

All Inhabitants of the Earth will Worship the Beast

13: 4-10

DIG: Who worships the beast? What impact does this beast have on believers? How should they respond? Why? What is the book of life? Whose name's are written in it? Whose names are missing from it? Why?

REFLECT: Is there a beast in your life (people, forces, institutions, etc) that is testing your allegiance to Jesus? How is God helping you deal with that? Is your name written in the book of life? How do you know? What kind of grade would you give yourself on patient endurance and faithfulness? Why?

Chapters 11 through 14 are parenthetical. They add some detail about the middle of the Great Tribulation and show us why the bowl judgments will be so necessary.

For many years before the Rapture there will be a revival of various occultist groups. The practice of occultism will be greatly accelerated after the true believers in **the Lord** are taken out of this world. During the first forty-two months of the Great Tribulation the preaching of the 144,000 (see **Cr - Then I Heard the Number of Those Who Were Sealed, 144,000 from all the Tribes of Isra'el**), and the Two Witnesses (see **Dc - I Will Give Power to My Two Witnesses to Prophecy for 1,260 Days**), combined with the seal and trumpet judgments will finally remove every trace of scientific skepticism. By that time mankind will have seen and heard the holy angels flying in the heavens. The Rapture will have prompted many to read the Bible and books such as *Left Behind*. At long last, even the most cynical will be convinced that both **God** and Satan exist. But then they will choose Satan.³⁰³

People worshiped the dragon (the devil) because he had given authority to the beast (the antichrist). Just as God the Father will give all authority to His righteous Son Jesus Christ, Satan will give all authority to the antichrist (First John 2:18, 4:3, Second John 7). They also worshiped the beast and asked: Who is like the beast? They will choose to cast their lot with the beast because they come to believe that he is more powerful than ADONAI. The world will have a new superhero. All the adoration will lead people to ask: Who can make war against him (13:4)? They will recall his meteoric rise to power, his great victories in other wars, his overwhelming personality, and of course, his seemingly miraculous healing. They will come to believe that he is invincible. Dani'el prophesied about all of this when he said: He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause

astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy the mighty men that try to usurp his authority he sets up an image of himself in the tribulation temple (see Bx - **The Tribulation Temple**) and declares himself to be God (Dani'el 8:24).

For three-and-a-half years **the beast** will strive for world dominance with other kings, the two witnesses, and the 144,000 and their converts. He will have to fight against the devastating seal and trumpet judgments from heaven. But in the final analysis he will triumph, and the entire world will look to him, believing in his master, **Satan**, for every need. Finally! The **forty-two months** of drought will be over, the plagues will have stopped, the two witnesses are gone, **the antichrist** will be in charge and **Satan** and his demons will have come to the earth. What a time. It will be **the devil's holiday**.

The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months (13:5). The search for a charismatic world leader will be over. **The antichrist** will know it all, and his heart will overflow with pride. He will boast of his great achievements, power and **world** control. His speeches will be spellbinding. Dani'el prophesied that he would have a mouth that spoke boastfully. He will speak against the Most High God and oppress His saints who will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time (Dani'el 7:8, 20, 25). With their minds deceived and blinded by the dragon (Second Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 12:9), confused additionally by drugs (9:21), and numbed by every conceivable sin, the people will easily come to believe in **Satan** and his lies (Second Thessalonians 2:9-12).

*Whenever a corrupt leader usurps divine prerogative because **the LORD** has not called him to serve, the voice of authority becomes the voice of opinion, proclamation is replaced by discussion, the Word of **God** is replaced by the word of man, and sermons become philosophical dissertations at best, or blasphemy at worst.*

The world will see the counterfeit resurrection of the antichrist from the dead and his power over the two witnesses (11:7-13). Although the two witnesses will be resurrected, they will fade into obscurity. The inhabitants of the earth will begin to worship the antichrist as king of the world and as Lord of all. No one will be able to stand against him. He will establish himself in the Beautiful Land of Isra'el and will have the power to destroy it (Dani'el 11:16). He will declare himself to be God and demand to be worshipped. For forty-two months, or the second half of the Great Tribulation, he will open his mouth in blasphemies against God to insult His name and His Shechinah glory, and those living in heaven (13:6). He will be the number one blasphemer in a **world** full of blasphemers. The beast will not only blaspheme ADONAI'S heavenly Tabernacle and those who live in heaven with Him, but also His name and His Shechinah glory.

But before the antichrist can establish his world empire, he will need to subdue it. He was given power to make war against God's holy ones and to conquer them. No place on earth will be safe because he will be given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation (13:7). Great resistance, however, will come from both Jews and Gentiles who will come to believe in Messiah during the second half of the Great Tribulation. Dani'el also prophesied about this when he said: I watched this horn wage war against the holy ones and defeat them (Dani'el 7:21 CJB). There is no indication that believers will offer any armed resistance until the end (see Ex - **The Eight Stage Campaign of Armageddon 2. The Destruction of Babylon**), but their moral resistance, coupled with the seeming immunity against the plagues that infected the earth will make them especially hated by the beast.

At this point the antichrist will not only have political authority over the whole world, but he will have religious authority over the earth as well. All unbelievers will worship him during the Great Tribulation. All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast (13:8a). They will reject the Most High God because they will believe the unholy trinity is more powerful. They, like the ancient pagans and the modern evolutionists, have exchanged the truth of ADONAI for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25). It will be humanism on steroids. In worshiping the antichrist, they actually end up worshiping themselves!

It is hard to imagine a world full of Satan worshipers, but that is exactly where the world is headed. The Scriptures tell us that all will worship the beast, except those whom the Lord has reserved for Himself. The book of life mentioned here contains all the names of every person who is born again and only those who are born again (21:1). Their names are written into the book of life belonging to the Lamb before the creation of the world (13:8b). But those who will worship the unholy trinity will not have their names written in that book (also see 17:8b). In Psalm 69:28, it is also known as the book of the righteous. Based on God's election and foreknowledge, this book contains the names of only those who are born again. And because our salvation is eternally secure (see my commentary on **The Life of Christ Ms - The Eternal Security of the Believer**), it is impossible to be blotted out of this particular book.³⁰⁴ Jesus said it this way: He who overcomes will be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before My Father and His angels (3:5).

Those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will have the spiritually enlightened eyes to see through the polished politics and not be intimidated by the military might of the antichrist. They will see him for the monster he really is. Yet their resistance could have dreadful consequences. Those who refuse to worship the beast will suffer

severely. So **John** warns the reader to snap to attention and listen to his solemn warning: **He who has an ear, let him hear (13:9)**. This is the exact pleading message that **John** had earlier given to the angels of the seven churches in Asia Minor (see **Ay - Write, Therefore, What Is Now**). If mankind will **worship the beast**, they will forfeit their **names** being mentioned in **the book of life**; they will not have the **righteousness** of **Yeshua**, and consequently they will face eternity in hell. However, if they do not **worship the beast**, they will be martyred. It will be a grave choice, they will need to **hear** and understand its implications well.³⁰⁵ The famous observation of Tertullian, one of the father's of the faith, was that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," has a depth of insight that is all too often lost on believers today.

Here **the LORD** graciously interjects a word of encouragement to those **believers** who are being persecuted. The exact way that the lost treat **the holy ones**, **the Lord** will treat them. Long ago **God** had detailed this commandment: **Show no pity; a life for a life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot (Deuteronomy 19:21)**. In the **70th seven** of **Dani'el**, this commandment will be reinstated. **If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If they enslave the holy ones, they will find themselves enslaved.** The Dispensation of Grace will have been a thing of the past. **ADONAI** will do what our current society will not do - **kill those who kill others (Genesis 9:6)**. **If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed (13:10a)**. **If they kill the holy ones, they will be killed** in some manner. This promise will sustain **the holy ones** through such a time of bitter persecution.

This will call for **patient endurance and faithfulness** on the part of the **holy ones** at that time (**13:10b**). Like their **Lord**, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross (**Hebrews 12:2**), they will know that they themselves will have better and lasting possessions in heaven. **They will need to persevere so that they will receive what He has promised them. For He who is coming will not delay (Hebrews 10:34-36)**. The terrible stress of the Great Tribulation will dwarf anything endured by **believers** before them and will provide the greatest test of patience and faith ever experienced.

The fact that **the beast (the antichrist)**, will be given authority by **the dragon (Satan)**, is indeed an awe-inspiring thought. **The beast** will combine features of the earth's most vicious animals and **his mouth** will spew out wickedness. The whole world **will worship him** except **those** whose names are **written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb**. What a terrible time it will be. Yet, **God** will limit **the beast's** dreadful persecution to a short time, **forty-two months**. Clearly, evil will not reign forever, and those who remain faithful to the light of **Messiah** will see the darkness dissolve.

If we are to survive direct persecution and remain loyal to **the Lord** in a hostile world, we must have faith in the slain **Lamb**, who has overcome death itself along with the lesser "deaths" that tempt us to despair. We need to be able to look beyond our current challenges and difficulties to see **ADONAI** working out our salvation in the midst of dark circumstances if we are to persevere.

Where is my gaze fixed today? Is it fixed on the present difficulties that can make me feel isolated, or on **Yeshua**? **He** boldly proclaimed: **Surely I am with you always, even to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:20b)**. Am I fixed on my trials, or on my victory promised by **Christ Himself**? For **He** has said: **I have told you these things** (about His death and resurrection), **so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world (John 16:33)**. On my weaknesses, or on the faithfulness of **ADONAI** who provides a way of escape in every temptation? **God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will provide a way out so that you can stand up under it (First Cor 10:13)**.

Also, where am I dwelling? Do I dwell on the earth (13:8), where I submit to false values like everyone else? Or do I understand that my true dwelling place is with those who live in heaven where **God** is already reigning (13:6)?

Who is like You, Lord, majestic in holiness, brilliant in glorious deeds, doing wonders? In Your steadfast love You have led the people that You have bought with Your precious blood. You have guided us by Your strength to Your holy dwelling place in heaven. Help me to enjoy the security of living in Your presence and praise You continually.³⁰⁶