

Revelation 13:1-10

Verse 1

And he stood on the sand of the seashore – There is a textual variant in this verse. Some manuscripts read “*And I stood*” referring to John. Others read “*and he stood*” referring to the dragon (Satan). Neither reading affects the understanding of the passage. Contextually it seems best to understand the dragon as the one standing and calling forth his general. Many understand the “*sand of the seashore*” to be a reference to Israel. The sea is sometimes a symbol of the Gentile nations (17:15). It is also used as a symbol of the “abyss” as in Isaiah 27:1.

A beast having ten horns and seven heads – This parallels Daniel’s description of the fourth kingdom in Daniel 7:7-8. The 10 horns represent 10 rulers. In Daniel 7:8 three of the horns are pulled out which evidently leaves the seven heads.

On his horns were ten diadems – This represents governmental authority. The beast will rule by force.

On his heads were blasphemous names – They will speak in opposition to Israel and her God.

Verse 2

A the beast which I saw – The antichrist. **Was like a leopard* – Swift with fierce cruelty. **His feet were like those of a bear* – Strong and brutal. **His mouth like the mouth of a lion* – Strength and majesty, a powerful speaker. The beast is the antichrist. Note the parallel kingdoms in Daniel 7: **The lion* – Babylon **The bear* – Medo-Persia **The leopard* – The Alexandrian Empire. The fourth kingdom, the revived Roman Empire, will be a combination of all three. The beast will represent all these qualities.

And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority – Antichrist will receive his power and position from Satan. Satan tried to offer Jesus the same position in Luke 4:5-8 in exchange for being worshipped.

Verse 3

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed – Since the heads represent nations, some believe this represents the dead Roman Empire which antichrist will miraculously revive. Others believe this refers to the beast himself and he will die and be raised from the dead in a Satanic effort to duplicate the death and resurrection of Christ.

And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast – Unbelievers during this second half of the tribulation will be deceived by the healing of this fatal wound and will pledge their allegiance to the beast.

Verse 4

And they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority to

the beast – Satan will be recognized as the one who empowers the beast and will be worshipped as god.

And they worshipped the beast saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?” – The antichrist will be viewed as invincible. His power elicits worldwide admiration.

Verse 5

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies – Note the parallel in Daniel 11:36-39. The beast will have profound oratorical abilities and will use them to speak against God and his followers.

And authority to act for forty-two months – The beast arises and acts during the final 3 ½ years of the tribulation.

Verse 6

And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God – Note Daniel 7:25

To blaspheme His name – By claiming to be God (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

And his tabernacle – By desecrating God’s earthly tabernacle and speaking against God’s heavenly dwelling.

Those who dwell in heaven – The inhabitants of the heavenly tabernacle.

Verse 7

And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them – Note Daniel 7:21. The origin of his power is Satan. Many believers will be martyred during this time.

And authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him – Total, worldwide domination by the antichrist will mark the final 3½ years of the tribulation.

Verse 8

And all who dwell on the earth will worship him – All unbelievers will worship the beast.

Everyone whose name has not been written in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain from the foundation of the world – “*From the foundation of the world*” can modify either “written” or “slain.” The Greek word order suggests the latter.

Verse 9

If anyone has an ear let him hear – All should pay attention, especially those living during this time.

Verse 10

If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes – This refers to antichrist, his followers, and during the present period some of the saints.

If anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed – Those who kill during the tribulation will face the same fate.

Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints – Their security and assurance that God will execute final justice and reward.