a false prophet (Earth-Beast). And together these three will attack God's people and God's true covenant. Last week's lesson, this lesson and the next lesson look at how such powers have, are, and will manifest themselves in time and space.

Interpreting Revelation 13:1-10

The Sea-beast (same as Daniel 7,8 Little Horn) is religious Rome that dominated Europe. Note that:

- The Sea-beast received power, throne and authority from the Dragon. This means Political Rome would give power to Religious Rome. The Medieval Church was the direct successor of Political Rome.
- The Sea-beast came up amid the divided Europe (10 horns) that followed political Rome. It didn't arise in Africa or Asia.
- The Sea-beast persecuted the saints (think of the inquisitions and other methods used by the Medieval Church against dissenters etc)
- The Sea-beast made outrageous or blasphemous claims. Blasphemy in the Bible is to claim the prerogatives that belong to God alone (see John 10:33). For example, to claim to be able to forgive sins (Matt 9:1-8), or to be infallible.
- The Sea-beast reigned for 42 months (1260 years)

Unfortunately, only the institutional hierarchy of the medieval church that dominated Europe fulfils all these characteristics given by the prophecy. The prophecy states that Religious Rome would receive a *fatal* wound but at the very end of time it would recover and exert worldwide influence.

The 1260 days in History

The long oppressive reign of medieval religious Rome extended from the 6th century to the 18th century. In the 6th century religious Rome emerged as arguably the prominent political force in Europe and *the completely dominant religious power with no rival* (Arians and other religious groups were crushed in this century). Just as the 6th century marked a turning point where the institutional church was able to gain political power, so the 18th century was the historic turning point where the institutional religion of Rome had clearly lost this power.

However, as prophecy states, the Sea-beast will be healed and again exercise great influence over the earth. This recovery is largely due to the activity of the Earth-beast. We will next look at who is the Earth-beast.

Prophecy Speaks of Systems not Individuals

The Sea-beast represents the political and institutional system of Religious Rome (the hierarchical Papacy). It *does not* symbolise the many genuine and peaceful people that may form the body connected with the system. The Sea-beast only represents that specific organisational system which has persecuted God's people, relied on and yet dominated political powers, and made blasphemous claims. God has children everywhere and is leading them to follow him and his ways more and more.

Revelation 13:11-18: The Earth-Beast or Land-Beast

After the Dragon calls up the Sea-beast and we learn about some of his long career, the dragon then finally turns and calls up an additional beast from the earth to help him. Read Revelation 13:11-18 and answer the following.

How is this beast described in verse 11?

How extensive is his power?

What does he do in verses 13 and 14?

What does he do in verses 15 and 16?

Who is this beast from the earth?

Let's note the characteristics of the Earth-beast.

- It comes up around time of Sea-beast's wound near the end of the 1260 days (during 18th century).
- It comes from the earth, the place that helped the woman in Rev 12:16, which symbolises a place favourable to Bible following Christianity.
- This beast appears lamb-like. The Lamb always refers to Jesus in Revelation so this symbol is suggesting this power appears 'Christian' or 'Christ-like'.
- It develops such massive economic power that it can influence and control the world economy vs. 16,17.
- It can force other nations to follow it. It is *the* political superpower.
- It becomes a miracle working power. It is or becomes a very religious power.

Here is prophesied a power that once helped the woman and provided her freedom, that came into being in the 18th century, which develops massive economic and political power and will be highly religious (especially a lamb-like or Christian religion that centres around miracles).

Today's Superpower

This appears to be talking about the so-called free world, but in particular the United States of America. Consider the following about the USA:

- It arose in the 18th century. Both the Declaration of Independence and the American constitution came into being in that century.
- It came up out of the 'earth', the very place or symbol in Rev 12 that had helped 'the woman', by offering freedom to persecuted believers from Europe and all over the world.
- It has been lamb-like, a predominantly Christian country advocating freedom.
- It has developed the world's biggest economy. It is the most powerful political and military nation. It is the world's only superpower.
- Forms of Christianity that are focused on or open to miracles increasingly dominate the USA religious scene, and, unfortunately they are increasingly and actively seeking political power.

The prophecy tells us the United States of America will eventually become dominated by a miracle-working group (Christian). Though lamb-like in its ethos (consider the freedom enshrined in its constitution) it will eventually speak oppressively like a Dragon and enforce a certain form of worship on the world. The Dragon and Sea-beast specifically rely on the Earth-Beast to attack the remnant.

Deception at the End

Revelation warns us that *miracles*, the *activity of spirits* and *false prophets* will be special ways Satan will gain control of the world at the end of time. It is very important then that we be warned, aware and prepared to resist deception and to help warn other people to avoid it. We need to have a good knowledge of the Bible and a strong daily relationship with Christ.

What does 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 tell us about Satan's activity before the end of time?