

REVELATION

ALL • THINGS • NEW

UPSTATE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Week 8 – February 26–March 3 – *Revelation 13*

LEADER NOTES

Group leaders, you are doing such an amazing job leading your groups. Continue to remain steadfast in our study of the book of Revelation. This week's study on Revelation 13 can feel daunting, so let's focus on the things which we can be sure of from the text. The bottom line of this passage is clear: Satan can only imitate the one true and reigning Christ.

Please remember to ask your groups about gospel connections and conversations had in the previous week. You can complete the form [here](#).

COMMUNITY

Open the group by caring for one another and allowing a moment for everyone to have a place to belong.

Start the group by taking prayer requests, finding out about people's week, and praying for one another.

Opening Questions:

- *What are some examples of cheap imitations of a genuine product?*
- *Why do cheap imitations never measure up to the real thing?*

SCRIPTURE

Take this time to study the Bible together. Remember, the goal is not just to convey information, but to help people in your group learn to read the Bible for themselves.

THE POINT

Satan can only imitate, never replicate.

The First Beast

13 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. 2 And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. 3 One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. 4 And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. 6 It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear:

10 If anyone is to be taken captive,
to captivity he goes;
if anyone is to be slain with the sword,
with the sword must he be slain.

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

The Second Beast

11 Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. 12 It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. 13 It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, 14 and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived. 15 And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. 16 Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, 17 so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. 18 This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Revelation 13.

STUDY NOTES

Revelation 13 presents a picture of two beasts executing the will of Satan. It presents a pretty scary picture and one, like much of Revelation, that leaves us wondering what exactly is meant. There has been much debate about whether the one described in Revelation 13 is the antichrist or the spirit of the antichrist; while pursuing such debate here would be outside of our focus, it is important to see the overall theme behind what Satan is trying to do.

In chapter 13 we see “cheap imitations” of what Christ has promised and shown us. We find schisms of the throne and glory that are rightly ascribed to Christ. In chapter 13, we see them in torment and chaotic times, without the glory or majesty that is ascribed to Christ. This is a clear picture of Satan trying to imitate the power of Christ. Another way we see a “cheap imitation” of Christ is Satan trying to deceive in the picture of the second beast. Satan longs for the worship of the earth and the authority that goes with it. Lastly, we see that Satan doesn’t satisfy as Christ does. There is a longing for something more than we find in chapter 13. All that is found in chapter 13 is chaos, suffering, and slavery. Quite the opposite picture than what we find with the Christ who is presented to us in Revelation.

For more resources on this passage click the resources link [here](#).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Why is it important to understand the tactics of Satan in chapter 13?
- How is the deception from Satan in Revelation 13 still present today?
- How can we see Jesus in the midst of such a chapter as this?
- What is the most encouraging thing to you about Revelation 13?
- How should we respond to such a passage as this?

COMMISSION

As you wrap up your group, it is imperative that everyone knows we go into the world on mission for Jesus. Use this time to focus everyone to live on mission as you leave.

Seeing Jesus changes everything about our life. How can this vision of Jesus change how you are going to live as you leave here?

Who in your life needs to know Jesus?