

Revelation 13-14: Powers and Authorities.

When in your life have you been 'caught out' by hidden costs (to a product, or service)?

Why is it important to carefully think-through the cost of our actions?

Read Revelation 13:1-10.

1. There are two 'satanic' figures at this point in John's vision (the dragon and the beast). What are they like?

2. How do people respond to each of these satanic figures (v. 4, etc.)?

Read Revelation 13:11-18.

3. This 'second beast' is a *third* satanic figure. What is the role of this third figure (v. 12, 14, 15, 16)?

4. Is this beast a tyrant or a gentle leader? Why (14, 16)?

5. Looking back at 13:3, and 13:11, in what ways do these 'baddies' look a bit like the good characters in Revelation?

6. Here in 13, we have a 'satanic trinity' of **the dragon**, who gives his authority to **the first beast**. The first beast brings about the earthly kingdom of the dragon. **The second beast** then witnesses to the first beast, causing it to be worshipped. How do you feel when you see this picture start to come together?

How does what has gone before in Revelation (and what comes after!) comfort us despite the ugliness of this satanic world order?

Read Revelation 14:1-8.

7. When John mentions the 144,000 who are redeemed, who are they? Look back at Rev. 7:4 and 9, contrasting hearing / seeing if necessary. (NB: their 'virginity' probably speaks to their faith in God: they have not gone after the harlot of ch. 17, etc.)

8. What are the 144,000 doing, and how does the emotional feeling of our 2 chapters 'shift' at this point?

Read Revelation 14:9-13.

9. Why do you think the punishment of those who follow the beast "calls for patient endurance" on our part (v. 12)?

10. Compare the imagery of 14:10-11 with the source imagery of Isaiah 34:8-10. What do the sulphur / fire / smoke mean for the land of Edom? How long does it effect that place?

What might that imagery now mean for those who worship the beast in 14:9-11?

11. Ch. 13 reveals the beast as a *killer*. How does 14:13 free us from the fear of death?

Finish, giving thanks to God for the Lamb who was slain for our sake.