

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 29TH-30TH, 2018 // BOOK OF REVELATION

THE BEAST FROM THE SEA (REV 13:1-4)

THE EPIC DRAMA CONTINUES

As the drama continues, John sees the antagonist dragon (Satan) standing on the "sand of the sea" about to wage war against God's people. Satan will wage his last battle against humanity via 2 people: the "beast from the sea" and the "beast from the earth."

"I SAW A BEAST COMING UP OUT OF THE SEA"

There was a legitimate fear in John's time of uncharted waters. Jewish mythology told of sea monsters (Leviathan and Behemoth). More than likely this is referring to a sea of people.

- John is painting a picture of a monstrous person that will rise up and rage against Christianity.

THIS "MONSTER" WILL BE A POLITICIAN

The **10 horns** are political institutions, **7 heads** may be previous evil empires building up to the Antichrist and the last evil empire that he will lead, the **10 crowns** (countries?) are 3 more than the 7 mentioned in chapter 12 showing that 3 of these countries combine.

"...ON ITS HEADS WERE BLASPHEMOUS NAMES"

This shows that the empires of the past and the one that will be the last evil empire intensely and directly verbally attack Christ and the church.

- **There already exists a hatred towards Christianity that is both hypocritical and unique to all other forms of hate.**

THE BODY OF THE ANTICHRIST

The beast was "like a leopard, its feet were like a bear and its mouth like a lion." This last empire will have traits of previous evil empires, Babylon (lion), Persia (bear), and Greek (leopard).

- **Until v3, this is more of a movement. The spirit of "antichrist" has been brewing for millenniums but eventually it will culminate into one evil person.**

"ONE OF ITS HEADS APPEARED...FATALLY WOUNDED"

Satan is very unoriginal. He will become a parody of the Trinity and his Antichrist will be fatally wounded and resurrect much like Jesus, but it will be a mockery of the true resurrection.

- This will probably be some kind of assassination attempt, but the results will make people believe he is a god.

"THE WHOLE EARTH WAS AMAZED"

In restoring the Antichrist, Satan gives him authority. People who don't follow Christ will worship this man like a savior (12:9) and like Ps. 89:6-8 tells us to worship God.

- **It's one thing to respect earthly authority, but another to look at it as a savior. There's one Savior, and it will never be a politician.**

WAGING WAR (REV 13:5-10)

THE POWER OF WORDS

The first order of business from the Antichrist will be to **slander, boast, and blaspheme**. Eventually, blasphemy of God and Christian principles will lead to a war where people will be slaughtered for 42 months and the Antichrist will proclaim himself god (2 Thess. 2:4).

- **We are reminded again about the power of words!**

THE ATTACK WILL MOVE FROM VERBAL TO PHYSICAL

God will allow Satan to "conquer" His people for a brief time through persecution and eventually martyrdom. The beast's dominion and his attack will be global. Christians all over the world will be imprisoned and killed.

- **This is one of those very difficult questions that will only be completely understood in eternity.**

JESUS TALKED ABOUT THIS EARLIER

Jesus mentioned false prophets in Matt. 24:24 that would deceive many people, even ones that appeared to be Christians.

- So, this scene has already been written. **Those who have a superficial faith or who don't believe will fall to the Antichrist's tricks, but true Christians will suffer for their faith.**

LISTENING AND TRUSTING (V9-10)

When the Bible says, "If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen" we should probably listen. v10 is a sobering reminder that **everyone has an appointed time to die (Heb. 9:27) and that God is in control.**

- **To live for Christ takes "endurance and faithfulness from the saints." We must learn to pray, listen, submit, and trust.**

THE BEAST FROM THE EARTH (REV 13:11-15)

ANOTHER BEAST

The 1st beast was from the "sea," the 2nd beast is from the earth. The symbolism of this isn't exactly clear, but the imagery may be connected to Jewish mythology.

- This will be a **religious leader and charismatic speaker** that will perform miracles and persuade people to follow the Antichrist.

2 HORNS LIKE A LAMB, BUT SPEAKING LIKE A DRAGON

This means that this corrupt, evil religious leader will appear meek and humble but will be like a dragon (Satan) with his motives (Matt. 7:15).

- This false teacher will deceive many by his "great signs." **This reminds us to not be "sign seekers," to test all things, and to worship in Spirit and Truth!**

THIS MAY BE BIGGER THAN ONE PERSON

The beast from the earth could be a corrupt religion or a distorted version of our faith. **Things like Docetism, relativism, and universalism have crept into the church already.**

- **The truth is sometimes offensive, but the truth ultimately protects us. Though it may not align with culture, we must hold strong to what is biblical.**

THE UNHOLY TRINITY

Satan, the beast from the sea, and the beast from the earth make up a parody of the true Trinity of God. Satan continues to mimic and distort the things of God to further confuse humanity.

- V14-15 get really weird when an "image" of the Antichrist is made and given "breath."

AN IMAGE OF THE ANTICHRIST

The evil religious leader will have a statue of some sort built of the evil political leader. The image will "speak" and kill people that don't worship it. What this looks like no one really knows.

- **False belief always works this way: following > worshiping > killing in the name of the leader**

THE MARK (REV 13:16-18)

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

Maybe the most famous thing in Revelation is the mark of the beast. The Antichrist "makes everyone... receive a mark on their right hand or forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless they have the mark."

- People have speculated if this will be a tattoo, a chip, currency, or not literal but a belief (like our mark).

IT IS CONNECTED TO THE ECONOMY IN SOME WAY

More than likely, the crowning achievement of the Antichrist is economic. Because of this he will change commerce in some way and be able to control who can participate.

- This will weed out Christians. We will be unable to feed our children and will become social outcasts.

IT IS A MARK OF ALLEGIANCE

Again, Satan is unoriginal and counterfeits God with his version of a mark. Satan's mark is "666," and the number is highly debated.

- 7 represents perfection and balance. If God is a perfect Trinitarian God (777), Satan's trinity is imperfect and not as good as God's (666). There are tons of other interpretations.

THE RABBIT HOLE OF GEMATRIA

People have a tendency to go a little nuts with numbers and certain words in Revelation. Gematria is the ancient practice of using names with numbers to "interpret" scripture.

- **The Bible isn't some map to find conspiracies, it is God's instruction and guidance on how we are to better relate to Him and others.**

"THIS CALLS FOR WISDOM"

John is essentially saying, "See if you can crack this code." As far back as 90 A.D. people have been trying to calculate empires and leaders to see who the Antichrist is.

- **Wisdom is focusing on the majors of this book and to not fall for gimmicks. We need to just pursue Christ and prepare for His return.**

COMING UP SHORT / WISDOM & TRUST

- People have an uncanny ability to make idols. We do this with **fame and fortune, possessions, people, relationships, political parties, and even religious practice. The problem with idols is that they always come up short.**
- People who are truly wise can recognize what is counterfeit. **The only way to grow wise in the ways of the Lord and spot counterfeit is to surround oneself with what is authentic and real.**
- Once we establish what is real, we need to trust that God is in control.