

01/13/18

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REVELATION

The Beastly Trinity Revelation 13

I. The Beast

- a. Chapter 12 the Apostle John witnesses a great sign – a great sign that looks back into history
 - i. Symbolism – woman with a crown of 12 stars crying out in birth pains (Israel), a great red dragon (satan) with 7 heads with 7 crowns and 10 horns, with his tail swept down and third of stars, and the great red dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it.
 - ii. She gave birth to a male child (Jesus) who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, and the dragon was not successful in his plans because the child was caught up to God and to his throne
 1. The sign continues into future events – satan wages one more war against the inhabitants of heaven but he is defeated by Michael and his angels
 2. satan and his angels are thrown down to earth
 3. **Rev 12:(10) And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. (11) And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.**
 4. That loud voice proclaims “rejoice all who dwell in heaven but woe to you on the earth, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath because he knows his time is short”
 - iii. That is where we pick up this great sign in Chapter 13

13:1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. 2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.

- b. Who is this beast? It is none other than the Antichrist
 - i. The term antichrist literally means “in place of” Christ – and in John’s 1st epistle, chapter 2 verse 18 he writes **Children, it is the last hour, and you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore, we know that it is the last hour.**
 1. Important to remember that in scripture the Antichrist is a literal person but it is also a system or a spirit as John writes about in **1 John 4:2-3 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.**

- ii. We have seen this spirit of the antichrist throughout human history – the early church to whom John was writing was experiencing this first hand
 - 1. The Roman Empire was in power at the time of John’s writing, and they had instituted the worship of Caesar as God in an attempt unite the people under Roman rule
 - 2. No Caesar took this to heart more then Caesar Nero who believed he was in fact God in the flesh
 - 3. Everyone in the Roman Empire was required to go to one of the Roman temples and confess to one of their priests that Caesar was Lord
 - a. For most, it was just a hoop to jump through, but for Christians it was far more serious – it was blasphemy
 - b. What followed was intense persecution of the church and the execution of over 6 million Christians during that time
- iii. Caesar Nero is not alone in history – many men and ruling parties have risen up and claimed to be God – The Pharaohs, the early Japanese and Chinese emperors, Alexander the Great, the Dalai Lamas, and the Inca Emperors are only a few most well known
- c. They were all imposters – the Antichrist and all who come in his spirit are an imposters – they are pseudo-messiahs – false-christs – men who desired to be worshipped as God
 - i. That spirit doesn’t simply exist in the hearts of ancient rulers – it is common to all mankind
 - ii. We are prone to place people and things in the place of Christ. These rulers may have been on a larger world stage and their decisions impacted entire nations, but they were flesh and blood just like you and I – manipulated by their own pride and lust for power
 - 1. They weren’t kings over their own lives – they were simply pawns used to accomplish the work of the devil
 - iii. Now in Chapter 13 we see the culmination of all these antichrists in one man – the Antichrist

II. The Appearance of the Antichrist

- a. First, we learn this beast comes out of the sea and in scripture the sea often represents gentile nations
 - i. And the land often represents the nation of Israel – so, as Chapter 17 confirms, the Antichrist will come out of the old Roman Empire (which was never truly defeated)
 - ii. That doesn’t mean he won’t be of Jewish decent – there are scriptures that point to that as well – but he will come out of one reunified Roman Empire that we see in chapter 12 and chapter 13
- b. To fully understand John’s description of the Antichrist we have to look at Daniel’s interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Daniel 2
 - i. King Nebuchadnezzar dreamt of a great image/statue – head was made out of gold, arms made of silver, torso made of bronze, and its legs made out of iron
 - 1. Its feet were made partially out of clay and partially out of iron
 - ii. This statue represents the great kingdoms of man – mankind’s power and authority – it was something to behold
 - 1. Head of Gold – Babylonian Empire
 - 2. Arms made of silver – Medo-Persian Empire
 - 3. Bronze torso – Greek Empire
 - 4. Legs of Iron – Roman Empire
 - 5. Feet made of clay and iron – new world order that rises out of the old Roman Empire

6. Magnificent statue made of metals – each metal worth less than the one before it – the power of man deteriorates over time
 - a. Until all that is left is clay and iron feet – ultimately the entire statue is crushed and is blown away like dust in the wind
 - b. ***Dan 2:44 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms; and it shall stand forever.***
- c. Then in Daniel 7, Daniel has a dream
 - i. In this dream he has a vision of four great beasts – the first was like a lion, the second was like a bear, the third was like a leopard
 - ii. How did John describe the beast? Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion
 1. Same animals in reverse order – Remember Daniel was looking forward into world history and John was looking back
 2. The lion represents Babylon, the bear Medo-Persia, Leopard Greece – but what about the fourth beast?
 - iii. ***Dan 7:7 "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.***
 1. Huge iron teeth – Roman Empire with its 10 horns – these are the 10 gentile nations that will rise out of the old Roman Empire – the 10 toes of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream
 2. The world will be unified again under one world order – just as it was unified under the old Roman Empire
 - iv. ***Dan 7:(8) I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.***
 1. This Antichrist – rising out of this league of nations with eyes like a man's and a mouth speaking pompous words – which bring us back to Revelation 13

Rev 13:3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

III. The Reign of the Antichrist

- a. It seems as though the beast is assassinated
 - i. Zechariah prophecies about this event in ***Zec 11:16-17 For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand.***

***But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces. (17)
"Woe to the worthless shepherd, Who leaves the flock! A sword shall be
against his arm And against his right eye; His arm shall completely wither,
And his right eye shall be totally blinded."***

- ii. but then he is resurrected - Revelation 17 gives us a little more insight into verse 3 - ***Rev 17: 8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.***
- b. At this the people will marvel and worship him. And he will be given a great platform to speak – and when he opens his mouth out comes blasphemous words
 - i. Blasphemy isn't cursing or filthy language – it is the exaltation of self over God – that is what was written on the beast's forehead, meaning that is what was on his mind
 - 1. That is the spirit of the antichrist – replacing Christ with self. I am god over my own life. That is the unforgiveable sin in scripture – going to our graves as self-proclaimed gods
 - ii. That is the Antichrist – he is self-worship personified, the pinnacle of arrogance and pride and narcissism
 - 1. Any time we replace the worship of Jesus with any other thing we are really just worshipping ourselves – we are taking control – we are proclaiming ourselves as gods of our own lives

Rev 13:11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

IV. The Unholy Trinity

- a. What do we have before us?
 - i. The great red dragon who is satan, the father of lies
 - ii. The beast of the sea who appears as a man empowered by satan to deceive the nations into worshipping him,
 - iii. and now we have the beast of the land - he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast - He performs great signs, And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.
 - 1. This false witness serves to point people to the Anitchrist – claiming the Antichrist is worthy to be worshipped
- b. Does any of this sound familiar? This is the devil's evil impersonation of the Holy Trinity
 - i. God the Father – the source of truth and life
 - ii. His Son Jesus Christ – God in the flesh – the personification of all that is righteous and good – come to seek out and save mankind from their sins
 - iii. And the Helper – the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of God that points us to the only one who is worthy of worship – Jesus Christ, our savior and king – the Spirit of God who brings real power, and love, and clarity of mind
- c. The devil is an imposter

- i. he cannot create, he can only imitate, like the sorcerers in Pharaoh's court
- ii. And that is what he dangles in front of mankind – cheap imitations – instead of selfless love/selfish lust, instead of power for/power over – instead of lasting joy/temporary pleasure – instead of enjoying life as a child of God/living as slaves to our own desires – instead of Christian fellowship/shallow acquaintances
- iii. Sin is always a substitute – it is always settling for something less and that is all the enemy has to offer – something in place of Christ that is nothing like Christ, that can't compare to Him – yet we settle? Why?
- d. The devil offers something our flesh wants

Rev 13:16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

- i. In the last days he uses our greed and our lust for things to make his mark on humanities hands and foreheads
- ii. If you don't get it, you have no place in the world's marketplace
- iii. James tells us in chapter 1 of his letter let no one say when he is tempted that God is tempting me for God cannot be tempted by evil nor does He tempt anyone; but we are tempted when we are dragged away by our own evil desires and enticed. After we are dragged away are desires give birth to sin, and sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to death.

1. What is this mark

Rev 13:18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

2. The number 6 is scripture represent man – 666 man, man, man – or put more plainly me, me, me.

- e. satan obviously seems like a powerful enemy but he is a defeated enemy
 - i. And his days are numbered – and the only semblance of victory he can have now are those who join with him blaspheming God all the way to their graves
 - ii. After being accused of using demonic power to cast out demons, Jesus said in **NIV Mark 3:28 Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin.**
 - iii. The Holy Spirit – the Spirit of Truth – reveals to us God's plan to rescue us through His Son Jesus – to reject that message is to call God a liar – to attribute demonic attributes to the almighty God – may that not be the case