



Revelation Class #8: Revelation 13: The Embodied Dragon

Revelation 12 offers heaven's perspective on **chapter 13**, which details the great eschatological wrath of Satan; and **chapter 14**, which brings the wrath of God in response. Revelation can be understood as **the great confrontation of two wraths**, one fully determined to destroy the righteous (13:15), and the other equally determined to rescue them (19:11ff.). This demonic wrath has been active against the church since its inception but reaches a unique and universal intensity at the very end of time.¹

Summary

Revelation **12:10-11** is the **HEART** of Revelation: our triumph in God's courtroom **through the Lamb's blood**. Satan had incessantly accused humanity before God as worthy of death. But at the Cross the "accuser of the brethren" was silenced, his testimony disbarred. By Christ's substitutionary atonement, we are forgiven, fully acquitted; and simultaneously divine justice upheld. **Satan's case is no longer valid and he is cast out.**

REVELATION 13

Revelation 13 is the **central chapter** of the *central division* (3 on each side).

This chapter spells out the essential qualities and deceptions of all the false gospels and antichrist powers in history. The worship of the Lamb and the worship of the beast are mutually exclusive (13:8; 14:9-10; 15: 2-4) resulting in two opposite destinies (14:10; 21:3-4). But to the natural eye the difference is not immediately seen as stark opposites.

Satan's best weapon is deceit, and chapter 13 makes clear "**the beast**" is a masterful *counterfeit* of Christ. Remember the **analogy of the sugar bowl** for **Satanic deceit**: To the **Christian**, Satan's deceptions appear like **salt** in the sugar bowl; to the **non-Christian** they are like **cocaine** in the sugar bowl; but to **God** they are like **a fly** in the sugar bowl. The **deception** is discerned only through an **intimate acquaintance** with the divine reality (Rev 17: 14; Ps 34:8; Heb 6:4-5).

Revelation 13 is crucial for understanding: Who is judged and why? It declares that all who "**dwelt on the earth**" (6:10; 3:10; 11:9-10; 17:2, 8) will inevitably **worship of the beast** and share his animosity to those who refuse him ultimate allegiance. Rev 13 clarifies the multi-faceted nature of this evil.

¹ Concerning the Satanic wrath directed against the remnant Ladd made these remarks: "This effort is not limited to a single historical event but is manifested throughout the entire history of the church. . . . Therefore, the only unique thing about the last time of tribulation is its intensity. The modern evangelical fear of suffering in the Great Tribulation has forgotten the Biblical teaching that the church in her fundamental character is always a martyr church (Acts 14:22)" (Ladd, "The Theology of the Apocalypse," *Gordon Review* 7 [1963-64], p. 77).

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The Beast from the Sea

Revelation 13:1-2

The **dragon** stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a **beast coming out of the sea**. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on **each head a blasphemous name**. The beast I saw resembled a **leopard**, but had feet like those of a **bear** and a mouth like that of a **lion**. **The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.**

The dragon stands **on shifting sands**², the unstable land strategically located between the “sea” and the “earth” and *he calls from each a hellish ally* (13:1, 11). The **two beasts** which arise, along with the **dragon himself**, comprise **the false trinity whose goal is to counterfeit and thereby counteract the redemptive work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**³

These two creatures are John’s symbolic fulfillment of Christ’s prediction in **Matthew 24:24** = “For *false Christs* and *false prophets* will arise and will show signs and wonders, so as to **mislead, if possible, even the elect.**”

Revelation 13:3-4

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a **fatal wound**, but the fatal wound had **been healed**. The **whole world** was filled with wonder and **followed the beast**. People **worshiped the dragon** because he had given authority to the beast, and they also **worshiped the beast** and asked, “*Who is like the beast? Who can wage war against it?*”

Revelation 13:5-7

The **beast** was given a mouth to utter **proud words and blasphemies** and to exercise its authority for **forty-two months**. It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander His name and **His dwelling place**: [that is] **those who live in heaven**. It was given power to *wage war against God’s holy people and to conquer them*. And it was given authority over **every tribe, people, language and nation**.

Revelation 13:8

All the inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have **not been** written in **the Lamb’s book of life, the Lamb** who was slain from the creation of the world.

² Note the dragon’s location on the shifting sands of an earthly shore as he sets up his challenge to God’s authority (13: 1). The divine response is the **Lamb securely situated at the top of the heavenly Mount Zion** (14:1).

³ In Rev 13:11-15 a second beast from the earth is introduced as the “evangelist” for the first beast from the sea. This second beast calls all people to worship the sea-beast, using deceptive miracles and persecution to persuade them. After Rev 13 **this second power is never again called a “beast,” but rather is identified as the “false people” who appears with the dragon and the beast in Rev 16:13; 19:20, and 20: 10.**

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This “**beast**” (*therion*) remains the **central character** in the drama of **Rev 13**. All activity focuses on him. He is Satan's primary agent to turn humanity from the Lamb's everlasting gospel; from the worship of the true Creator. Those who worship the beast and receive his mark will also drink the wrath of God in the hour of His judgment: 14:10.

Revelation 13 is God's call to understand the nature of the beast and refuse his spirit wherever it manifests itself in the world. To grasp the meaning of the beast, we must consider **5 characteristics in John's description**:

1. The beast rises from “the sea” (13:1).

In the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic, the **sea** (*thalassa*) was equated with the **abyss** (*abyssos*) which identified the **primeval waters of chaos** (Gen 1:2; 7:11; 8:2; cf. Rev 11:7; 17:8). The sea is the dragon's kingdom and the abode of the demonic powers hostile to God. **In Daniel 7:2-3, 17 the sea stands for the peoples and kingdoms of earth rife with war and in rebellion against God.**

Three times in the Old Testament, God exercised his sovereignty over the waters of the great deep: at **creation** where *God conquered the primeval waters* of chaos; in **Noah's day** when the great deep were His instrument of judgment; and **at the Exodus** when the sea destroyed the armies of Pharaoh (the dragon, Ezekiel 29:3).⁴ On a larger scale the sea symbolized **the turbulent world of the wicked**: “*But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud*” (Isa 57:20).

In the New Testament **the sea** is identically interpreted. Like **the abyss** (Rom 10:7; Rev 9:1) it signifies the **abode of death and the demonic**, thus the disciples' fear the approaching figure on the storm-tossed waves was a demonic apparition. But in the New Testament **the sea is conquered by Christ** (Matt 14:22-33; John 6:16-21). Finally, **like Thanatos and Hades the sea and its demonic inhabitants will be annihilated** (Rev 21:1; 13:1; 17:1, 8, 15). Thus the **beast is a power arising out of the storm-tossed, raging depths of unregenerate humanity where the demonic forces of evil hold sway**.⁵

⁴ Bocher, *NIDNTT*, 3:983-4; s.v. “*thalassa*”; see also the discussion of the sea in Caird, *Revelation*, p. 161. Notice in Rev 15:2 those who gain the victory over this beast stand over a smooth but fiery “sea of glass.” Thus, **John sees the harlot simultaneously sitting on “many waters' and the “scarlet beast” (17:1, 3).**

⁵ In Daniel's symbolic vision the four beasts also arise out of a turbulent, wind-swept *sea* (7:2-3). But later when the angel interprets the symbols of the vision, he declares that the four beasts are four kings or kingdoms who “arise from the *earth*” (7:17). Thus, the sea represents earthly centers of civilization in opposition to God's kingdom.

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- 2. The beast is the embodied incarnation of the dragon. Both** have 7 heads and 10 horns. **Both are red (12:3; cf. 17:3)**, indicating their innate cruelty. **Both** wear crowns of royalty (*diademata*), which are only worn elsewhere in Revelation by Christ when He appears as Lord of lords and King of kings to wage war on the beast (19:12ff.)⁶

Satan wears the 7 crowns on his heads as the 'ruler of this world'. But *when he delegates his authority to the beast* the crowns are on the beast's horns, signifying human kingdoms. Like *Sauron in LOTR*, Satan is **a spirit, a fallen angel** (Luke 10:18). He **needs human agencies through which to manifest himself** and receive humanity's worship. The beast represents those agencies. **The important point is the essential oneness of the dragon and the beast.**

The **beast embodies in humanity the nature of Satan** as Jesus embodied "*the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being*" (Heb 1:3). Christ leads us to the **Father** (John 14:6-10), and the beast imbues humanity with the **spirit of Satan** (Rev 13:4; 2 Thess 2:4; Gen 3:5). **As Jesus Christ and the Father are one, so the dragon and the sea beast are one.**

- 3. The beast is a composite of all four beasts and the little horn in Daniel 7.**

The beast reincarnates all four beasts (kingdoms) of Daniel 7:2-7 who also arose "*from the sea*" (Dan 7:2-3): the **lion, bear, leopard, and a terrifying 4th beast. Together Daniel's four beasts had 7 heads and 10 horns as does the beast of Rev 13.** Revelation's beast takes to himself the prominent attribute of each of his predecessors.

They all share one unifying characteristic: hostility to God emanating from the dragon. This hostility changes in outward expressions throughout history but not in its essence (Daniel 10:13, 20; Rev 17:12-13). John's beast **embodies** the spirit of the Old Testament pagan kingdoms who persecuted the people of God. It is the consummation and continuation of all the ungodly empires which existed before Christ's appearing.⁷

⁶ The dragon and the beast exercise sovereignty over men, but it is a usurped sovereignty lawfully won back by Christ through His death (5:3-9) and ultimately lost completely in the judgment of God (20: 10). **All other crowns in Revelation are *stephanos*.**

⁷ Ezell believed John's composite beast to be "a collage of evil which stalks the end time. Antichrist is legion!" (Ezell, p. 77.) Like Ezell, Hendrikson believed that the beast is more than just one political or religio-political power but rather all anti-Christian systems used by Satan to wage war on the remnant of God's seed. It is the visible manifestation of Satan's spirit in the realm of men. See Hendriksen, pp. 176-77.

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This **beast** also **mirrors the characteristics** of Daniel's "**little horn**".⁸ The correspondence is exact! **Both** have **blasphemous mouths** (Rev 13:5-6; Dan 7:8, 20, 25). **Both war against the saints and overcome them** (Rev 13:7; 11:7; Dan 7:21, 25). The **reign of both** spans the entire "**end time**" period (Rev 13:5; Dan 7:25). The **authority of both is worldwide** (13:7-8; 7:21-26).

In Daniel **7:21-26** the angel explains that the **reign of the "little horn"** is the last and greatest manifestation of evil. It extends from the fall of the 4th beast (Rome) till the 2nd coming and final judgment; when the power of the little horn is "destroyed forever" and "***the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the people of the Most High***" (7:26-27).

In Revelation's **beast unites the multitudes and nations of earth in blasphemous worship of the creature rather than the Creator** (13:4, 7). This deception intensifies into a determined warfare against all those in the Lamb's book. This warfare also culminates in the annihilation of the beast and his followers at the return of Christ (17:13-15; 19:11ff).

4. The beast is a counterfeit parody of Christ's redemptive work; he is a counterfeit savior offering a counterfeit hope of salvation.

As the beast arises we are immediately alerted that **the satanic purpose for its existence is to counterfeit Christ**. Upon the **slain but resurrected Lamb at His ascension**, the Father bestowed **His throne** (Rev 3:21; cf. Eph 1:20-23), **all power** (Rev 5:12-13; cf. John 13:3), and **authority** (Rev 12:10; Matt 28:18).

Likewise, the **dragon grants his beast these same privileges: "his power and his throne and great authority"** (13:2).⁹ The beast is the **viceregent of Satan** among men, even as **Christ represents the Father** to the world (John 14:6-9).

Like Christ, the beast has horns (13:11; 5:6), a **sword**, and **wages war** (13:7, 10; cf. 19:11, 16). **Like Christ** he has **been slain**, and the **same Greek word is used to describe their deaths** (*sphagizo*), which signifies "**slaughtered to death**" (13:3, 8; cf. 5:6). And the **beast also ascends**

⁸ A detailed examination of the use of Dan 7 in Rev 13 is found in: Gregory K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (New York: University Press of America, 1984), pp. 229-48.

⁹ **What Satan here delivers to the beast he once offered to Christ**. As the prince of this world Satan had transported Christ to the top of a high mountain. There, displaying the kingdoms of this world and their glory, Satan tempted Christ: "All these things will I give you, if you fall down and worship me" (Matt 4:9). Luke's gospel records the addition: "for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if you worship before me, it shall all be yours" (Luke 4:6-7, NASB). The words "delivered to me" are significant. **Satan, himself a created being, has no genuine creative power. The beast and the harlot are simply his perversion and degradation of God's creatures and creation.**

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from the abyss of death in **resurrection power** to receive *greater dominion and authority*.

Just as a worldwide remnant gives allegiance to the slain but resurrected Lamb (5:9-10), **the beast's sway is worldwide**; his dominion knows **no national boundaries** but extends over *“every people, tribe, tongue and nation”* as well as the **“rulers of the earth”** (13:7; 17:13-14).

To the beast *“those who dwell on the earth”* **gather in worship**, ascribing to him omnipotence (13:3-4) which **rightfully belong only to the Lord God and His Christ** (15:3-4; 19:15).¹⁰

To escape the wrath of the beast all those who worship him receive **the mark of his ownership** upon their right hand or forehead (13:15-17). This stands in opposition to **the seal of God** placed upon the foreheads of those who follow the Lamb to preserve them from divine wrath (7:1-3).

The **total duration of the beast's authority** is **coterminous** with the entire time of Christ's **two witnesses** (13:7; cf. 11:3) and **God's protection of the woman** in the wilderness: the **symbolic second half of a broken 7** (see Daniel 9:24-27); the length of Christ's own earthly ministry (approximately three and a half years).¹¹

The beast is the 2nd member and focal point of a hellish trinity determined to *convert (or compel) all men to worship his image* in opposition to the work of heaven's Trinity to **restore in men the likeness of Christ**.¹²

¹⁰ Ancient Israel had declared of Yahweh: “Who is like Thee among the gods, O Lord?” (Exodus 15:11). This praise was later echoed in the name of Michael [Who is like God?], who warred with the dragon and conquered him (12:7-9). In bold defiance of this exaltation of God alone, the beast draws men into a worship of himself which leads them to proclaim: “Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?” (13:4). See further comparisons made by Johnson, “Revelation,” EEC 12: 527; Hengstenberg, 2:22-24; and Milligan, *Revelation*, p. 224.

¹¹ Concerning this detailed counterfeiting of Christ's authority and achievements, Ford comments: “The very mark of Antichrist is this endeavor to reenact the mighty works of Christ. While the heart of biblical religion is the *commemoration* of God's unique and unrepeatable acts of redemption, all false religion endeavor to *duplicate* the divine achievements.” (Ford, *Crisis*, 2:562-63 [emphasis supplied]).

¹² Schick captured the deeper meaning of the symbols in his summary of Satan's purposes in welding together this trinity of evil: “Just as God sent his Messiah from heaven to redeem mankind so Satan resurrects a ‘world redeemer’ out of hell to ‘redeem’ mankind from God and His Christ. In the image of a negative imitation of the Messiah of God by the employment of the ‘antichrist’ and his aids, a contrary course in opposition to the history of salvation is unfolded in world history; Satan, who did not succeed in thwarting the work of redemption from the beginning (12:5), now tries to make it senseless, and useless in its final outcome, by taking measures to influence mankind (12: 17). The **interference of this power hostile to God will accompany the Church of Christ like a dark shadow on its way through history till the return of her Lord**” (Schick, *Revelation* 2:17-18).



- 5. The beast is wounded unto death but healed.** In all its particulars Rev 13:2-8, which pictures the enthronement of the beast as the world's savior, a direct challenge to Christ's enthronement in Rev 5:4-14.

These two scenes should be studied together. The focus of both scenes is a slain but *resurrected* Savior.¹³ To highlight this John uses the identical phrase "*as having been slain*" of **both Christ and the beast** in both passages (5:6; 13:3).¹⁴

As the beast rises out of the sea, its "**slain to death**" head already appears healed: "One of the heads of the beast *seemed to have had* a fatal wound, **but the fatal wound had been healed**". This healing occurred **before, not at the conclusion** of the **beast's 42 months of blasphemous reign** on the earth.

This already-healed **death stroke** affirms the **beast (*therion*)** as a **parody of the Lamb (*arnion*)**. Jesus was slain and then, through resurrection power, began His reign over His persecuted but protected, worshipping church (for 1260 days: 1:5-6, 17-18; 5:9; 12:6,14). The beast seeks to counterfeit this sequence. He is slain unto death but rises in resurrection power to initiate his universal rule. Thus, the **world worships him** (verse 4) during the **forty-two months**.

What is intended by this "*slain but alive*" beast? It is important to remember the **beast's power is derived**, his throne and authority were given by the dragon: **He possesses nothing apart from the dragon**. He is the visible manifestation or **incarnation** on earth of the **blasphemous** (self-worshipping) and **persecuting** (God-hating) **spirit of Satan** (13:1; 12:3).

Whatever, therefore, smites the authority and power of the dragon equally smites the beast. To destroy the dragon whom men worship by worshiping the beast is to deal a deadly wound to the beast. Therefore, whatever has befallen the "*ruler of this world*" (John 16:11), is to discover what befell **his human incarnation**.

This **deathblow**, in some genuine sense, **marked the overthrow** of the power and authority of **the dragon and beast**, establishing a rule in opposition to their own. **Christ declared His**

¹³ **This resurrection militates against any interpretation of the beast as a literal person or persons.** Rather it seems to indicate the **beast symbolizes a religious philosophy and/or political ideology which shapes the worldview of any organization or individual who embraces it.** The beast in its final intensification necessarily will have a person or persons as its human head[s], but such a person will not have been literally resurrected from death [Satan has no genuine lifegiving power] nor would he [or they] constitute the totality of what John intended to be symbolized by the beast.

¹⁴ See Hengstenberg, 2:19, who literally translates 13:3 as "and (I saw) one of his heads as killed to death, and the stroke of his death was healed."

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substitutionary death on the Cross was the judgment by which Satan as the “ruler of the world” was cast down (John 12:31). His kingdom of darkness was destroyed through the dying of Christ. Rev 12:9-12 confirms heaven's recognition of this victory as an accomplished fact.

Thus, the “slaughter” of the **beast** (13:3), the “slaughter” of the **Lamb** (5:6, 9), and the **casting down of Satan** (12:9-10) **all coincide at the Cross!** There, **Satan**, the “*ancient serpent*,” **crushed the heel** of the woman's seed; but the **promised Deliverer crushed the serpent's head**. The fatal wound to Satan and his parasitical agent was **inflicted by Christ on the cross**.

By that one victory, Jesus dealt a death-stroke to every system founded on rebellion against God. This **all-sufficient victory** is the **one weapon** by which Christ's people defeat every system of power and oppression which rises up against them from the sea of proud humanity (12:11; 2:10, 13; 1 John 5:4).

Yet the beast rises again, his death blow apparently healed. John warns us that the victory we possess already—in Christ—is not yet visible to the natural eye. The powers of ungodliness are doomed; **their time is short**. But their *visible* destruction awaits the appearing of Christ (17:14; 19:20-21; 1 Cor 15:22-25).

So remember:

1. **Satan is the true source of the beast's life** (13:1-2). The beast represents the visible incarnation(s) of the Satanic spirit, first encountered in Eden (Gen 3:5-6); and includes all agencies under the control of the “*ruler of the world*” who seek to supplant God and silence His people (13:7).
2. A **composite of all the idolatrous powers** in Daniel 7:1-25),¹⁵ **the 7-headed beast, covered with blasphemous names, cannot symbolize just one empire, organization or individual**. While the essential character of the beast remains the same, his composite nature describes a spirit which manifest itself in various forms throughout history.
3. **The beast's influence and authority is worldwide**. “*All who dwell on the earth*” follow **the beast and worship him**, that is, *all whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life* (13:3-4, 7-8). The beast is a counterfeit as universal as the true salvation offered through Christ. His kingdom counterfeits Christ's kingdom: it is not limited in

¹⁵ In the beast is found their predominant characteristics: the proud mouth of the lion (cf. Dan 4:30), the cruelty of a ravaging bear (7:5), the deceptive cunning and swiftness of the leopard (7:6), and the conquering strength of the fourth terrible beast (7:7). The beast also embodies the same intelligent and determined opposition to God, to His laws, and to His people presented in the “little horn” (7:20-25).

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geographical location.

4. The **reign of the resurrected beast is coterminous** with the ministry of **Christ's witnesses** (11:3) and **God's watch-care over His church** (12:14); that is, **from the 1st to the 2nd coming--the whole Christian dispensation from its beginning to its close** (13:5; 17:12-14; 19:20).
5. The **beast is both a political power and a religious power**—in the sense that **he desires worship** (absolute allegiance), and so supplants the primacy of Christ as he promises a false redemption through the creature and his works (13:14-17). He *parodies Christ* as **the second member of a false trinity demanding men's worship** (13:4, 11).

Thus, the beast was **the pagan Roman empire** of John's day--as **preterist scholars** uniformly affirm it to be--and yet it is *obviously more* than Rome. The spirit of the beast can be recognized in the **papal Roman empire** during the terrible persecutions of its corrupt medieval reign, as **historicist interpreters** have unanimously declared—yet *this cannot exhaust its significance*.

As **futurist emphasize**, the **beast stands at the head of a final worldwide confederation of evil** demanding all everywhere yield to it complete political, religious, and economic allegiance, decreeing death for any dissenters (13:14-17). This final attempt to annihilate God's people is the climactic manifestation of the beast. Yet *the beast has existed prior to earth's final crisis*. *“The point is that the beast cannot be limited to either the past or the future.”*¹⁶

As **the human incarnation of Satan (the true antichrist)**, the **beast was already visible during the era of the Apostolic church** (John writes: *“even now many antichrists have come”*): **READ: 1 John 2:18, 22; esp 4:3-4; 2 Thess 2:7.**

The beast is resurrected in history wherever any individual or system of autonomous self-righteous humanity declares itself the true “Center” or hope of humanity. The beast is *“the man of sin”*: the myriad human attempts to cast aside or push to the periphery God's authority and grace. **The beast is Satan's self-worshipping spirit incarnated in proud, rebellious hearts** (9:20-21; 16:14).¹⁷

¹⁶ Johnson, “Revelation,” EBC, 12:535. Concerning the various manifestations of the beast in light of the incarnation, ministry, death, and resurrection of Christ, Wilcock asserts: “All whose hope is not ultimately in the blood of the Lamb have no hope except some human system, to which either expressly or by implication they give the blasphemous name of God (13:1, 6)” (Wilcock, p. 125).

¹⁷ Yates believed the “Man of Sin” in 2 Thessalonians 2 represents the intensification throughout history of mankind's revolt against God. Similarly, **the “antichrist[s]” identified in 1 John 2:18-23 and 4:3-6 points to all**

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Christ promised to be with His disciples *unto the end of the age* (Matt 28:20). Even so, **when-ever one manifestation of the beast is “slain” the essential reality does not perish, but reemerges from the sea of unregenerate mankind in new forms.** Thus, the allusion is maintained in the minds of those who “worship” human pride, power, beauty, or achievements that the works of men are sufficient--and unending (Rev 18:7-8; cf. Dan 4:30; 5:22- 23; Isa 47:10).¹⁸

This antichrist spirit (the beast) is always, overtly or covertly, a *religio-political amalgamation* of human pride that desires the role of God; akin to the idolatrous, ancient empires of **Egypt, Babylon, or Imperial Rome.**

William Milligan, Book of Revelation, p. 225

“The **beast is the embodied spirit of Satan in all its forms.** The influence of the beast **cannot be confined to one person, party, or sect, or age.** It is found in the Church or in the State, in every society, in every family, *or even in every heart,* for **whoever is ruled by the pride and power of man, there 'the beast resides.'”**

In light of the crucified and risen Savior (Acts 4:12), humanity has only 2 options: to hope in the redemptive work of the *Creator* and worship Him alone (14:7), or to hope in the claims and power of some extension of the *creature* (13:12). **Both are religious in nature, for when the great God goes, invariably lesser “gods” come—and they are legion** (18:2; 9:20; 3:17). One brings **divine vindication** and the **gift of eternal life** (13:8; 14:7-10; 16:19; 20:15; 20:4; 21:6-8; 22:14-15); and the other **divine judgments unto eternal death** (14:9-10).

philosophies and false Christian doctrines championed by human systems in opposition to Christ alone as Savior and Lord. Yates (pg. 44) noted these systems are usually backed by the weapons of coercion and persecution.

¹⁸ Ezell's remarks suggest a warning against oversimplifying the beast into just one historical manifestation of evil and thus being ignorant (and therefore vulnerable) to its deceptive spirit seeking to secure allegiance to the dragon through other avenues: **“How often we have thought that the removal of a particular evil person or group would remove evil itself, only to discover that evil has the resilience to raise [resurrect] its ugly head in another form and place. It is not flesh and blood against which we contend, but principalities and powers. The removal of those who are promoting evil will not remove the evil. Evil will only be thwarted for a moment and then it will manifest itself in another form”** (Ezell, *Revelation on Revelation*, p. 79).