

13:1-10, **Introduction and Summary:** The apostle, standing on the shore, saw a savage beast rise out of the sea; a tyrannical, idolatrous, persecuting power, springing up. It was a frightful. The source of its power was the dragon. It was set up by the devil, - supported by him. The wounding the head may be the abolishing pagan idolatry; and the healing of a wound, introducing idolatry.

The devil's power and success are limited. Christ has a chosen remnant, redeemed by his blood, recorded in his book, sealed by his Spirit; and though the devil and antichrist may overcome the body, and take away the natural life, they cannot conquer the soul, nor prevail with true believers to forsake their Saviour, and join his enemies. Perseverance in the faith of the gospel and true worship of God, in this great hour of trial and temptation, which would deceive all but the elect, is the character of those registered in the book of life. This powerful motive and encouragement to constancy, is the great design of the whole Revelation. Matthew Henry

J. Vernon McGee - Seven personages are introduced to us by the seventh trumpet, five of whom we met in Rev 12; the woman, or Israel; the red dragon, Satan; the child of the woman, Christ; Michael, the archangel; and the remnant of Israel, that is, the 144,000 who were sealed of God and who are going to make it through the Great Tribulation. In chapter 13 the final two personages are brought before us. One is the wild beast out of the sea; he is both a political power and a person. The other is the wild beast out of the earth; he is a religious leader... There is revealed to us the great warfare between light and darkness.

These two beasts are presented to us as wild beasts. Identity of the beasts: Some consider the first beast to be a person, while others treat him as the last form of the Roman Empire. Some treat the second beast as the Man of Sin, while others consider him merely as the prophet, or the John-the-Baptist type, for the first beast. These difficulties arise because it is impossible to separate a king from his kingdom. A dictator must have a realm over which he rules, or he is no dictator. Though it is difficult to distinguish the two, it seems that the first beast is the antichrist, the ruler over the restored Roman Empire.

In Revelation 16:10 it speaks of "the throne of the wild beast." I would judge from this that there is somebody to sit on that throne, and that is the beast who is presented here -- but he would not be the beast if he did not have the empire. After determining the identity of the first beast, it is not really difficult to identify the second. He is a man, the false prophet, the religious leader, who leads in the worship of the first beast.

Therefore, the first beast is political antichrist, and the second beast is religious antichrist."

13:1, *And I stood upon the sand of the sea*, - και ειδον εκ της θαλασσης -

and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, - θηριον αναβαινον εχον -

having seven heads and ten horns, - κεφαλας επτα και κερατα δεκα -

and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. - και

επι των κερατων αυτου δεκα διαδηματα και επι τας κεφαλας αυτου ονομα

βλασφημιας -

The dragon (Satan) stands on the sands of the sea, and it is he who brings the wild beast out of the sea and dominates him. This is Satan's masterpiece. The first beast is a person who heads up the old Roman Empire. Rome simply fell apart, and this is the only one who will ever be able to put it together again. God must let Satan demonstrate that, when he is given full sway, he will not be able to produce.

Prophecy of Daniel: This wild beast is similar in description to the fourth beast in the seventh chapter of Daniel. There it represents the prophetic history of the Roman Empire, down to "the little horn" and his destruction. That fourth beast looked like it became dormant for a little while, and then out of one of its seven heads there came up ten horns, out of which came a little horn. The little horn put together three of the horns and was able to take the other seven.

At the time of the writing of John, much of the prophecy of Daniel had been fulfilled. The first three beasts - Babylon, the lion; Media-Persia, the bear; and Graeco Macedonia, the leopard - had all been fulfilled. When Daniel gave it, it was prophecy, but it was fulfilled by John's time. Therefore, John centers on the fourth beast and upon the little horn because the fourth beast, the Roman Empire, had appeared.

In the Book of Revelation, the emphasis is upon the rule of the little horn of Daniel 7, and the little horn is set before us as a wild beast, for he is now ruling and controlling the restored Roman Empire in John's prophecy. The little horn of Daniel 7 and the wild beast of Revelation 13 are identical.

The wild Beast is the Man of Sin and Antichrist, the final world dictator. The last verse of this chapter confirms this view. "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six" (v. 18).

There has been a great deal of excitement in our day (and I am included in the group that is excited) about the current existence of the Common Market in Europe.

Throughout history, there have been many who have attempted to put Europe back together again. Charlemagne attempted it and failed. The Holy Roman Empire was centered in Vienna, Austria, which makes it a very interesting place to visit today. Franz Josef was the last of the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire who tried to put Europe together, but he was the worst flop of all. His son apparently either was murdered or committed suicide, and that ended the Holy Roman Empire. Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, Hitler, and Mussolini all attempted it.

But God has not been ready yet, and He will not let that one appear until the time of the Great Tribulation. To me the Common Market is interesting, not because we are seeing prophecy fulfilled, but because we are seeing the stage set which reveals that prophecy can be fulfilled. Down through the centuries, many have said that it is impossible to get Europe together. It is impossible until God is ready -- and Satan is going to supply the man.

The ten horns with ten diadems speak of the tenfold division of the Roman Empire in the time of the Great Tribulation. The horns are the ten kings who rule over this tenfold division. This interpretation is confirmed by Revelation 17:12. The little horn comes to power by first putting down three of these rulers, and afterward he dominates the other seven and thus becomes the world dictator.

The seven heads are not so easily identified. They are interpreted in Revelation 17:9-10 as seven kings. These do not reign contemporaneously as the ten horns do, but they appear in chronological order. Some have interpreted them as representing certain Roman emperors, such as Domitian who was then ruling. Others interpret these seven heads as the forms of government through which the Roman Empire passed. A third view is that the seven heads could represent seven great nations of antiquity which blasphemed God: Rome, Greece, media-Persia, Chaldea, Egypt, and Assyria. The kingdom of the beast which is yet to come would be the seventh. Another likely view is that the seven heads correspond to the seven heads of the dragon which denote exceptional wisdom.

Blasphemy, in Scripture, signifies impious speaking when applied to GOD, and injurious speaking when directed against our neighbor. A name of blasphemy is the prostitution of a sacred name to an unholy purpose.

13:2, *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."*

13:3, *"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."*

13:4, *"And they worshiped 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?"*

13:5, *"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."*

13:6, *"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."*

13:7, *"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."*

13:8, *"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."*

13:9-10, *"If any man have an ear, let him hear. 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. **A second beast causes an image to be made of the first***

13:11-15, "Those who understand the first beast to denote a worldly power, take the second to be also a persecuting and assumed power, which acts under the disguise of religion, and of charity to the souls of men. It is a spiritual dominion, professing to be derived from Christ, and exercised at first in a gentle manner, but soon spake like the

dragon. Its speech betrayed it; for it gives forth those false doctrines and cruel decrees, which show it to belong to the dragon, and not to the Lamb. It exercised all the power of the former beast. It pursues the same design, to draw men from worshiping the true God, and to subject the souls of men to the will and control of men.

The second beast has carried on its design - men should be deceived to worship the first beast. By lying wonders, pretended miracles. It makes a qualification for buying and selling, as well as for places of profit and trust, that they oblige themselves to use all their interest and power to enhance the dominion of the beast. To worship the image of the beast, implies being subject to those things which stamp the character of the picture, and render it the image of the beast.

The number of the beast is given, so as to show the infinite wisdom of God, and to exercise the wisdom of men. The number is the number of a man, computed after the usual manner among men, and it is 666. What or who is intended by this, remains a mystery. To almost every religious dispute this number has yet been applied, and it may reasonably be doubted whether the meaning has yet been discovered. But, anyone who has wisdom and understanding, will see that all the enemies of God are numbered and marked out for destruction; that the term of their power will soon expire, and that all nations shall submit to our King of righteousness and peace.

13:11, *“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.”*

13:12, *“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”*

13:13, *“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,”*

13:14, *“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.”*

13:15, *“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”*

13:16, *“And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:”*

13:17, *“And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”*

13:18, *“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast:*

for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.”