

## **Should we be afraid of the number 666? (Rev 13:18)**

The number 666 is found in Rev 13 is a number that has frightened many people. What does the number mean? And what does the number 666 symbolize?

The Devil knows that one day God will throw him in a lake of fire along with his angels, but until that day arrives, Satan is coming after us with everything he's got.

The Apostle John describes him in Rev 12. In verse 9, John says, "He is that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan." Verse 10 says, "He accuses our brethren."

Verse 17 talks about how "The Devil makes war with those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus."

Verse 12 tells us, since Satan knows that his time is short, he's filled with fury and in the next chapter he comes up with a plan. He is going to work through 2 forces (symbolized as two beasts) to stop Christianity

### **I. The Sea Beast: Rev 13**

The Sea beast is described as having 10 horns and 7 heads. The heads have blasphemous names.

Verse 2 says it's made up of animal parts. It looks like a leopard; it has the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion.

Daniel 7 mentions something similar, but instead of having one beast, he has 4 beasts. If you study the passage carefully you will find that Daniel is describing 4 powerful kingdoms.

The Babylonian empire, the Persian Empire, the Greek empire, and finally the Roman empire which was the kingdom during the existence of the church. All of these kingdoms have one thing in common. They persecuted God's people. My conclusion is that the sea beast in Revelation symbolizes the most evil, Satanic empire of all, the Roman empire.

### **II. Land Beast: Verse 11**

This beast does not look as scary. It only has 2 horns, like a lamb. Probably 2 little stubs, but it spoke like the dragon. The land beast is trying to get everyone to worship the sea beast.

He deceives by performing great signs, like making fire come down from heaven. What does this beast symbolize? My best guess is this. The land beast symbolizes organizations or the groups of people responsible for enforcing emperor worship.

Jesus warned in Matt 24:24, "'For false Christ's and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

The land beast is all about promoting a counterfeit religion and those who (in verse 15) did not worship the sea beast were killed.

### **3. Mark of the Beast: (vs. 16)**

Next, we learn that the land beast starts branding people.

In context, the mark of the beast is to counter act God's seal placed on the faithful in chapter 7. Not one single Christian was forgotten. Now, Satan will put his seal on people.

Being marked on the forehead indicated that their thoughts were being affected. Being marked on the hand indicates that their actions were also being affected.

The mark is not literal. It simply symbolizes the beast promising protection. But as you know the devil is good at making promises He cannot deliver.

Initially the beast seemed to deliver on his promises. For instance, in verse 17, those with the mark could buy and sell while those without the mark were not. Satan is going to use economic pressure.

### **4. The Meaning of 666:**

What is the meaning of the number 666 found in verse 18?

The first clue is found in the phrase "the number is that of a man." That tells me, no matter how powerful someone is or appears to be, no one can stand against God.

The second clue is the number given to the man. 666. The number 6 symbolizes evil, imperfection and failure. The number 7 on the other hand symbolizes perfection. The nature of the beast has triple imperfection 6's. It stands for failure upon failure upon failure. What did this mean for early Christians? Anyone or anything that opposes our Lord will ultimately fail.

### **5. Does the Devil still use the sea beast and the land beast today?**

Does he still use the government to carry out what is evil? Does he still promote false religion?

When Paul was writing about some men who claimed to be Apostles of Christ, he told his readers, "don't be amazed, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light." (2 Cor 11:14)

Eph 4:14 says, "don't be gullible and except everything you hear as being truth." Make sure that what you believe comes from the Bible.

### **Close:**

God will always triumph over Evil. The # of the beast is failure upon failure, upon failure.