

WHO IS THE BEAST?

THE BEASTS OF REVELATION

The word "beast(s)" is found 356 times in the King James Bible—59 times in Revelation alone. Most of these beasts are literal four-footed animals, albeit, all 59 of the beasts in Revelation are symbols for something other than four-footed animals. The four beasts made reference to 7 times in the singular from Rev. 4:6 to 6:7 should be translated "**living creatures**" and not "beasts." And all references to "beasts" in the plural (15 times) from Rev. 4:6 to Rev. 19:4 should be also translated "**living creatures**," with the exception of Rev. 6:8 and 18:13 where "beast" is correct.

The Greek word which should be translated "living creature(s)" these total of 22 times (7 singular plus 15 plural), comes from **zoon** (do you recognize the word "zoo" in there?), and it means "*a living creature or living animal*" and can include ALL creatures that live on earth *including* man.

That leaves 59 minus 22 or 37 times that the word "beast(s)" is translated properly. Well, almost properly. The remaining 36 of the remaining 37 times that we find the word "beast(s)" in the King James it is from the Greek word, **therion** and it, "almost invariably denotes 'a WILD beast.'" (Strong's #2342, p. 116). The one occurrence of "beasts" in Rev. 18:13 is from the Greek word **ktenos**, and it means "beasts of burden" or domesticated animals.

All of the occurrences of the terms "**living creatures**" in Revelation have reference to the creatures associated with the throne room of God. These are benevolent creatures. All of the remaining beasts with the exception of the two "beasts" already mentioned in the plural, have reference to a "**WILD beast**," in the singular and should be translated such as numerous translations do. These are clearly not benevolent creatures, but ferocious "**wild beasts**." The remaining 35 references to "wild beasts" in Revelation all concern one "**wild beast**" and his mirror "**image of the beast**."

WHENCE THE BEAST WITH SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS?

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a [wild] beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy [Gk: 'a blasphemous name'].

And the wild beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion, and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat [throne], and great authority.

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded [as if it had been wounded] to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the wild beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the wild beast: and they worshipped the wild beast saying, Who is like unto the wild beast? Who is able to make war with him?

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power [authority] was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power [authority] was given him over all kindreds [tribes], and tongues, and nations.

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

If any man have an ear, let him hear." (Rev. 13:1-9).

Who or what is this **Wild Beast**?

ANOTHER WILD BEAST

There's more:

"And I beheld ANOTHER wild beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon.

And he exercises all the power [authority] of the first wild beast before him, and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the FIRST wild beast [the one from the sea] before him [in his presence], and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first wild beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

And deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the wild beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an IMAGE to the wild beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the wild beast, that the image of the wild beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the IMAGE OF THE WILD BEAST should be killed.

And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a MARK in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the MARK, or the NAME of the wild beast, or the NUMBER OF HIS NAME.

Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding count the number of the wild beast: for it is THE NUMBER OF A MAN; and his number is SIX HUNDRED THREESCORE AND SIX [666]" (Rev. 13:11-18).

Let me recap this just a little for you. First comes a wild beast out of the sea with seven heads and ten horns. A second wild beast comes out of the earth like a lamb with two horns speaking like a dragon and he calls down fire from heaven and deceives the whole world by miracles. This second wild beast makes everyone worship the first wild beast. This wild beast from the earth then causes everyone on earth to make an image of the first wild beast from the sea and makes everyone worship this image of the wild beast from the sea or be killed.

This image of the wild beast from the sea then causes everyone to worship this image, and causes all to receive a MARK of the first wild beast from the sea in their right hand, or in their foreheads. They can have either a **mark** or the **name** or the **number** of his name, and that number is said (albeit not correctly said) to be the number of **a man**, and it is the number **666**.

Now repeat all that back to me in your own words! Okay, let's try this shortened version: a beast from the earth causes all to worship a beast from the sea and to also make an image of this beast from the sea, who then causes all to receive either a mark, name, or number. Got it?

***the image, name, and number of the wild beast"** all have reference to the one beast that comes up out of the sea and is the wild beast made reference to for the remainder of the book of Revelation. It is this very "**wild beast**" along with the "**false prophet**" which is ultimately "**...cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone**" (Rev. 19:21).

Who is this **WILD BEAST**?

It behooves us to know just who or what this wild beast is, and especially his **image**. It is a force and a power to be reckoned with by every human that has ever lived or ever will live.

On the one hand we have this:

"Who is like the unto the wild beast? Who is able to make war with him?... And it was given unto him to MAKE WAR WITH THE SAINTS... And all that dwell upon the earth SHALL WORSHIP HIM, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb..." (Rev. 13:4, 7, & 8).

On the other hand we have this:

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the wild beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the WRATH OF GOD, WHICH IS Poured OUT WITHOUT MIXTURE..." (Rev. 14:9-10).

Talk about finding oneself between a rock and hard place!

Apparently we can either be AT WAR with this wild beast, though we were just warned: "...who is **ABLE to make war with him**"? Or, we can partake of "**THE WRATH OF GOD poured out without mixture...**" Either prospect is extremely frightening. But I would rather be on God's side than on the side of the wild beast. However, how well will we fare in war against this wild beast, seeing that God warns us, "**Who is ABLE TO MAKE WAR WITH HIM?**"

Before I was yet a teenager, my older brother read to us one time from this section of Revelation. Even at that early age, I quickly realized that this book of Revelation was an hard book. For I immediately saw that if we didn't follow the beast it would kills us and if we did follow the beast, God would kill us. My brother did not have an explanation for this, and it bothered me somewhat for many years to come. It was, in fact, the only thing that I never forgot in this mysterious book of Revelation. I wondered just how fair can God be if we are left with two fatal choices such as that. Maybe I've even frightened you by now. That is not my objective. "**You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you FREE.**"

Like everything in Revelation leading up to the consummation of all things, this **wild beast** is the wild beast that "**is, was, and will be.**" This wild beast has been around from before John received his revelation, and will be around until the consummation. However, that is not to say that these things that "**are, were, and will be**" do not build into a giant and violent CRESCENDO in these end times:

Evil men have always been with us. And so "evil men **are, were, and will be.**" But notice what Paul tells us will happen as the consummation of the age is upon us:

"But evil men and seducers [imposters] shall wax [grow] worse and WORSE, deceiving and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13).

And so too, this wild beast that comes up out of the sea is the beast **IS** (at the time John wrote of it), **WAS** (before it was introduced to John), **AND WILL BE**

(down through the centuries until our time and beyond until the consummation of this age).

You will never understand the book of Revelation as long as you try to make it either "Preterism" of the past or "Futurism" of still-to-be-fulfilled events for the first time. The events of Revelation are neither, Preterism or Futurism, but rather things that **"are, were, and will be."**

I STOOD UPON THE SAND OF THE SEA

I mediated and prayed long and hard on this phrase **"sand of the sea"** before God opened my mind and spirit to it.

So many many times in Scripture we find little phrases (apparently, *insignificant* little phrases) that seem to add nothing to the meaning of the verse. And yet, there they are. I have come to realize that NOTHING in Scripture is 'insignificant.' But here again, we find one of these little phrases:

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw..." (Rev. 13:1).

Why doesn't it just say, **"And I saw a beast rise up out of the sea..."**? What does it matter from "where" John saw this vision? Oh, but it matters a lot.

The **wild beast out of the sea** is not making its first appearance at the very time that John writes about it in a book. Oh, no. Remember that this book is **"the testimony of Jesus Christ"** (Rev. 1:2), and Jesus Christ said:

"I am Alpha and Omega, the BEGINNING and the ENDING, says the Lord, which IS, and which WAS, and which IS TO COME, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8).

And so our Lord's testimony of a beast out of the sea is a beast out of the sea, **"which IS, and which WAS, and which IS TO COME."** For just once in your life BELIEVE your Lord, and just maybe you will begin to learn and understand the truly **"DEEP things of God."**

But how can I say that this beast out of the sea is something that already existed at the time of John's writing? Was he not to write about **"...things which must shortly COME TO PASS..."**? (Rev. 1:1). Is this not then making all that John sees, things that are all in the future from the time of his vision? No. Everything in this book is part of Christ's testimony, **"which IS, and which WAS, and which IS TO COME."** It is needful that we read several verses now to catch the significance of, from what perspective it was that John wrote this prophecy:

"I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos,

for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ ['which IS, WAS, and WILL BE'].

I was IN THE SPIRIT on the Lord's day, and heard BEHIND ME a great voice, as of a trumpet [a trumpet is a symbol for a POWERFUL MESSAGE],

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What you see, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are [they ALREADY existed at the time that John writes about them] in Asia...

And I TURNED to see the voice that spoke with me. And BEING TURNED, I saw seven golden candlesticks." (Rev. 1:9-12).

Ah yes, John heard this trumpet (or message) "behind him" and therefore, had to TURN BACK in order to see, hear, and understand the message! And so John writes about the things he sees "BEHIND" him (1:10), and "...things which must be HEREAFTER."

And so it is in this context that John said: "I stood upon the sand of the sea..." Did you not notice what we just read concerning John and ourselves? Let's read it again:

"I John, who ALSO am YOUR BROTHER, and COMPANION IN TRIBULATION [persecution], AND IN THE KINGDOM AND PATIENCE [endurance] of Jesus Christ..." (Rev. 1:9).

The very elect are all "companions and brothers" in our quest for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Where Jesus walked, WE WILL WALK. Where John walked, WE WILL WALK. Where John stood, we all have stood or will yet stand.

We all must walk the walk that Jesus Christ walked! We must all "take up our cross." We must all

"OVERCOME... even as I [Jesus] also OVERCAME ['overcame the WORLD,' John 16:33], and am set down with My Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21).

Back to the sand of the sea. Why was John standing on the sand of the sea? Why must we at some time in our lives, also, stand on the sand of the sea? This is where John was standing when the wild beast first makes its appearance to John, not when the beast first came into existence.

THE SPIRITUAL SYMBOL OF THE SAND

I have already stated a dozen times or so in this paper that we must all "follow Christ." Peter puts it this way:

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an EXAMPLE, that we should FOLLOW HIS STEPS: Who did NO SIN, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judges righteously: Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto RIGHTEOUSNESS: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now RETURNED unto the Shepherd and Bishop [overseer] of your souls"

Notice that we are all to **follow His steps**. But Jesus **"did NO SIN,"** and we ALL sin. There is the giant difference. We have to KEEP WALKING in His steps until we STOP SINNING. But the point to be made here is, that we must and WILL **"follow His steps."**

John **"stood on the sand of the sea,"** and I said that we must ALL 'stand on the sand of the sea.' Jesus was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness [a desert waste place—sand] and was tried and tested there by the Adversary. Jesus appeared to be alone with the Adversary and the sand. Nothing to eat and nothing to drink—just sand. But Jesus was only alone in this physically desert of sand. Spiritually Jesus was IN HEAVEN with His Father.

Jesus had built a spiritual house. His house was about to be tested to see if it could withstand the rain, and flood, and wind. Satan would do all in his power to bring down the spiritual house of Jesus. But His house did not fall under the temptation of Satan, for he was FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT OF GOD, and His spiritual house was **'built upon THE Rock'** (John 3:34). The spiritual house of Jesus was to DO THE WILL OF THE FATHER:

"I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gave Me to do" (John 17:4). **"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work"** (John 4:34).

"For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John 6:38).

And just what is it that we also must do if we are to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?

"Not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that does THE WILL OF MY FATHER which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

Jesus said that many would profess Him, but were really workers of iniquity and did NOT do the will of His Father. Jesus says, **"Therefore..."** in verse 24. The

'Therefore' refers back to what He had just told them about **"doing the WILL of His Father."**

"Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and DOES THEM, I will liken him to a wise man, which build his house upon a [Gk: 'THE'] Rock [Jesus is 'THE Rock']. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house [yes, it is through MUCH tribulation that we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Acts 14:22]; and it fell not: for it was founded upon The Rock.

"And every one that hears these sayings of mine and does them NOT, shall be likened unto a foolish man [yes, there are 'foolish saints'], which built his house upon THE SAND; And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and IT FELL: and GREAT was the fall of it" (Matt. 7:24-27).

Now I am sure that we all would like to declare that we have built OUR spiritual house upon **The Rock** of Jesus Christ, and that certainly WE are not among the foolish saints who have build our spiritual house **upon the sand**.

Make no mistake about it; if your spiritual house is built upon **sand**, IT WILL FALL! ALL spiritual houses built upon **the sand**, will fall.

The Great Church in Revelation is called:

"Mystery BABYLON THE GREAT, The Mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth" (Rev. 17:5).

This great church decidedly does NOT spiritually dwell in the heavens, but is '**of the earth, earthy.**' This great church is built upon the spiritual **sand** of this world's doctrines. And being built on **sand**, SHE WILL FALL:

"And there followed another angel, saying Babylon IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN, that great city ['For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is and is in bondage with her children' Gal. 4:25], because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Rev. 14:8).

And this...

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth

have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:5).

And so, dear reader, if you have built your spiritual house upon the **sand** of this world's great Church, you are warned to **COME OUT OF HER**, because she is going to fall, and **"GREAT will be the fall of it."**

This then, is the condition of ALL the saints at some time in their life, as they along with John, **"...stood upon THE SAND OF THE SEA, and saw a wild beast rise up out of the sea..."**

Now Jesus does not leave us in the dark as to just what the sand represents in this set of parables. Jesus says,

"And everyone who hears these SAYINGS OF MINE, and does them NOT, shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand..." (Matt. 7:26).

What is missing in this house that we built upon the sand? Why it is a solid foundation, of course.

JESUS CHRIST—THE ONLY LASTING AND SURE FOUNDATION

"For we are laborers [Gk: 'fellow workers] together with God: ye are God's husbandry [Gk: 'field'] , ye are God's building.

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds thereon. But let every man take heed how he builds thereupon.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation [A] gold, silver, precious stones, [B] wood, hay, stubble [straw];

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sport it is.

If any man's work abide [endures] which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:9-15).

We could spend an entire installment on the two categories of things with which people build in their spiritual houses. These **works** apply every bit as much to what we believe, what is our faith, what are our doctrines of Scriptural Truths. This is so because out of "**the abundance of the heart...**" flows ALL of our actions, deeds, thoughts and works—whether they be good or bad. And BAD works, acts, actions, thoughts, teachings, etc., will be **burned up**. But GOOD works, acts, actions, thoughts, teachings, etc., will be **refined in the fire** to be made even more pure and more valuable.

These Scriptures clearly show that those taking part in this particular judgment by fire, MUST be building on the ONLY POSSIBLE **foundation** that will lead to salvation [**he himself SHALL BE SAVED**']. But notice that it is possible to build on something other than "**this foundation**"—"Now if any man build upon this foundation..." So clearly it is possible to build on 'another' foundation—a foundation of **SAND**. And every spiritual house built upon the sand will fall.

Now then, what are the options for all those who build their spiritual house **upon the sand**?

1. They can continue to build upon the sand until they die in their sins.
2. They can build upon the sand until it falls, but forego any further spiritual house building and die in their sins.
3. They can **repent** when their spiritual house falls, **turn back to God**, and begin building again on the only sure foundation, **The Rock—Jesus Christ**, and be "**...SAVED; yet so as by fire**" NOW, IN THIS LIFETIME, and "**Inherit the Kingdom of God**" with all of its colossal blessings and rewards in the "**FIRST resurrection**."

These are they which are being judged NOW:

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey NOT the gospel of God?" (I Pet. 4:17).

"That the trial [Gk: 'genuineness'] of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it [your faith] be tried [tested] with FIRE, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:7).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the FIERY TRIAL [testing, judging] which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (II Pet. 4:12).

THERE IS HOPE FOR THE BUILDERS ON SAND

Yes, there is HOPE for all those who build their house **upon the sand**? But there is hope only according to God's choosing. Remember, **"many are called, but FEW ARE CHOSEN."**

Every one who is **chosen** out from the **called**, will have first built their spiritual house **upon the sand**, and it will **FALL!** Every one who is of the **chosen FEW** will leave his **"First Love"** (Rev. 2:4). There is a time when all of the **chosen** will **"look back,"** and see a time when they were not, **"...FIT for the Kingdom of God"** (Luke 9:62). It happened to Peter, it happened to the other eleven apostles, it happened to Paul, it happened to Paul's followers, it happened to the entire early church, it will happen to US!

1. **"Surely you [Peter] also are one of them: for your speech betrays you. Then began he to CURSE AND TO SWEAR [Gk: call down curses, damning and swearing], saying I DO NOT KNOW THE MAN [Jesus Christ]" (Matt. 26:73 & 74).**

How true: at that very moment in Peter's life he TRULY DID NOT KNOW Jesus Christ! **HIS HOUSE OF SAND FELL!**

2. **"But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then ALL THE DISCIPLES FORSOOK HIM AND FLED" (Matt. 26:56)!**
3. And just as all the disciples forsook Jesus, so did all the believers forsake Paul: **"At my first answer no man stood with me, but ALL MEN FORSOOK ME: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charged" (II Tim. 4:16).**

Paul could not resent their leaving him, after all, Paul himself (who once studied under Gamaliel) hardened his heart and **left his first love** also:

"And Saul [Paul] consenting unto his death... As for Saul, he made havoc of the church... and Saul yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord..." (Acts 8:1, 3; 9:1).

All Asia forsook Paul, **"This you know, that ALL THEY WHICH ARE IN ASIA BE TURNED AWAY FROM ME..." (II Tim. 1:15).**

4. ALL who are **called and chosen**, will at some time in their walk, be attacked and will temporarily **fall**:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to ALL THE FLOCK over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the CHURCH OF GOD [the WHOLE Church of God], which He has purchased with his own blood. For I KNOW this that after my departing shall grievous [savage] wolves enter in among you, not sparing THE FLOCK [the WHOLE flock]" (Acts 20:28-29).

Everyone's first house (the house **built upon the sand**) FALLS! It is just part of the process in our **suffering to learn obedience**, that God has mandated.

"MANY [the called but not chosen] will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not

1. **prophesied in Thy Name? And**
2. **in Thy Name cast out devils? And**
3. **in Thy name done MANY WONDERFUL WORKS?" (Matt. 7:22).**

These are "Christians" (**Lord, Lord**) who BELIEVE in the **Name of the Lord**, and they do **MANY... WONDERFUL... WORKS** in the Name of the Lord. But what happens to them? Their **house on the sand FALLS— "...DEPART from Me, you that work iniquity [lawlessness]" (Ver. 23)**. Jesus then goes on to show how those who do not build on the **foundation of Jesus** are building their **house upon the sand**, even though they do **MANY wonderful works**.

Their house falls, not because of the super structure itself. No, the super structure is composed of **MANY WONDERFUL WORKS**. The house falls because it is not build upon the **ROCK** of Jesus Christ who is the **ONLY FOUNDATION** that will support a spiritual house. The "wonderful works" part of Christendom is good. Jesus doesn't say that all of their works are bad. No, they are **wonderful**, however, their house will not stand and therefore it must come down. A Christian's personal good works will not forgive his personal **SINS!** These must be **REPENTED** of and **OVERCOME**.

Now for all of you whom God is **calling** only, you will not believe what I am saying, you will not do what I am teaching you, and you will not recover (in this lifetime) from the disaster of building your spiritual house (life) **upon the sand**. But what about those of you whom God is **calling AND choosing**? What are you to do when you see that your spiritual house has fallen with a **GREAT FALL**?
Answer:

1. **"Remember therefore from whence you ARE FALLEN, and REPENT" (Rev. 2:5)!**

2. **"RETURN unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. 3:7).**
3. **"For ye [all of you, the whole flock, the whole church, the whole house of God] were as sheep going astray [Isa. 53:6]; but are now RETURNED unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (I Pet. 2:25).**
4. **"And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous [‘prodigal or wasteful extravagance’] living.**

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine [a spiritual famine] in that land [in his land, his earth, for his thoughts were not ‘in heaven’]; and he began to be in want [‘...and know not that you are *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*’ Rev. 3:17].

And he went and joined himself to a citizen of the country; and he sent him into his fields to FEED SWINE [his spiritual house ‘has FALLEN, has FALLEN’].

And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the *swine did eat*: and no man gave unto him.

And when he CAME TO HIMSELF [‘remember from whence you are fallen, and REPENT’] he said, How many hired servants of my fathers have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

I will arise, and GO TO MY FATHER [‘RETURN UNTO ME, and I will return unto YOU’], and will say unto him, Father, I have SINNED against heaven [I have ‘left my first love’] and before Thee...

5. Seven times Jesus says to the Seven Churches who had **LEFT THEIR FIRST LOVE**; that they should **"REPENT!"**

And so after we repent of **leaving our first love**, and all the sin and corruption that goes along with it, what are we to do? Why we begin building our spiritual house upon **The ROCK** of Jesus Christ—the **FOUNDATION** of Jesus Christ, of course.

THE HOUSE UPON THE ROCK

"Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon THE rock; And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and it fell NOT; for it was founded [foundationed] upon THE ROCK" (Matt. 7:24-25).

Oh yes, the rains and floods and winds of trials and persecution will surely come, but we have this absolute assurance of God:

"Now unto Him that is able to KEEP YOU FROM FALLING, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, be GLORY and MAJESTY, DOMINION and POWER, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 24).

I love this verse. Read it over a half dozen times. It is sheer spiritual poetry! This is one of those absolutely POWER-PACKED Scriptures that should make our hair stand up! It is in verses like this that the King James Version really shines.

WHO IS ABLE TO MAKE WAR WITH THE WILD BEAST?

It is at this pivotal time in our walk with God, when our spiritual house has **fallen**, and we are alone standing on the sand of the sea, that the **wild beast from the sea... makes war with the saints** (that's US) and **OVERCOMES them** (this **wild beast overcomes us** because "**WHO is able to make war with him?**") (Rev. 13:4). Even we, who are saints of God, are NO MATCH for "**the WILD BEAST that comes up out of sea.**"

But I have already shown you that God gives us a way out of this dilemma. We are to **COME OUT OF HER** and **REPENT** of **leaving our first love**, and for **building our spiritual house upon the sand.**

WHEN FIRST WE SEE THE BEAST

Why is John standing on the sand of the sea when he first sees the wild beast rise out of the sea? Why isn't he standing on solid rock when first he sees this wild beast? Because **standing on the sand of the sea** depicts our spiritual condition at the time that we see **a wild beast come up out of the sea**. When we see the **wild beast**, God shows us our vulnerability.

We are standing DEFENSELESS on **the sand of the sea!**

There is a spiritual process that God takes His called and elect through that only **the few** ever experience. The common opinion seems to be that one can become sick and tired of his sinful ways, and so turn to Jesus Christ to get him out of his mess. Once he has accepted Jesus as his Saviour, it is presumed that all will begin to go well with the new convert.

Finances will improve, health will improve, our social life will improve, and certainly our spiritual life will improve. As we study and pray and go to church, it is believed that one will progress further and further until one's life is nearly perfect. In fact, if one is still having trials and tribulations after decades in a

church, it is assumed by all that that person is not living right and that God is cursing him for some sin or disobedience.

I showed you in a previous installment that the very first thing that Jesus pointed out as a spiritual flaw in the first of the Seven Churches, was that they "**LEFT their first love.**"

This is referred to in fundamental circles as "backsliding." But, supposedly, only a few ever "backslide." Most, it is assumed, just keep growing and growing from grace to grace until they die a happy death of old age.

The Seven [COMPLETE] Churches of God represent the WHOLE CHURCH OF GOD in all generations. And so, what is it that God says those who are ALREADY IN THE CHURCH have to do if they are to **overcome** and be in the Kingdom of God? Answer:

"Remember therefore from whence you are FALLEN, and REPENT..." (Rev. 2:5).

Repent of WHAT? Repent of "**...leaving your FIRST LOVE.**"

But you say, "I have never **left my first love.**" Well then, this Scripture isn't speaking to you. But everyone who does make it into the Kingdom, does leave his first love. There are those, however, who have left their first love, AND DON'T EVEN KNOW IT! Repenting will come especially hard for them, as they see nothing to repent of.

Whenever someone is called of God and he repents, is baptized, confirmed, initiated, or whatever, it is into a church. And sooner or later that particular church will bring you to the point where you will leave your first love for God and turn to the church and its religion as the idol of your heart. God calls His people OUT of the Babylonish System of Religion which has a strangle hold on 'The Church.'

"Mystery Babylon the Great" is a CHURCH! But it is also A SPIRITUAL WHORE:

"For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to JERUSALEM which now is, and is in bondage with HER CHILDREN. But Jerusalem which is ABOVE is free, which is the MOTHER OF US ALL" (Gal. 4:25-26).

Jerusalem above is our MOTHER. Jerusalem below is also a MOTHER with children in bondage. Revelation speaks clearly of this Mother and her Children:

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto you the

judgment of the GREAT WHORE that sits upon many waters [peoples and nations and tongues]:

With whom the kings of the earth have committed [spiritual] **FORNICATION, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.**

So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a WOMAN [a church] **sit upon a scarlet colored WILD BEAST, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.**

And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls [possessing many of the blessings of God including the **pearls** of God's Word], **having a gold cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:**

And upon her forehead was a name written,

**MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND
ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"**

(Rev. 17:1-5).

And now for one of the most amazing Truths in all Revelation:

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her [Mystery Babylon the Great], **MY PEOPLE, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues"** (Rev. 18:4).

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE OUT OF THE VERY CHURCH THAT HE CALLED THEM INTO!

"Many are called but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14).

Few realize that there is a "church WITHIN the church." When God **chooses** us FROM AMONG the **called**, we become separate from their doctrines and sins. We are still "**The Church of the Living God**," but we are a **peculiar people** that no longer follows the traditions of men, which the **many called** who are building the house upon the sand continue to follow.

Therefore, WE WILL SEE THE BEAST that comes up out of the sea. We will be forced to WAR with the beast from the sea. And we will be OVERCOME by the wild beast. This really is serious business.

SEA, EARTH, AND HEAVEN

There are three realms spoken of in Revelation: sea, earth, and heaven:

"And the angel which I saw stand upon the SEA and upon the EARTH lifted up his hand to HEAVEN, and swore by Him that lives for ever and ever, [for the eons of the eons], who created HEAVEN, and the things that therein are, and the EARTH, and the things that therein are, and the SEA, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer [no longer a time of delay]" (Rev. 10:5-6).

The angels [messengers] of God communicate things from **heaven** to both the **earth** and the **sea**:

"And the voice which I heard from heaven spoke unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the ANGEL which stands upon the sea and upon the earth" (Rev. 10:8).

There are three realms of humanity and three realms of spiritual understanding. The lowest of all is **the sea**. Those with at least some spiritual understanding are those who dwell in **the earth**. And those who have the very mind of Christ are those who dwell in **heaven**. ALL REALMS will give honor and glory to God:

"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, [need I explain that 'fish' do not have the mental capacity to comprehend what is being taught here—these are MEN, MANKIND, HUMANITY] and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and upon the Lamb for the eons of the eons" (Rev. 5:13).

Is this not saying the identical thing that Paul teaches in Phil. 2:10-11:

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should BOW, of things [them] in heaven, and things [them] in earth, and things [them] under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

More proof:

"Therefore rejoice, ye heavens and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and [inhabitants] of the sea! ..." (Rev. 12:12).

Next notice that:

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast into the earth, he persecuted the WOMAN [the Church] which brought forth the man child [the manifest sons of God]" (Rev. 12:13).

Where is the Church? Does she dwell in the spiritual realms of **heaven**? No. Is she located **in the sea**? No. She dwells **in the earth**. She is higher than **the sea**, but lower than **heaven**; she dwells **in the earth**. These are the three realms spoken of in Revelation. If we can't get our thinking above the symbols themselves, we will never ever understand the book of Revelation.

The **saints** have left the **earth** in their spiritual walk with God. Those who are now 'spiritually-minded;' **dwell in heaven**—a much much higher realm than that of **the earth**. And yet... and YET, of the **wild beast** that comes out of **the sea** in Revelation 13, we are told:

"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle and them that [spiritually] dwell in heaven. And it was given unto Him [the wild beast] to make war with the saints, and TO OVERCOME THEM: and power was given him over ALL KINDREDS, AND TONGUES, AND NATIONS" (Verses 6-7).

Now maybe you don't catch the significance of these verses. Here is a **wild beast** that not only has power, "**...over ALL KINDREDS, and TONGUES, and NATIONS,**" but also can, "**...make war with the SAINTS, and to OVERCOME THEM...**" Is it possible for Satan to OVERCOME THE SAINTS? How can this be? Where? Show me?

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because GREATER is He [Jesus] that is in you, than he [Satan] that is in the world" (I John 4:4).

Does this verse sound like there is some **wild beast** OUT THERE somewhere, who can make a mockery of this verse, because this **wild beast** really can "**...make war with the saints, and to OVERCOME them?**" What ever happened to:

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. RESIST the devil, and he WILL FLEE FROM YOU" (James 4:7)?

Is there, OUT THERE SOMEWHERE, a power for evil that is even GREATER than Satan the Devil, himself? Why haven't we been warned about him before we come to Rev. 13:7?

Did Jesus ever warn us of this **wild beast**? Did the apostles? Did Paul to the nations, warn of this evil power? How could the saints themselves, be deceived by this **wild beast**? I thought that the very elect of God CANNOT be deceived:

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, IF IT WERE POSSIBLE, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. 24:24).

Ah, but it is NOT POSSIBLE to deceive the **very elect**! Will someone tell me what's going on here with this **wild beast**?

WHO ARE THE SAINTS?

If the **very elect** can't be deceived, is it possible for **saints** to be deceived? Yes, there is a difference. One can be a saint long before he becomes **the VERY elect**. Were the believers in Ephesus called, **saints**?

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, TO THE SAINTS which are in Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:1).

So, Yes, the believers in Ephesus were called **saints**. But were they perfect? Were they spiritually mature? Were they **the VERY elect**? No, they weren't.

"Unto the angel of the church of EPHESUS write... I have somewhat [‘somewhat’ is not in the Greek texts] **...I have against you, because you have LEFT YOUR FIRST LOVE"** (Rev. 2:1 & 4).

Is Jesus accusing the whole church at Ephesus of leaving their **first love**, if in reality, there were only a few? But there were NOT just a few—the WHOLE CHURCH of Ephesus **"left their first love."** And furthermore, since the Seven Churches are ONE CHURCH, THE WHOLE CHURCH **left their first love!** Believe it or not, leaving one's first love, is part of the process of **"going on to perfection"** (Heb. 6:1).

"I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH — JOHN TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES"

Jesus said, **"...upon this Rock [Himself] I will build My church..."** And the testimony of Jesus Christ is **"unto His servant John"** and then **"John TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES"** (Rev. 1:1 & 4). Jesus began to build His church when John was yet a carnal-minded, unconverted follower of Jesus. And, as the messages in Revelation **"are, were, and will be,"** then certainly the message to the Seven Churches also must be a message that **"IS, WAS, and WILL BE."**

John sees a **"wild beast come up out of the sea"** when John himself **"stood upon the sand of the sea."** This had to be at the time when John **"heard BEHIND ME a GREAT VOICE, as a trumpet"** (Rev. 1:10).

JESUS CHRIST IS THE SOUNDING TRUMPET

"...AND HEARD BEHIND ME A GREAT VOICE, AS OF A TRUMPET, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last..."

The Alpha and Omega is CHRIST. This "**voice of a trumpet**" is Christ. There is something most interesting about this statement of John's. John says he "**heard behind me a GREAT voice, as of a trumpet.**"

You will be interested to learn that the word "great" is used 72 times in Revelation. But only five times is it said to be a "**great VOICE.**" We will look at the last four and then come back to the first:

The second time a "**GREAT voice**" is trumpeted or announced as a powerful, earth-shaking message or event is in Rev. 16:1:

"And I heard a GREAT voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials [bowls] of THE WRATH OF GOD upon the earth."

This is a GIANT event, unparalleled in the history of the world. But remember, although this prophecy may also crescendo toward the consummation, it is also, the "**wrath of God**" that "**IS, WAS, and WILL BE.**"

The third mention is when this horrible **wrath of God** is over in Rev. 16:17:

"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a GREAT voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, IT IS DONE"

The fourth mention is also an event of heretofore, unequalled glory:

"And after these things I hear a GREAT voice of much people in heaven, saying ALLELUIA; SALVATION, and GLORY, and HONOR, and POWER, unto the Lord our God... for He has judged the great whore... ALLELUIA for the Lord God omnipotent REIGNS. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him: for the MARRIAGE of the Lamb is come... Write, BLESSED ARE THEY which are called unto the MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB" (Rev. 19:1, 2, 6, 7, 9)

Now it is pretty honorable to just be "called unto the marriage of Christ," but to ACTUALLY BE THE BRIDE—Well, that's something else! We'll take that subject up some time later.

The last time we have the mention of a "GREAT voice" is in Rev. 21:3:

"And I heard GREAT voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He WILL DWELL WITH THEM, and they shall be His people, and God HIMSELF SHALL BE WITH THEM, and be their GOD!"

I am sure that we all agree that these four mentions of a **GREAT voice** are among the greatest events and proclamations in the history of humanity. But we have yet one to look at:

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a GREAT voice, as of a trumpet" (Rev. 1:10).

What POSSIBLE thing could John have heard, that happened "**BEHIND him**," that was in the same league as the four GIANT events portrayed by the other four **GREAT VOICES**? What was it that John saw "**BEHIND him**" as he "**stood upon the sand of the sea**" and "**saw a WILD BEAST rise up out of the sea**?" What did this **wild beast** mean to John? What will it mean to the world? What should it mean to US?

Whatever this **wild beast** from the sea is, it is among the five greatest pronouncements that bring in the "**end of the world**" — the "**consummation of the age**."

This **wild beast** from the sea is the only thing in all Revelation that "**makes war with the saints**" AND "**OVERCOME them**." Seven times in Rev. 2 & 3 were are told to OVERCOME seven categories of sins. Yet here we read that it is the saints themselves that are overcome. Let's make some sense out of all this.

ALL FALL AWAY

I showed numerous times that all: **leave their first love, forsake Jesus, look back, blaspheme, build a spiritual house upon the sand**, etc.

It is when John is standing **on the sand of the sea** that he first sees the **wild beast come up out of the sea**. Now the questions become: "WHEN did John **stand upon the sand** in HIS life? WHEN do we **stand upon the sand** in OUR lives?"

Answer: When the spiritual house that we all build falls down with a '**GREAT FALL**.' When (notice I did not say, 'IF')...when our spiritual house built upon the spiritual sand falls, WE ARE LEFT STANDING **ON THE SAND OF THE SEA**. We are only INCHES above the very sea itself—the masses and multitudes of humanity who do not have any knowledge of God AT ALL. It doesn't mean that we have no knowledge of God at all at this quandary in our spiritual lives; it just means that we are no closer to God than all the humanity in the sea. Hence, we are not IN the sea, but rather **standing on the SAND of the sea** where our spiritual house just **FELL!**

And since God is not only **calling** some of us but **choosing** us also, God begins to teach us anew. And the first thing He begins to show us is the **WILD BEAST coming up out of the sea** that is the CAUSE of our being overcome and the

CAUSE of our spiritual house **falling!** This wild beast will be reckoned with by all humanity sooner or later.

THERE MUST COME A 'FALLING AWAY' FIRST

I have shown you that John, Paul, Peter, ALL of the apostles, the whole church in Asia, the Seven Churches of Revelation, the entire flock of God's called, all built their houses upon spiritual sand—in other words EVERYONE ever called by God, **falls, falls down, falls away.**

The Proverb tells us that, "**For a just man falls seven times...**" That's a COMPLETE fall. But strange as it may seem, this is necessary in God's plan. What happens to a just man after he falls seven times? "**...and RISES UP AGAIN**" (Prov. 24:16). When he completely falls, he **falls from grace.** But for those whom God is both **calling AND choosing,** they will **RISE UP AGAIN,** for

"Who are you that judges another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Yes, he shall be holden up [made to stand up]: for God is able to MAKE HIM STAND" (Rom. 14:4).

We will ALL FALL! But afterwards, God "**raises us UP AGAIN,**" and "**makes us STAND.**" And from that time onward we have this sure promise of which we read before, but I want to read again:

"Now unto Him that is able to KEEP YOU FROM FALLING, and to present you FAULTLESS before the presence of His glory with EXCEEDING JOY, To the Only Wise God Our Saviour, be glory and majesty, and dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 124-25)!

When John's spiritual house built upon the sand fell down, he was left, **standing on the sand of the sea** by himself alone with God, and it is then and only then, that he is able to see the **wild beast that came up out of the sea.**

This wild beast is further identified in Rev. 13:14 when we are told this

"...beast, which had the wound [deadly wound, Ver. 3] by the sword, and DID LIVE."

He was wounded to death, but the wound was healed and he again lived. He also has a **mark,** and a **name,** and a **number.** What is this mysterious number that has baffled scholars, theologians, and saints for centuries? I will not give you the complete answer to this at this time, but will only show you that it is the number of mankind—humanity.

THE NUMBER 666

"Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding count the NUMBER OF THE BEAST: for it is the NUMBER OF A MAN; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six [666]" (Rev. 13:18).

Is this indeed what the Greek manuscripts of Rev. 13:18 state? No, it is not.

The Greek word used when only man is meant (always excluding woman), is **aner**. But the Greek word translated "man" in Rev. 13:18 is not **aner**, but rather the word **anthropos**, which means "a human being, male or female." *Strong's Concordant*.

Furthermore, it is not the number of "a" anything. It is just the number of human or of **mankind**! Even the Revised Standard Version translators saw this and therefore, states, "**It's number is six hundred sixty-six.**" The number of the **wild beast** is not the number of "a" man, but rather the number of "man" or "**mankind.**"

With this in mind let's read II Thes. 2:3:

"Let no man ['let not any person,' RSV, 'Let no ONE...'] deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a FALLING AWAY first, and that man of sin [Gk: the lawless one] be revealed, the son of perdition [Gk: the one destined for destruction]. Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God [a god], or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God"

Whenever man builds his spiritual house upon the spiritual sand, his spiritual house **will fall**. And it is then that God reveals to him the **wild beast that comes out of the sea**. What does Paul tell us happens when there comes a '**FALLING AWAY**' first? What follows? When our house on sand falls, what is then revealed? Why "**the LAWLESS one**" is "**REVEALED.**" When the **falling away occurs**, then the man of sin, '**the lawless one**' '**the one destined for destruction**' is **REVEALED.**

And what a revelation it is! What a blast of the trumpet it is! What a shock to all humanity when at long last this **wild beast** is revealed to EVERYONE! Trust me when I tell you that it is a hard pill to swallow. It will shake you to your sandy foundation.

As I am now at the end of this Part XIII, I don't want to close without revealing just who it is that constitutes the **wild beast** of Revelation 13 and the **lawless one** of II Thes. 2. I did title this Installment: **Who is the Beast?** And so I will tell you.

"So okay, enough, TELL US WHO THE BEAST IS. Who? Tell us WHO?"

The "**beast**" is *you!*