

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Perseverance Through Persecution

Revelation 13:9-10

1. _____
The beast from the sea (Rev. 13:1) refers both to a future world ruler (cf. Dan. 7:8; 9:26; 11:36ff; 2 Thess 2:3) and the empire he leads. He is arrogant, blasphemous, and extremely immoral as well as powerful and able to exert dominance over the whole world (Rev. 13:2-3). He will exalt himself above every god (Dan. 11:37) by claiming to be god himself (Rev. 13:5). The beast out of the earth (Rev. 13:11ff) is the false prophet (cf. Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10) who will assist the first beast, the antichrist, in all that he does. He will be granted the ability to perform supernatural signs and greatly assist in deceiving the whole world (Deut 13:1-5; cf. Matt 24:24). He is specifically described as directing people to build an idol of the beast (Rev. 13:14), instructing them to worship the beast and his image (Rev. 13:12, 15), and he will impose harsh penalties for all who do not (Rev. 13:15-17). The false prophet will be instrumental in connecting the regulation of all commerce with worship of the beast (Rev. 13:16-17).
2. _____
All Christians are to anticipate suffering hardship and persecution in this life on account of our faith (John 15:18-21; 2 Tim. 3:12 cf. 1 Pet. 1:6-7; 3:14, 17; 4:12-16). Perseverance is a patient endurance and a bearing up under hardship. It is a quality that is to be inculcated at all times in the Christian life (cf. 2 Pet. 1:5-9). One of the paths on which the Lord sanctifies believers in the area of perseverance begins with persecution (Rom. 5:3-5). Suffering persecution is one of the blessings that God graciously gives to believers (Phil 1:29) as He conforms us into the image of Christ (cf. Rom. 8:28-29).
3. _____
Faith is the way in which we receive new life in Christ (John 3:16, 36), and faith in Christ is what characterizes the rest of the believer's life (cf. John 6:68-69). A persistent faith in Christ is key to overcoming the world (John 16:33; 1 John 5:4-5). One of the marks of faithfulness to Christ is the evidence of fruit and fruitfulness (Matt 13:3ff; John 15:1ff; cf. Gal. 5:22-23; 2 Pet. 1:5-9). Those who are truly saved will hear and obey the commands of Christ (Luke 8:21) because they love Him (John 14:15). The assurance of our inheritance with God on account of His victory over all things motivates the believer to remain faithful to obey the commands of Christ (1 Cor. 15:58).