

is probably needed. A lamb, meek and gentle in appearance, but still having authority and governmental control. On this description some have thought this to be the Antickrist...imitating the Lamb of God who while meek and lowly still exercises the power to uphold and govern the universe. I think it is more in common with the ideal of the Holy Spirit who supports and strengthens the Lamb in all that is done. This beast performs wonders and does things reminiscent of the prophets of the Old Testament (13:13).

13:16..the mark, I interpret literally but the value given to it -666- is certainly a symbol...probably a symbol for the perfection of humanistic effort.

Please remember that while we are interested with the symbols and actions that occur...our attention should be on the Lord and what he is doing. The pieces of the puzzle that do not place easily just now will fall into line well when He puts them together. Rejoice with the heavenly ch oir of chapter 12 and learn the lesson that is predicated in chapter 13 with the "he that hath ears to hear."

SOME AVAILABLE LESSONS FROM CHAPTERS 12-13

1. The Lesson of Patience of 13:9.
2. The Lesson of Providence of 12:16 and 12:6.

It would seem that no great commentary is needed on these. In the first we simply allow God to bring things to completion in His own time. In the second we know that He has all things appointed to secure His program and while we are often bewildered at Satanic progress...God has the places and people prepared for the achievement of His own ends.

3. The Lesson of belief is also sketched. It is the idea of the importance of believing the truth while it is available..knowing that those who do not receive the truth are well set up to believe a lie...and the enemy knows the sort of lies that people most quickly believe. The work of the second beast of chapter 13 along with the teachings in 2 Thessalonians 2 are important in this regard.
4. There is also a lesson with regard to the miraculous. Deceivers may use spectacular methods to achieve their ends. The key feature for the believer is to know and obey the truth. The message we preach has the element of the miraculous in it but miracles without the support of truth (the facts and ideas of the Word of God) are not much help.

LOOKING AHEAD TO CHAPTERS 14-18

1. Reach the chapters carefully.
2. Think about the Babylon that is described in these chapters. With it (the thinking about Babylon) ask yourself what some of the fundamental mistakes are that men make in their dealings with God.