

Revelation 13:1-18



The text – Revelation 13:1-18

1. As we study the second half of the book of Revelation, and specifically Revelation 13 in which we read about a dragon and two beasts (an evil trinity), review some of the characteristics of “apocalyptic” literature. What type of literature are we reading when we read Revelation? What are some of the main characteristics?
2. The beast from the sea (13:1-8) is like Jesus in some ways (as an imitator) and unlike Jesus in other ways. Discuss the characteristics of this beast.
3. The words of Revelation 13:9-10 are at the heart of this chapter, linking the descriptions of the beast from the sea and the beast from the earth. What is the meaning of these words? What is the main point that John’s readers need to understand?
4. The beast from the earth (13:11-18) is also like Jesus and God’s Spirit in some ways (by imitation) and not like Jesus or God’s Spirit in other ways. Discuss the characteristics of this beast.
5. There are many views as to what the number 666 means. What are some of those possibilities? What do you understand it to mean?

The Scriptures – Revelation 13:1-18 as a portion of the Scriptures

6. John’s beastly visions draw their imagery from various portions of the OT Scriptures (including Job 40-41). However the most important OT passage to be aware of is Daniel 7:1-14. Read this passage, comparing and contrasting Daniel’s vision with that of John in Revelation 13.
7. The words of Revelation 13:10 are drawn from Jeremiah 15:1-3. Jeremiah wrote these words at a time when Israel was under God’s judgement, faced with destruction by Babylonian armies, and being taken into exile out of the land of Israel. Why did John reuse these words? John uses them in quite a different way to Jeremiah. What does John mean by them in contrast to Jeremiah?

Our lives – walking the way of Jesus in response to Revelation 13:1-18 as a portion of the Scriptures

8. What do you need to be patient about? What do you need to endure? Talk about some areas of life that require you to hold on to God?
9. John characterises the Roman empire, and other world empires, as beastly. What are some of the empires of today? What is beastly about them?
10. In the face of greed, violence, and deception in today’s world, how should we live? What can we do as a church to help you live faithfully and patiently?