



# FAITH PRINCETON SUNDAY SCHOOL

## REVELATION 13:1-10 The Two Beasts (Part 1)

SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2026

### REVELATION 13 Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme \_\_\_\_\_

#### **13 The Beast from the Sea**

1 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore.

Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. 2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. 3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; 4 they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" 5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

7 It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

## *Enduring Word Commentary:* **Revelation 13: The Two Beasts**

### A. The beast rising from the sea.

#### 1. (1) John's vision of a beast rising from the sea.

**Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.**

##### a. Then I stood on the sand of the sea:

In [Revelation 12](#), John's vision mainly had *heaven* in view. Now the scene of his vision shifted to the earth, and in his vision he **stood on the sand of the sea**.

i. Many people today love **the sea**, but as a whole the Jewish people in Biblical times regarded the sea as a wild, untamed, frightening place. While ancient Israel under Solomon had a navy, Hiram the King of Tyre supplied the sailors ([1 Kings 9:26-27](#)).

ii. Because ancient Israel was wary of **the sea**, it was a figure of evil and chaos that seemed to resist God, though the resistance was unsuccessful:

*· For God is my King from of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. You divided the sea by Your strength; You broke the heads of the sea serpents in the waters. ([Psalm 74:12-13](#))*

*· LORD God of hosts, who is mighty like You, O LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You. You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, You still them. ([Psalm 89:8-9](#))*

*· But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. ([Isaiah 57:20](#))*

##### b. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea:

From the place identified with evil and chaos and resisting God, a **beast** comes forth. The ancient Greek word translated **beast** here has the idea of a wild, dangerous animal. Because John calls him a **beast** and not a *dragon* (as in [Revelation 12:3](#)), this creature represents someone distinct from Satan who was represented by the dragon ([Revelation 12:9](#)).

c. **Having seven heads and ten horns:** Though this **beast** is distinct from the dragon of [Revelation 12](#), he is still closely identified with him. He is not the dragon, but he is *like* him, because the dragon also had **seven heads and ten horns** ([Revelation 12:3](#)).

i. Any creature with **seven heads** would be hard to kill, because if you wounded one head, six still remained. In Biblical imagery **horns** express strength and power. A bull with two horns is a powerful creature, but a **beast** with **ten horns** has that much more power – just like the dragon of [Revelation 12:3](#).

ii. This likeness to Satan is just one of the things that identifies this **beast** with the one popularly known as the *Antichrist*. The word *Antichrist* only appears in the Bible five times in four verses ([1 John 2:18](#), [2:22](#), [4:3](#), and [2 John 1:7](#)). [1 John 2:18](#) is a good example: *Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming*. With this, John referred to an individual who has captured the imagination of many people, some who don't even know the Bible. But many are ignorant about this person called *the*

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*Antichrist*, except what they have learned from movies like *The Omen*.

iii. We can begin by understanding what the title *Antichrist* means. The prefix *anti* may mean “the opposite of” or “instead of.” The Antichrist is the “opposite Jesus”; he is the “instead of” Jesus. Most people have focused on the idea of the “opposite Jesus.” This has made them think that the Antichrist will appear as a supremely evil person, that as much as Jesus went around doing good, he will go around doing bad. As much as Jesus’ character and personality was beautiful and attractive, the Antichrist’s character and personality will be ugly and repulsive. As much as Jesus spoke only truth, the Antichrist will speak only lies. This emphasizes the idea of the “opposite Jesus” too much. The Antichrist will instead be more of an “instead of Jesus.” He will look wonderful, be charming and successful. He will be the ultimate winner, and appear as an angel of light. In this sense the Antichrist will be a satanic messiah, *instead of* the true Messiah Jesus Christ.

iv. In [1 John 2:18](#), John also spoke of *the Antichrist and many antichrists*. There is a “spirit” of antichrist, and this “spirit” of antichrist will one day find its ultimate fulfillment in *the Antichrist*, who will lead humanity in an end-times rebellion against God. In other words, though the world still waits to see the ultimate revelation of the Antichrist, there are little “previews” of this man and his mission to come. These are the *antichrists* with a little “a.”

v. Though we commonly call this coming world leader the Antichrist, the Bible gives him many names or titles. He is known as:

- The *little horn* of [Daniel 7:8](#).

- The *king of fierce countenance* of [Daniel 8:23](#).

- The *Prince that shall come* of [Daniel 9:26](#).

- The *willful king* of [Daniel 11:36-45](#).

- The one who comes *in his own name* of [John 5:43](#), whom Israel will receive as a messiah.

- The *son of perdition, the man of sin, the lawless one* of [2 Thessalonians 2:3](#).

d. **And on his horns ten crowns:** This is something *different* about the **beast** compared to the dragon of [Revelation 12:3](#), who had *seven diadems on his heads*. The seven crowns of the dragon expressed his strength and power, because seven is a number associated with strength and completeness. The **ten crowns** of the **beast** express his rule over a group of ten nations.

i. Most commentators think that the **ten horns** are distributed among the seven heads, but David Hocking sees all **ten horns** upon one of the heads. The figure of **ten horns** also associates this **beast** with the beast of [Daniel 7:7](#), which represent the final world empire of the Antichrist, which the Messiah will ultimately conquer: *After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. ([Daniel 7:7](#))*

ii. In Daniel’s vision, the *ten horns* specifically represented *ten kingdoms* that this final world dictator has authority over ([Daniel 7:24](#)). In John’s vision the **ten crowns** on the **ten horns** emphasize this idea.

iii. The visions of [Daniel 7](#) and [Daniel 2](#) also connect the governments represented by the **ten crowns** with the ancient Roman Empire. In those visions, Daniel saw three successive world empires, each succeeded by a fourth – which in the context of the visions is plainly the Roman Empire. In the days of that fourth empire the Messiah will come, destroy all earthly rule and reign over the earth. Since we do not see the reign of Jesus on earth in the way Daniel prophesied, we can see that the Roman Empire will “resume” in some way, expressed by this collection of **ten crowns**.

e. **And on his heads a blasphemous name:** The seven heads of the **beast** each advertise blasphemy against God. This speaks of more than the beast’s message; it speaks of his character. He is a blasphemer, who speaks against God (as in [Daniel 7:25](#)).

## 2. (2) The description of the beast of the sea again connects it to images from Daniel 7.

**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.**

a. **Like a leopard... a bear... a lion:** In this vision, God used images from Daniel’s vision of [Daniel 7](#) to communicate the identity and nature of this **beast** to John. [Daniel 7](#) used four animals (*beasts*) to describe the course of human government from Daniel’s time until the ultimate reign of Jesus on this earth.

i. The first three animals are a **lion** (in Daniel, a picture of the Babylonian Empire), a **bear** (a picture of Medo-Persian Empire), and a **leopard** (a picture of the Greek Empire). The fourth animal was a dreadful, indescribable beast which shared

the most terrifying characteristics of the previous beasts, yet represents the final world empire under the leadership of a Satanic dictator ([Daniel 7:7-8](#)).

ii. John presents this **beast** as the extension of the fourth beast of [Daniel 7](#), connecting his empire with the characteristics of the great empires of the past. This final world empire will have the catlike vigilance of a **leopard**, the slow and crushing power of a **bear**, and the authority and ferociousness of a **lion**.

iii. Since the beasts of [Daniel 7](#) represented empires more than specific men, some have thought that the **beast** of [Revelation 13](#) is not a person, but a government or a cultural system. Many believe the beast is a broad picture of totalitarian governments, especially the totalitarian states of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For example, Mounce writes: “The beast has always been, and will always be, in a final intensified manifestation, the deification of secular authority” (Mounce). But others see the **beast** as a person, specifically the Antichrist – the final Satanic dictator who leads the world in rebellion against God. Some (like David Hocking) combine the approaches and say that the beast is a modern, world totalitarian government, *but* the one head that has ten horns is specifically the Antichrist – the leader of this beast of a final satanic dictatorship. But with any empire, especially brief empires, the government is almost totally identified with the ruler. When we think of Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, the figures of Adolph Hitler as an individual and Nazi Germany as a state are virtually the same.

b. **Now the beast which I saw:** All the indications in [Revelation 13](#) are that the **beast** is a man, though he is closely identified with his world-dominating government.

i. “The Beast is worshipped as a god; but people never worship an empire as such; neither do they make a succession of emperors into an object of religious devotion. The paying of divine homage to kings has been a common thing in the world’s history, but it has always been rendered to individuals.” (Seiss)

ii. An image is set up of the beast, and the whole world is commanded to worship it. This makes far more sense if the **beast** is a man more than an empire or a government. Through history, men have often bowed down to an image of a political ruler.

iii. “This Beast also has a proper name – a name expressive of a particular number, and that number ‘a number of *a man*’; which cannot be conceived except on the idea of an individual person.” (Seiss)

iv. “This beast is finally damned. He goes to perdition, into the lake of fire, where he continues to exist and suffer, after passing from this earthly scene ([Revelation 17:11](#); [20:10](#)), which cannot be true of systems of government.” (Seiss)

v. The antichrist is also called *the son of perdition* ([2 Thessalonians 2:3](#)), as was Judas ([John 17:12](#)). Judas was a man, not a system or a government, so it follows that the antichrist will also be a man.

vi. With all this in mind, we agree with Seiss: “We would therefore greatly err from the Scriptures, as well as from the unanimous conviction and teaching of the early Church, were we to fail to recognize this Beast as *a real person*, though one in whom the political power of the world is finally concentrated and represented.”

c. **The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority:** This world leader is really empowered and supported by Satan. Through this man, Satan will express his own desire and authority. In this, the **beast** takes the offer that Jesus refused ([Matthew 4:8-10](#)).

i. The **beast** is not an ordinary man. He is called *the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit* ([Revelation 11:7](#), [17:8](#)), and ordinary men do not come from there. “One who hails from that place must either be a dead man brought up again from the dead, or some evil spirit which takes possession of a living man... In either case, the Beast, as a person, is an extraordinary and supernatural being.” (Seiss)

ii. It may be that Satan himself takes possession of this man, and this is what makes him exceptional. This was the case with Judas, who was possessed by Satan ([John 13:27](#)).

### 3. (3) The beast and his wound.

**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.**

a. **One of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded:** This is a *head* wound, a *mortal* wound, not a superficial injury. Perhaps it is the result of God’s judgment against the **beast**.

b. **And his deadly wound was healed:** The recovery of the beast increases his fame and authority (**all the world marveled and followed the beast**). Twice later ([Revelation 13:12](#), [14](#)) this recovery is mentioned in connection to the world’s worship and devotion to the beast.

i. Some who see the beast not as a man but as a government see this as the revival of the Roman

Empire, fulfilling [Daniel 7](#). In this perspective, the Roman Empire has been *dead* but will again be *revived*, and the world will marvel. Yet the most natural way to understand John's words in [Revelation 13](#) make us believe that he speaks of a man who will be **mortally wounded** and then **healed**. The man will lead a revived Roman Empire, and his personality will dominate it – yet he and the empire are not exactly the same.

c. **Wounded... healed:** This is truly an *Antichrist*, who even imitates Jesus in His death and resurrection. The world will believe this, and it will add tremendously to his fame and power.

#### 4. (4) The authority and popularity of the beast.

**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?”**

a. **So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast:** As people worship this beast and bow down before his government, it may be that they do not know they are bowing down to Satan himself; but it is worship of Satan none the less. They clearly worship both the **beast** and the **dragon**, but their worship of the dragon may be unknowing.

i. Though Satan worship becomes more and more popular each year, it is still only a tiny fraction of people who openly worship Satan. But this is because more people expect Satan to appear with ugliness and horror. This is wrong, *for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.* ([2 Corinthians 11:14-15](#))

b. **Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?** The world will be amazed at the power of the beast, and will believe he is so mighty that he cannot be conquered. For a time, the beast will look like a tremendous *winner*. When he blasphemes Jesus and persecutes God's people, they will appear to be complete losers – for a short time.

i. They worship the beast, and the dragon behind the beast, simply because of the beast's might. “Worship of the devil and the devil's agent is justified purely on the ground of brute force.” (Robertson)

#### 5. (5-6) The beast's blasphemies.

**And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.**

a. **Speaking great things and blasphemies:** “Blasphemer” may be a more accurate title than “Antichrist” for this end-times dictator. This beast is a man who speaks against God and everything God stands for (**His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven**).

i. Some Roman Emperors blasphemed God this way; but they did not fulfill these prophecies, even if they did prefigure their fulfillment.

b. **And he was given authority to continue for forty-two months:** The beast continues without restraint by God for a period of **forty-two months** – the familiar three and one-half years. The duration of the period shows that the beast has full reign for the first half of the final seven

years, and that during the whole time he is still under God's authority.

c. Why does the beast **blaspheme... those who dwell in heaven**? This means he speaks against those who were taken in the rapture, and are therefore out of his reach.

## 6. (7-8) The beast makes war against the saints.

**It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 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.**

a. **It was granted to him to make war with the saints:** [Revelation 12](#) described the broad phenomenon of Satanic persecution during the tribulation period. Here, the main instrument of that persecution is revealed: the government of the beast will persecute and kill all those who do not bow in worship to the beast.

b. **To overcome them:** **Overcome** does not mean that the beast can overcome the faith of the saints, but that he can destroy their physical lives, and by all appearances defeat the cause of God's people on this earth.

i. Who are these **saints** who are **overcome** by the beast? Various views of the timing of the rapture will determine who these persecuted ones are. Those who believe in a pre-tribulation rapture believe that these saints are God's people who come to Christ after the church has been raptured. Those who believe in a post-tribulation rapture believe that these saints are God's people who are on the earth before the final rapture, including what we think of today as the "church."

ii. Jesus said of the church, that *the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it* ([Matthew 16:18](#)).

If this group of saints (a term not exclusively applied to the New Testament church) is overcome by Satan, perhaps they are not the same New Testament *church* that Jesus spoke of.

c. **All who dwell on the earth will worship him:** This final world dictator will demand and receive worship from the whole **earth**. But those who **worship him** pay the price: they are those **whose names have not been written in the Book of Life**.

i. *How* will **all who dwell on the earth... worship him**? It will probably be after the pattern of the worship demanded by the Roman Emperors in the days of the early church. There were times in the early church when all residents in the empire were required to burn a pinch of incense before a statue of Caesar and say, *Caesar is Lord*. Christians refused to do this and were persecuted because of it. The Romans saw it as an act of *political* allegiance, but the Christians rightly saw it as an act of religious worship. After the great and terrible totalitarian rulers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mao), it isn't hard to imagine a dominating world leader demanding such a declaration of allegiance, tantamount to worship.

ii. The **Book of Life** contains the names of all God's redeemed ([Revelation 20:15](#)). The idea is that worshipping the beast and having your name in the **Book of Life** are mutually exclusive.

d. **The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world:** This deeply meaningful title for Jesus reminds us that God's plan of redemption was set in place before He even created the beings who would be redeemed. God wasn't "surprised" by

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the fall of Adam or any other evidence of the fallen nature of man. God isn't making it up as He goes along. It is all going according to plan.

- God the Son had a relationship of love and fellowship with God the Father *before the foundation of the world* ([John 17:24](#)).
- The work of Jesus was ordained *before the foundation of the world* ([1 Peter 1:20](#)).
- God chose His redeemed *before the foundation of the world* ([Ephesians 1:4](#)).
- Names are written in the Book of Life *before the foundation of the world* ([Revelation 17:8](#)).
- The kingdom of heaven was prepared for the redeemed *before the foundation of the world* ([Matthew 25:34](#)).

## 7. (9-10) A warning to all.

**If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.**

- a. **He who has an ear, let him hear:** This introduces a solemn word of warning, meant to capture the attention of all who hear.
- b. **He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity:** This means that the functionaries of the beast are not without guilt. Though these things are prophesied and part of God's predetermined plan, it does not lessen in the slightest way man's personal responsibility. If you work for the beast and lead others **into captivity**, you certainly **shall go into captivity** yourself. God will measure unto you what you have measured to others.
- i. This may have a secondary or additional meaning: there is no hope in fighting against the

Antichrist. The only way of victory is steadfast faith and endurance in Jesus.

c. **Here is the patience and the faith of the saints:** Though they are viciously attacked by the Antichrist and his followers, the **saints** of God must keep steadfast **faith** in the ultimate justice of God. He will reward their persecutors with persecution of His own.

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