

- Song 55 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

13:1, 2, 11, 15-17

Understanding the identity of the beasts of Revelation chapter 13 helps us to avoid fearing them or following them with admiration as mankind in general does.

- (Revelation 13:1, 2) And it stood still on the sand of the sea. And I saw a wild beast ascending out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns ten diadems, but on its heads blasphemous names. 2 Now the wild beast that I saw was like a leopard, but its feet were like those of a bear, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave to the beast its power and its throne and great authority.
- (Revelation 13:11) Then I saw another wild beast ascending out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb, but it began speaking like a dragon.
- (Revelation 13:15-17) And it was permitted to give breath to the image of the wild beast, so that the image of the wild beast should both speak and cause to be killed all those who refuse to worship the image of the wild beast. 16 It puts under compulsion all people—the small and the great, the rich and the poor, the free and the slaves—that these should be marked on their right hand or on their forehead, 17 and that nobody can buy or sell except a person having the mark, the name of the wild beast or the number of its name.

Match each beast with what it represents

BEASTS

The dragon.—Re 13:1, ftn.

A wild beast with ten horns and seven heads.—Re 13:1, 2

A wild beast with two horns like a lamb.—Re 13:11

The image of the wild beast.—Re 13:15

POWERS

- The Anglo-American World Power
- The League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations
- Satan the Devil
- All governments opposed to God

Re 13:1, 2—The dragon gives authority to a seven-headed, ten-horned wild beast (w12 6/15 8 ¶6)

(Revelation 13:1, 2) 13 And it stood still on the sand of the sea. And I saw a wild beast ascending out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns ten diadems, but on its heads blasphemous names. 2 Now the wild beast that I saw was like a leopard, but its feet were like those of a bear, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave to the beast its power and its throne and great authority.

*** w12 6/15 pp. 8-9 par. 6 Jehovah Is “a Revealer of Secrets” ***

6 At the close of the first century C.E., the resurrected Jesus gave the apostle John a series of stunning visions. (Rev. 1:1) In one of them, John saw the Devil, represented as a dragon, standing on the shore of a vast sea. (Read Revelation 13:1, 2.) John also saw a strange beast rise from that sea and receive great authority from the Devil. An angel later indicates to John that the seven heads of a scarlet beast, which is an image of the beast of Revelation 13:1, represent “seven kings,” or governments. (Rev. 13:14, 15; 17:3, 9, 10) At the time of John’s writing, five of those had fallen, one was currently in power, and one had “not yet arrived.” What is the identity of those kingdoms, or world powers? Let us consider each of the heads of the beast described in Revelation. We will also see how the writings of Daniel added detailed insights into many of these kingdoms, sometimes centuries before they came into existence.

- (Revelation 1:1) A revelation by Jesus Christ, which God gave him, to show his slaves the things that must shortly take place. And he sent his angel and presented it in signs through him to his slave John,
- (Revelation 13:1, 2) And it stood still on the sand of the sea. And I saw a wild beast ascending out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns ten diadems, but on its heads blasphemous names. 2 Now the wild beast that I saw was like a leopard, but its feet were like those of a bear, and its mouth was like a lion’s mouth. And the dragon gave to the beast its power and its throne and great authority.
- (Revelation 13:1) And it stood still on the sand of the sea. And I saw a wild beast ascending out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns ten

diadems, but on its heads blasphemous names.

- (Revelation 13:14, 15) It misleads those who dwell on the earth, because of the signs that it was permitted to perform in the sight of the wild beast, while it tells those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the wild beast that had the sword-stroke and yet revived. 15 And it was permitted to give breath to the image of the wild beast, so that the image of the wild beast should both speak and cause to be killed all those who refuse to worship the image of the wild beast.
- (Revelation 17:3) And he carried me away in the power of the spirit into a wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet-colored wild beast that was full of blasphemous names and that had seven heads and ten horns.
- (Revelation 17:9, 10) “This calls for a mind that has wisdom: The seven heads mean seven mountains, where the woman sits on top. 10 And there are seven kings: Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet arrived; but when he does arrive, he must remain a short while.

Re 13:11, 15—A two-horned wild beast gives life to the image of the first wild beast (re 194 ¶26; 195 ¶30-31)

(Revelation 13:11) 11 Then I saw another wild beast ascending out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb, but it began speaking like a dragon.

(Revelation 13:15) 15 And it was permitted to give breath to the image of the wild beast, so that the image of the wild beast should both speak and cause to be killed all those who refuse to worship the image of the wild beast.

*** re chap. 28 p. 194 par. 26 Contending With Two Ferocious Beasts ***

26 What can it be? The Anglo-American World Power—the same as the seventh head of the first wild beast but in a special role! Isolating it in the vision as a separate wild beast helps us to see more clearly how it acts independently on the world stage. This figurative two-horned wild beast is made up of two coexisting, independent, but cooperating political powers. Its two horns “like a lamb” suggest that it makes itself out to be mild and inoffensive, with an enlightened form of government to which all the world should turn. But it speaks “as a dragon” in that it uses pressure and threats and even outright violence wherever its version of rulership is not accepted. It has not encouraged submission to God’s Kingdom under the rule of the Lamb of God but, rather, to the interests of Satan, the great dragon. It has promoted nationalistic divisions and hatreds that add up to worshipping the first wild beast.

*** re chap. 28 p. 195 pars. 30-31 Contending With Two Ferocious Beasts ***

30 The outworking of history identifies this image as the organization proposed, promoted, and supported by Britain and the United States and known initially as the League of Nations. Later, in Revelation chapter 17, it will appear under a different symbol, that of a living, breathing scarlet-colored wild beast having an independent existence. This international body ‘speaks,’ in that it makes boastful claims to be the only one able to bring peace and security to mankind. But in reality it has become a forum for member nations to exchange verbal tirades and insults. It has threatened with ostracism, or a living death, any nation or people that does not bow to its authority. The League of Nations actually expelled nations that failed to abide by its ideologies. At the onset of the great tribulation, militaristic “horns” of this image of the wild beast will fulfill a devastating role.—Revelation 7:14; 17:8, 16.

31 Since World War II, the image of the wild beast—now manifested as the United Nations organization—has already killed in a literal way. For example, in 1950 a UN force took the field in the war between North Korea and South Korea. The UN force, along with the South Koreans, killed an estimated 1,420,000 North Koreans and Chinese. Similarly, from 1960 to 1964, United Nations armies were active in the Congo (Kinshasa). Moreover, world leaders, including popes Paul VI and John Paul II, have continued to affirm that this image is man’s last and best hope for peace. If mankind fails to serve it, they insist, the human race will destroy itself. They thus figuratively cause to be killed all humans who refuse to go along with the image and worship it.—Deuteronomy 5:8, 9.

- Paragraph 30
- (Revelation 17:1-18) One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me: “Come, I will show you the judgment on the great prostitute who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality, and earth’s inhabitants were made drunk with the wine of her sexual immorality.” 3 And he carried me away in the power of the spirit into a wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet-colored wild beast that was full of blasphemous names and that had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and she was adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, and she had in her hand a golden cup that was full of disgusting things and the unclean things of her sexual immorality. 5 On her forehead was written a name, a mystery: “Babylon the Great, the mother of the prostitutes and of the disgusting things of the earth.” 6 And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the holy ones and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. Well,

on seeing her I was greatly amazed. 7 So the angel said to me: "Why is it that you were amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the wild beast that is carrying her and that has the seven heads and the ten horns: 8 The wild beast that you saw was, but is not, and yet is about to ascend out of the abyss, and it is to go off into destruction. And the inhabitants of the earth—those whose names have not been written in the scroll of life from the founding of the world—will be amazed when they see how the wild beast was, but is not, and yet will be present. 9 "This calls for a mind that has wisdom: The seven heads mean seven mountains, where the woman sits on top. 10 And there are seven kings: Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet arrived; but when he does arrive, he must remain a short while. 11 And the wild beast that was but is not, it is also an eighth king, but it springs from the seven, and it goes off into destruction. 12 "The ten horns that you saw mean ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they do receive authority as kings for one hour with the wild beast. 13 These have one thought, so they give their power and authority to the wild beast. 14 These will battle with the Lamb, but because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb will conquer them. Also, those with him who are called and chosen and faithful will do so." 15 He said to me: "The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is sitting, mean peoples and crowds and nations and tongues. 16 And the ten horns that you saw and the wild beast, these will hate the prostitute and will make her devastated and naked, and they will eat up her flesh and completely burn her with fire. 17 For God put it into their hearts to carry out his thought, yes, to carry out their one thought by giving their kingdom to the wild beast, until the

words of God will have been accomplished. 18 And the woman whom you saw means the great city that has a kingdom over the kings of the earth."

- (Revelation 7:14) So right away I said to him: "My lord, you are the one who knows." And he said to me: "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
- (Revelation 17:8) The wild beast that you saw was, but is not, and yet is about to ascend out of the abyss, and it is to go off into destruction. And the inhabitants of the earth—those whose names have not been written in the scroll of life from the founding of the world—will be amazed when they see how the wild beast was, but is not, and yet will be present.
- (Revelation 17:16) And the ten horns that you saw and the wild beast, these will hate the prostitute and will make her devastated and naked, and they will eat up her flesh and completely burn her with fire.
- Paragraph 31
- (Deuteronomy 5:8, 9) "You must not make for yourself a carved image or a form like anything that is in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. 9 You must not bow down to them nor be led to serve them, for I, Jehovah your God, am a God who requires exclusive devotion, bringing punishment for the error of fathers upon sons, upon the third generation and upon the fourth generation of those who hate me,

Re 13:16, 17—Do not accept the mark of the wild beast (w09 2/15 4 ¶2)

(Revelation 13:16, 17) 16 It puts under compulsion all people—the small and the great, the rich and the poor, the free and the slaves—that these should be marked on their right hand or on their forehead, **17** and that nobody can buy or sell except a person having the mark, the name of the wild beast or the number of its name.

*** w09 2/15 p. 4 par. 2 Highlights From the Book of Revelation—II ***

13:16, 17. Despite the hardships we may encounter in carrying out such everyday activities as ‘buying or selling,’ we should not allow ourselves to be pressured into letting the wild beast rule our lives. Accepting ‘the mark of the wild beast in our hand or upon our forehead’ would amount to permitting the wild beast to control our actions or affect our thinking.

Digging for Spiritual Gems:

Re 16:13, 14—How will the nations be gathered for “the war of the great day of God the Almighty”? (w09 2/15 4 ¶5)

(Revelation 16:13, 14) 13 And I saw three unclean inspired expressions that looked like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the wild beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. **14** They are, in fact, expressions inspired by demons and they perform signs, and they go out to the kings of the entire inhabited earth, to gather them together to the war of the great day of God the Almighty.

*** w09 2/15 p. 4 par. 5 Highlights From the Book of Revelation—II ***

16:13-16. “Unclean inspired expressions” symbolize demonic propaganda intended to ensure that the kings of the earth are not swayed by the pouring out of the seven bowls of God’s anger but instead are maneuvered into opposition to Jehovah.—Matt. 24:42, 44.

Re 16:21—What message will we no doubt declare just prior to the end of Satan’s world? (w15 7/15 16 ¶9)

(Revelation 16:21) 21 Then great hailstones, each about the weight of a talent, fell from heaven on the people, and the people blasphemed God because of the plague of hail, for the plague was unusually great.

*** w15 7/15 p. 16 par. 9 “Your Deliverance Is Getting Near”! ***

9 This will not be the time to preach the “good news of the Kingdom.” That time will have passed. The time for “the end” will have come! (Matt. 24:14) No doubt God’s people will proclaim a hard-hitting judgment message. This may well involve a declaration announcing that Satan’s wicked world is about to come to its complete end. The Bible likens this message to hailstones when it says: “Great hailstones, each about the weight of a talent, fell from heaven on the people, and the people blasphemed God because of the plague of hail, for the plague was unusually great.”—Rev. 16:21.

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week's Bible reading?

Bible Reading:) Re 16:1-16 (th study 10)
(4 min. or less) •

(Revelation 16:1-16) 16 And I heard a loud voice out of the sanctuary say to the seven angels: "Go and pour out the seven bowls of the anger of God on the earth."

2 The first one went off and poured out his bowl on the earth. And a hurtful and malignant ulcer afflicted the people who had the mark of the wild beast and who were worshipping its image.

3 The second one poured out his bowl into the sea. And it became blood like that of a dead man, and every living creature died, yes, the things in the sea.

4 The third one poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water. And they became blood. 5 I heard the angel over the waters say: "You, the One who is and who was, the loyal One, are righteous, for you have issued these judgments, 6 because they poured out the blood of holy ones and of prophets, and you have given them blood to drink; they deserve it." 7 And I heard the altar say: "Yes, Jehovah God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments."

8 The fourth one poured out his bowl on the sun, and to the sun it was granted to scorch the people with fire. 9 And the people were scorched by the great heat, but they blasphemed the name of God, who has the

authority over these plagues, and they did not repent and give glory to him.

10 The fifth one poured out his bowl on the throne of the wild beast. And its kingdom became darkened, and they began to gnaw their tongues because of their pain, 11 but they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their ulcers, and they did not repent of their works.

12 The sixth one poured out his bowl on the great river Eu·phra'tes, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the rising of the sun.

13 And I saw three unclean inspired expressions that looked like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the wild beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 They are, in fact, expressions inspired by demons and they perform signs, and they go out to the kings of the entire inhabited earth, to gather them together to the war of the great day of God the Almighty.

15 "Look! I am coming as a thief. Happy is the one who stays awake and keeps his outer garments, so that he may not walk naked and people look upon his shamefulness."

16 And they gathered them together to the place that is called in Hebrew Armageddon.

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

• **First Return Visit Video: (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.**

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 21

• Maintain Your Neutrality: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video Neutrality in Thought and Action. Then ask the question, How can you remain neutral regarding social issues or governmental policies? Next play the video Maintain Neutrality at Public Events. Then ask the question, How can you prepare for situations that may test your neutral stand?

Neutrality in Thought and Action. Then ask the question,

How can you remain neutral regarding social issues or governmental policies?

Next play the video Maintain Neutrality at Public Events. Then ask the question,

How can you prepare for situations that may test your neutral stand?

• First Return Visit: (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. (th study 2)

○○○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: What effect can the love of money and possessions have on our happiness?

Scripture: 1Ti 6:9, 10

Link: What are the benefits of maintaining a positive attitude?

- (1 Timothy 6:9, 10) 9 But those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and harmful desires that plunge men into destruction and ruin. 10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains.

• First Return Visit: (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then introduce and discuss (but do not play) the video What Happens at a Bible Study? (th study 11)

○○○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

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Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)**Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)**

1st chap. 95

(Matthew 19:1-15) When Jesus had finished speaking these things, he departed from Gal'i-lee and came to the borders of Ju-de'a across the Jordan. 2 Also, large crowds followed him, and he cured them there. 3 And Pharisees came to him intent on testing him, and they asked: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on every sort of grounds?" 4 In reply he said: "Have you not read that the one who created them from the beginning made them male and female 5 and said: 'For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh'? 6 So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together, let no man put apart." 7 They said to him: "Why, then, did Moses direct giving a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her?" 8 He said to them: "Out of regard for your hard-heartedness, Moses made the concession to you of divorcing your wives, but that has not been the case from the beginning. 9 I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the grounds of sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery." 10 The disciples said to him: "If that is the situation of a man with his wife, it is not advisable to marry." 11 He said to them: "Not all men make room for the saying, but only those who have the gift. 12 For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs on account of the Kingdom of the heavens. Let the one who can make room for it make room for it." 13 Then young children were brought to him for him to place his hands on them and offer prayer, but the disciples reprimanded them. 14 Jesus, however, said: "Let the young children alone, and do not try to stop them from coming to me, for the Kingdom of the heavens belongs to such ones." 15 And he placed his hands on them and departed from there.

(Mark 10:1-16) From there he got up and came to the borders of Ju-de'a across the Jordan, and again crowds gathered to him. As he was accustomed to do, he again began teaching them. 2 And Pharisees approached, intent on testing him, and they asked whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife. 3 He answered them: "What did Moses command you?" 4 They said: "Moses allowed the writing of a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her." 5 But Jesus said to them: "Out of regard for your hard-heartedness, he wrote this commandment for you. 6 However, from the beginning of creation, 'He made them male and female. 7 For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother, 8 and the two will be one flesh,' so that they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore, what God has yoked together, let no man put apart." 10 When they were again in the house, the disciples began to question him about this. 11 He said to them: "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, 12 and if ever a woman after divorcing her husband marries another, she commits adultery." 13 People now began bringing him young children for him to touch them, but the disciples reprimanded them. 14 At seeing this, Jesus was indignant and said to them: "Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such ones. 15 Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a young child will by no means enter into it." 16 And he took the children into his arms and began blessing them, laying his hands on them.

(Luke 18:15-17) Now people were also bringing him their infants for him to touch them, but on seeing this, the disciples began to reprimand them. 16 However, Jesus called the infants to him, saying: "Let the young children come to me, and do not try to stop them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such ones. 17 Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a young child will by no means enter into it."

Paragraph 1 on Page 222

(Luke 16:18) "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and whoever marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery."

Paragraph 2 on Page 222

(Deuteronomy 24:1) "If a man marries a woman but she does not please him because he found something indecent about her, he must write out a certificate of divorce for her, hand it to her, and dismiss her from his house."

(Matthew 19:3) And Pharisees came to him intent on testing him, and they asked: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on every sort of grounds?"

Paragraph 3 on Page 222

(Matthew 19:4-6) In reply he said: "Have you not read that the one who created them from the beginning made them male and female 5 and said: 'For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh'? 6 So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together, let no man put apart."

Paragraph 4 on Page 222

(Matthew 19:7) They said to him: "Why, then, did Moses direct giving a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her?"

(Matthew 19:8) He said to them: "Out of regard for your hard-heartedness, Moses made the concession to you of divorcing your wives, but that has not been the case from the beginning."

Paragraph 5 on Page 222

(Matthew 19:9) I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the grounds of sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery."

Paragraph 6 on Page 222

(Matthew 19:10) The disciples said to him: "If that is the situation of a man with his wife, it is not advisable to marry."

Paragraph 7 on Page 222

(Matthew 19:12) For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs on account of the Kingdom of the heavens. Let the one who can make room for it make room for it."

Paragraph 8 on Page 222

(Mark 10:14, 15) At seeing this, Jesus was indignant and said to them: "Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such ones. 15 Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a young child will by no means enter into it."

(Luke 18:15) Now people were also bringing him their infants for him to touch them, but on seeing this, the disciples began to reprimand them.

Paragraph 9 on Page 222

(Luke 18:17) Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a young child will by no means enter into it."

◇ How do the Pharisees test Jesus on the subject of divorce?

◇ According to Jesus, what is the divine standard regarding divorce?

◇ Why might some disciples choose to remain single?

◇ Jesus teaches what lesson through his dealings with young children?

* Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)

• Song 131 and Prayer