

Studying the book of Revelation (16)

Chapters 12 and 13 @

Concord Community Church on 03/8/2025

Sermon Title: "Victory in the Midst of the War"

Text: Revelation 12:1–17

Theme: God's people are caught in a cosmic conflict, but ultimate victory is guaranteed through Christ.

Introduction: Revelation 12 is one of the most vivid and symbolic chapters in the entire book. It shifts the focus from the judgments of God on the earth to a panoramic view of spiritual warfare between God and Satan—a battle that stretches across heaven and earth, past and future. It gives us behind-the-scenes insight into the war that underlies history itself.

Let's divide this message into **three major sections**:

1. The Woman, the Child, and the Dragon (vv. 1–6)
2. War in Heaven (vv. 7–12)
3. War on Earth (vv. 13–17)

1. The Woman, the Child, and the Dragon (vv. 1–6)

The Vision: *"A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head."* – **Revelation 12:1**

- **The Woman** represents *God's covenant people*, Israel and possibly the faithful remnant, both Old and New Testament.
 - The imagery recalls **Genesis 37:9–11**, where Joseph dreams of the sun, moon, and stars symbolizing Israel.
 - This woman is *pregnant* and in *pain of childbirth*, representing God's people awaiting the coming of the Messiah (cf. Isaiah 66:7-9).

The Child: *"She gave birth to a son, a male child, who 'will rule all the nations with an iron scepter.'"* – **Revelation 12:5a**

- This is clearly **Jesus Christ**, the promised Messiah.
- The quote is from **Psalms 2:9**, speaking of the rule of the Messiah.

The Dragon: *"Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns..."* – **Revelation 12:3**

- The dragon is identified later as **Satan** (v. 9), the arch-enemy of God.
 - The seven heads and ten horns symbolize dominion and completeness of evil power.
- He seeks to devour the child as soon as He is born—paralleling **Herod's attempt** to kill Jesus in **Matthew 2:13–18**.

Application:

- The birth of Christ was not just a manger scene—it was a **cosmic battle**.
- Satan has always tried to stop God's redemptive plan, but he **cannot succeed**.

2. War in Heaven (vv. 7–12)

The Cosmic Battle: *“Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon...”* – **Revelation 12:7**

- The Archangel **Michael**, defender of God's people (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1), leads heavenly armies against Satan.
- The result: **Satan is cast out** of heaven.

The Accuser is Defeated: *“For the accuser of our brothers and sisters... has been hurled down.”* – **Revelation 12:10**

- Satan is described as the one who *accuses* believers (cf. **Job 1:9–11**, **Zechariah 3:1–2**).
- But now, through the death and resurrection of Christ, he has **no place** to accuse the saints!

“They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.” – **Revelation 12:11**

Three Keys to Overcoming Satan:

1. **The Blood of the Lamb** – Our ultimate victory rests in Christ's finished work (John 19:30, Colossians 2:14–15).
2. **The Word of Our Testimony** – Bold confession of faith (Romans 10:9, Matthew 10:32).
3. **Faithful unto Death** – A willingness to suffer for Christ (Philippians 1:29, Revelation 2:10).

Application:

- We are **not powerless** against the enemy.
- Spiritual victory is rooted in **Christ's work**, our **witness**, and **faithful perseverance**.

3. War on Earth (vv. 13–17)

The Dragon's Rage:

“When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman...” – Revelation 12:13

- Satan, having lost his place in heaven, focuses his wrath on **God's people** on earth.
- God provides protection (v. 14: “the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle...” cf. **Exodus 19:4, Isaiah 40:31**).

The Remnant Attacked:

“Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against... those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus.” – **Revelation 12:17**

- The **final verse** reminds us that believers will face intense spiritual warfare.
- This "remnant" is the **faithful church**, the saints of the New Covenant.

Theological Insights

- This chapter is a **theological drama** of salvation history.
- It affirms that:
 - Satan is real, powerful, and active.
 - But his power is **limited** and his **defeat is sure**.
 - God protects His people even in persecution.
 - Christ's work is central to all victory.

Practical Applications

1. **Do not fear spiritual warfare** – Satan is defeated. You fight from victory, not for victory (Romans 8:37–39).
2. **Stand firm in your testimony** – Let your faith speak louder than your fear (1 Peter 3:15).
3. **Trust God's protection** – Though persecuted, you are not abandoned (2 Corinthians 4:8–9).
4. **Be alert and resist the devil** – Walk in holiness and Armor yourself with truth (Ephesians 6:10–18; James 4:7).

Conclusion: Revelation 12 reminds us that we are not spectators—we are **soldiers in a spiritual war**. But we are **not alone**, and we are **not without hope**. The Child has conquered, the accuser has been cast down, and the saints are sealed.

“Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” – **1 Corinthians 15:57**

Sermon Title: “The Rise of the Beasts: Deception and Dominion in the End Times”

Text: Revelation 13:1–18

Theme: Satan empowers a counterfeit system to oppose God, but the saints are called to wisdom, endurance, and unwavering faith.

Introduction

Revelation 13 is one of the most sobering chapters in the Bible. It introduces us to **two beasts**—one from the sea and one from the earth. These two figures represent Satan’s **final rebellion** against God and His people through **political and religious deception**. This chapter is a **dark mirror** of Revelation 12, where Satan was cast out of heaven. Now, he wages war on earth using these two agents.

Let us explore the chapter in **three parts**:

1. The First Beast: Political Power and Persecution (vv. 1–10)
2. The Second Beast: Religious Deception and Idolatry (vv. 11–15)
3. The Mark of the Beast: Loyalty and Allegiance (vv. 16–18)

1. The First Beast: Political Power and Persecution

Revelation 13:1–10

The Beast from the Sea:

“And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and blasphemous names on its heads.” – Revelation 13:1

- The **sea** often represents chaos and the nations (Isaiah 17:12; Revelation 17:15).
- The beast mirrors the **dragon** in Revelation 12:3, showing it is empowered by Satan.
- The **ten horns and seven heads** echo the vision in **Daniel 7**, connecting this beast with historic and future **world empires**.
- **Blasphemy** defines its speech and rule—it challenges the very authority and name of God.

“The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.” – Revelation 13:2

Satanic Imitation:

- This is a **counterfeit trinity**:
 - The **Dragon** (Satan) imitates the Father.
 - The **Beast from the Sea** imitates Christ (receives a mortal wound and is "resurrected").

- The **Beast from the Earth** imitates the Holy Spirit (promotes worship).

“One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed.” – Revelation 13:3

- This **fake resurrection** deceives the world into worshiping the beast.
- **2 Thessalonians 2:9–10**: *“The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders...”*

Persecution of the Saints:

“It was given power to wage war against God’s holy people and to conquer them.” – Revelation 13:7

- The beast has **temporary authority** over the saints (cf. Daniel 7:21, Revelation 6:11).
- Yet, God allows it **only for a time** (cf. Revelation 13:5 – “forty-two months”).

Call to Perseverance:

“This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God’s people.” – Revelation 13:10

2. The Second Beast: Religious Deception and Idolatry

Revelation 13:11–15

The Beast from the Earth:

“Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon.” – Revelation 13:11

- This second beast is a **false prophet** (see Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10).
- **Two horns like a lamb** – it appears gentle, even “Christian” in character.
- **Speaks like a dragon** – its words are inspired by Satan.

Deceptive Miracles and Worship:

“It performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to the earth in full view of the people.” – Revelation 13:13

- Like Elijah (1 Kings 18), but counterfeit.
- Like the magicians in Egypt who mimicked Moses (Exodus 7–8).

“It deceived the inhabitants of the earth. It ordered them to set up an image in honour of the beast...” – Revelation 13:14

- This is the **revival of idolatry** under a new form—global and deceptive.

- Image worship parallels **Nebuchadnezzar's image** in Daniel 3, where refusal meant death.

“The second beast was given power to give breath to the image... and cause all who refused to worship it to be killed.” – Revelation 13:15

- Religious persecution intensifies under false worship and totalitarian religion.

3. The Mark of the Beast: Loyalty and Allegiance

Revelation 13:16–18

Economic Control and Spiritual Choice:

“It also forced all people... to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads...” – Revelation 13:16

- This is a **counterfeit of God's seal** in Revelation 7:3 and 14:1.
- The **mark** is not merely economic—it's **spiritual allegiance**.

“...so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark...” – Revelation 13:17

- In the end times, those who refuse the beast's authority will face **economic isolation** and persecution.

Number of the Beast:

“This calls for wisdom. Let the one who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: 666.” – Revelation 13:18

- **666** falls short of the perfect number **7**—it symbolizes the **ultimate imperfection**.
- It represents **man exalting himself as god** (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:4).
- It is **humanism deified**, the worship of power, control, and fleshly dominance.

Theological Summary

- **Satan imitates** God to deceive the world.
- **Political power** (first beast) and **religious deception** (second beast) work together to enforce a global rebellion.
- The **mark** symbolizes where one's **allegiance** lies: with God or with the world.
- God allows tribulation, but He calls His saints to **endurance, wisdom, and faithfulness**.

Practical Applications

1. **Stay Spiritually Alert**
 - Do not be swayed by miracles, power, or popularity. (Matthew 24:24)

- Measure everything by **God's Word**, not signs and wonders.
- 2. **Resist Worldly Conformity**
 - The mark of the beast is about **conforming** to a system that rejects God.
 - Romans 12:2: *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world..."*
- 3. **Endure in Faith**
 - Even when isolated, persecuted, or marginalized.
 - Revelation 2:10: *"Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."*
- 4. **Declare Your Allegiance Now**
 - If you can't stand for Christ now, you won't stand then.
 - Luke 9:26: *"Whoever is ashamed of Me... the Son of Man will be ashamed of them..."*

Conclusion

Revelation 13 is a warning and a call. Satan's system will rise in strength, but it is a **short-lived kingdom**. God's people are not to fear but to **stand firm**.

"The one who endures to the end will be saved." – **Matthew 24:13**

Let us pledge our allegiance not to a system, a government, or a worldly religion—but to the **Lamb who was slain** (Revelation 5:12) and **the King who is coming** (Revelation 19:16).