

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 26TH–27TH, 2024 // REVELATION

THE BEAST FROM THE SEA (REVELATION 13:1–4) THE EPIC DRAMA CONTINUES

The drama continues but becomes clearer as 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 two 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, Behemoth). More than likely this is referring to a sea of people.

- John is painting a picture of a monstrous person who 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 three more than the 7 mentioned in Chapter 12 showing that three 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** God/Jesus and the church.

- **There already exists a hatred towards Christianity that is both hypocritical and unique, but it will intensify.**

THE “BODY” OF THE ANTICHRIST

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

- **Until v. 3, this is a movement. The spirit of “antichrist” has been around millennia but eventually culminates in one person.**

- 1 John 4:3 (CSB)

“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, similar to Jesus, but it will be a mockery of the 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 Psalm 89:6–8 tells us to worship God.

- **We are to respect earthly authority, but never view it as a savior. There’s One Savior, and He is not a politician.**

WAGING WAR (REVELATION 13:5–10)

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

The Antichrist’s first objective is to **slander, boast, and blaspheme**. Eventually, this will lead to a “war” where people will be slaughtered for 42 months, and the Antichrist will proclaim himself god (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

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

FROM VERBAL TO PHYSICAL

God will allow Satan to “conquer” His people for a brief time through persecution and eventually martyrdom. Christians all over the world will be imprisoned and killed.

- **This is one of those very difficult topics that will only be completely understood in eternity.**
- Philippians 1:28–29 (CSB)

THE FAÇADE FAILS

So, this scene has already been written. Jesus mentioned false prophets in Matthew 24 who would deceive many people, even ones who appear to be Christians.

- **Those who don’t believe or have a superficial faith will fall for the Antichrist’s tricks, but true Christians will suffer.**

LISTENING AND TRUSTING (VS. 9–10)

When the Bible says, “If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen” we should listen. V. 10 is a reminder that **everyone has an appointed time to die (Hebrews 9:27) and 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 (REVELATION 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 (new age?), but the imagery may be connected to Jewish mythology.

- This will be a **charismatic religious/spiritual leader** who will perform miracles and persuade people to follow the Antichrist.

2 HORNS LIKE A LAMB, BUT SPEAKS LIKE A DRAGON

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

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

MAYBE IT IS BIGGER THAN JUST ONE PERSON?

The beast from the earth could be a false religion or distorted version of our faith. **Hasn’t relativism and universalism crept into the church already?**

- **Biblical Truth is offensive because it doesn’t align with culture, but we must cling to truth because it alone saves and protects.**

THE UNHOLY TRINITY

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

- Vs. 14–15 get really weird when an “image” of the Antichrist is made and given “breath.”

AN IMAGE OF THE ANTICHRIST

The religious leader will build an image of the political leader. The image will “speak” and have people killed who don’t worship it. We don’t know the mechanism, but things like AI make this more imaginable.

- **False belief evolves from intrigue to following, to worshiping, to violence.**

THE MARK (REVELATION 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 his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark.”

- Again, we don’t know the mechanism. It may also be a spiritual mark not a literal one.

IT’S CONNECTED TO THE ECONOMY IN SOME WAY

More than likely, the crowning achievement of the Antichrist is economic (currently our world is in crisis). He will change commerce in some way and be able to control who participates.

- This will weed out Christians. We will be unable to feed our families 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).**

THE RABBIT HOLE OF GEMATRIA

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

- **The Bible is God’s instruction on how to relate to Him and others and it wasn’t given to conceal truth, but to reveal it.**

“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 discover who the Antichrist is.

- **Wisdom focuses on biblical majors, not minors or gimmicks. Revelation reminds us to pursue Jesus and prepare for His return.**

COMING UP SHORT

- People have an uncanny ability to make idols. We do this with **attention/affirmation, possessions, people, relationships, political parties,** and even **religious practice.** **The problem with idols is that they inevitably come up short and leave us wanting more.**

COUNTERFEIT AND THE REAL THING

- In essence, the systems of the world that are ultimately “under the sway of the evil one” (1 John 5:19) present **counterfeit solutions meant to mislead us.**
- Counterfeits are cheap and easy but fail to last. **To identify counterfeits, we must be exposed to, and in contact with, the real thing.**

WISDOM AND TRUST

- When we come into contact with a genuine Savior who loves and is able and willing to lead and guide us, **we must trust in His Word, ways, and principles.**
- Trust in Jesus not only shows **wisdom** but produces more and more as we grow in that relationship (**pray, listen, submit, trust**).