

The Revelation – The Beast from the Earth

In last week's lesson we discussed the first of the beasts of the Revelation which came up out of the sea. Today we will look at the rising of a second beast found in Revelation 13:11-18

- (11) And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.
- (12) And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.
- (13) And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,
- (14) And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.
- (15) And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.
- (16) And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:
- (17) And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.
- (18) Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six.

As the first beast rose up from the sea, which would seem to indicate a republic, this second beast rises up from the earth. It would seem that this second beast is not so much from the people as it is from the conditions which exist upon the earth. It would seem to arise from a secular humanist viewpoint, one which puts humanity at the center.

There are a couple of interesting aspects to the description of this beast. First we're told that he has horns like a lamb. It seems, then, that this beast would appear to be perfectly innocent, just like a little lamb. You see, if people saw him for who he really is they would never follow him.

The next aspect that we see is that he speaks as a dragon. This would appear to me to mean that his voice is powerful, yet cunning. The dragon is the great deceiver, and this beast is no different.

The first beast was primarily a political leader, the second is primarily a religious leader. It would seem that the world must first be united politically before it can be united religiously.

I believe that the spirit that will raise up this second beast is already at work. As we look around us we see that the world as a whole has accepted a humanistic point of view. First, we find that most people have accepted unproven science over the Word of God. People have, in general, accepted the idea that the earth is millions of years old and that man has, in some way or another, evolved into being at the top of the food chain. Children are taught that self esteem is all-important. These are the types of things that this beast will feast on. If we're centered on self we cannot be centered on God.

This beast begins to focus the interests of the people on the first beast. He makes people worship government. This, too, is a factor which we're already seeing in American culture. Many people have become dependent upon the government, and government is expected to supply all our need. You see, government is taking the place of God.

This beast goes even a step further. He begins to be a worker of miracles. He is trying to imitate Jesus Christ himself, and the people of the world will follow him just as if he were Christ. You see, most people of the world do not recognize Jesus as the great Messiah, the miracle worker. This man, though, will be before their eyes. He'll be on TV every day, and he'll be a media darling.

At this point we see the real force behind the rise of the beasts, the economy. Once again, if we look at America, and many other democracies, we find that people often vote based upon economics, either real or perceived. The kingdom of Satan will take full advantage of this.

Another aspect of this kingdom is the full control of the economy. This is first an implementation of socialist ideas which are becoming more prevalent in modern democracies. This also appears, though, to be an answer to a growing problem in Western civilization, identity theft. The mark that is mentioned here appears to be an identifying mark for each individual that will link directly to the individual's bank account. Most likely biometric validation is required in order for the mark to be put in place.

The number, 666, which is given here is for our understanding. It has been the subject of much discussion. It would appear that this number is representative of the name of the beast. During the apostolic age it was common to assign numbers to names based upon their spelling. Notice that there are three things here which are counted, the mark of the beast, the name of the beast, or the number of his name. The mark, then, is distinctly different from the number 666, although I'm sure that there are many other fundamental Christians who would disagree with me. I believe that this is the time that Jesus talked about when everyone will be deceived, except for the elect (Matthew 24:24).

It would seem to me also that the division into three parts represents three distinct groups of people. Those who have the mark of the beast are presumably the common people. Those who have the name of the beast are likely those who are involved in the religious operations of the government. Those who have the number of the beast are likely those who are in charge of the government.

Now I do want to point out that these are only my thoughts on the Scripture and are not direct revelation from God. Some people will expound upon the Revelation as if what they have to say is absolutely correct. I'm just telling you what I'm reading, and I want to encourage you to read it and study it for yourself. Think about what it is saying, and pray that God will give you the wisdom to understand. It is important that we study this book as we prepare to enter the tribulation period.

Yours in Christ,

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