

Revelation 13: The Rise of the Beast

Revelation 13:1–4, 11–12 | Sunday, April 2 | Revelation Series

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OVERVIEW

Revelation 13, Hal says, pulls together all the predictions about this important figure. He sets the frame first: some chapters carry the action of the seven years chronologically, and interspersed among them are chapters that give a vignette of the movements and personalities that dominate those years. Then he reads the first four verses — a beast out of the sea with ten horns and seven heads, like a leopard, with a bear's feet and a lion's mouth, given his power, his throne and great authority by the dragon, and a fatal wound healed. The three animals send him to Daniel 7: Greece, Persia, Babylon. He skips to verse 11 and the second beast, out of the land — *tes ges*, with the definite article, which in this book always means Israel — with two horns like a lamb and the voice of a dragon, impersonating the Lamb of God. Revelation 19:20 settles that both are individuals: you cannot throw a nation into the lake of fire. The rest of the session is Daniel 7.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Revelation 13:1–4 — The beast out of the sea; the dragon gives him power, throne and great authority; the fatal wound healed

Revelation 13:11–12 — The second beast, out of the land, two horns like a lamb, speaking as a dragon

Revelation 19:20 — The beast and the false prophet thrown alive into the lake of fire

Revelation 17:15 — The waters where the harlot sits are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues

Daniel 7:1–3 — The first year of Belshazzar; the four winds stirring up the great sea; four beasts

Daniel 7:19–23 — The fourth beast, the ten horns, and the little horn that displaces three

Daniel 2 — Chapters 2 through 7, written in chaldean — a Gentile language for the times of the Gentiles

Isaiah 57:20 — The wicked are like the tossing sea, whose waters toss up refuse and mud

2 Thessalonians 2 — Christ comes for the believers before this man is ever unveiled

KEY TERMS

Vignette — a chapter that gives the picture of an important movement or personality rather than carrying the action forward

Tes ges — “of the land” in the Greek — and with the definite article, Hal says, the land always means Israel

The false prophet — the second beast, out of the land, with two horns like a lamb and a dragon's voice; he impersonates the Lamb of God

The Tribulation and the Great Tribulation — the first half of the seven years, and the second half

The sea — God's symbol for the Gentile nations — restless, never able to be quiet, as in Isaiah 57:20

The little horn — the horn that comes up among the ten after they are there and displaces three of them; the first prophecy Hal knows of in Scripture about the Antichrist

Chaldean — the Gentile language of Daniel 2 through 7, used because those chapters treat the times of the Gentiles from a Gentile point of view

Scarlet o'harlot — Hal's own name for the whore of Babylon in Revelation 17

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer from the message itself. Every answer is in the teaching.

1. How does Hal divide the chapters of the book of Revelation?

2. What comes up out of the sea, and what does the dragon give it?

3. Match the three animals to their empires.

4. What makes the whole earth marvel and follow after the beast?

5. Where does the second beast come from, and why does the Greek matter?

6. What do the second beast's two horns and his voice tell us about him?

7. How does Hal show that the beast and the false prophet are individuals rather than kingdoms?

8. Why does Hal make a point of the way Daniel dates his chapters?

9. What is unusual about Daniel 2 through 7?

10. What do the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea show?

11. What does the sea stand for, and which two passages does Hal use to fix it?

12. Who is the little horn of Daniel 7, and what does he do?

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. Hal believes the man of this chapter is alive right now and somewhere in Europe, and also that no one will identify him. How should a believer hold both of those at once?

2. The whole earth marvels at a resurrection and then worships. What makes a miracle persuasive — and is that a safe measure of anything?

3. The second beast has two horns like a lamb and the voice of a dragon. Where have you seen counterfeit gentleness?

4. Hal spends real time showing that Daniel dated everything so it could be checked. Why does checkable detail matter to faith?

5. He printed three translations side by side this week and says he learned new things — after teaching this book more times than he can count. What does that model for your own reading?

6. Four empires rose and fell, and Rome fell apart from the inside. What difference does it make to live under a government you know is temporary?

MEMORY VERSE

“But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud.”

— Isaiah 57:20, as Hal reads it in this message