

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

**Episode Twelve: Revelation 13**

Who is this Beast who rises from turbulent seas at the siren call of the Red Dragon? This is the New World Order. It has a fatal wound, for it has risen repeatedly from the dead to appear as new reincarnations of an old Utopian dream. Who is the smaller beast who seduces people to worship the first? You must know these answers lest you find yourself tattooed with 666, the *Mark of the Beast.* For the first time in history, our digital world can accomplish what is predicted in Revelation 13. Vigilance is essential to surviving and thriving.

1. **The BEAST** **from the Sea.** [Revelation 13] *“And the Dragon stood on the shore of the sea.”* [verse one] Satan is calling the Beast to come forth from the sea. The Beast is his ally, servant, and creation. It comes to do his bidding, which, by definition can only mean that the Beast, like Satan, is hellbent on robbing, destroying, and killing.

* **It’s IDENTITY**. “…resembled a leopard, but had feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion…” [vs, 2] In Daniel 7 we see the prophetic vision of four great empires, each represented by a beast: The first is Babylon, pictured as the ferociousness and authority of a lion. The second is Persia, pictured as a bear with crushing power. The third is Greece, represented by the speed and stealth of a leopard. The fourth is Rome, only described as a power with iron teeth to chew up the nations.

**A Great World Order. T**hat is an extension of previous world powers. Expanding empires are seen as Beasts of Prey by God. Beasts live to consume lesser creatures, procreate, and expand their territory. That was Babylon, Persia, Greece, and the most ferocious of all: Rome. The iron teeth of Rome are not a picture of this Beast from the Sea because it is an extension of Rome, or like the ancient dream that was Rome in every way. Rome has been the inspiration for almost every modern Beast that has come out of the West [i.e. Charlemagne’s Holy Roman Empire and Hitler’s Third Reich or the Third Reign of Rome]. Napoleon dreamed of another Rome, as did the Czars of Russia (0r Putin today) and the Ottoman Sultans (or Turkey’s Erdogan) Beware of the *Pax Romana, Pax Britannia*, or even a *Pax Americana*.

**The Antichrist.** Other scholars see this as the Antichrist because verse two says, *“The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.”* It would seem to be talking about an individual because of the word “his”. That is textually problematic because the “his” could be referring to the dragon’s power, throne, and authority which *he* gives to the beast. But it matter’s little whether it is a government or it’s leader.

**Every great empire has had its Antichrist.** *Christ* is a Greek translation of the Hebrew word Mashi’ahh or *Messiah*. Which means, “the Anointed One” or “Deliverer”. *Ante* is the Greek word for negation. Literally Antichrist means “not the Anointed One or Deliverer or Savior.” He or she is the pseudo or fake messiah. A pretender to the throne that can only be occupied by the King of Kings, our Lord Jesus Christ. Empires rise because conquerors claim that they will save the world. Nebuchadnezzar was the antichrist of Babylon. Darius the Great was an antichrist of Persia. Alexander the Great was the antichrist of Greece. Augustus was one of the antichrists of Rome. **Every New World Order, conquering Empire must have an antichrist**. And this greatest of all Beasts will have the most sinister of all antichrists. Thus, he is known as the Great Antichrist. St. Paul calls him, *“The son of perdition, the man of sin, the lawless one.”* [2 Thessalonians 2:3]

* **Coming Out of the Sea.** [vs. 1]The Jews were land people. They were not seafarers like their neighbors to the north, the Phoenicians. In fact, they were afraid to venture out into the seas. Their poets and prophets often speak of the seas as turbulent, chaotic, dangerous, and uncertain. To them the seas were pictures of a turbulent and dangerous world. The nations of the world (*the goyim*) always seemed to be an unsafe place of chaos.

It is the turbulence of the nations that will give rise to this final world order and Antichrist. He will promise peace by establishing a seemingly-unbeatable power base. *“Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?”* [verse 4] St. Paul writes of the appeal of the Antichrist and the deceptive spell he holds over the world, *“When they are saying, ‘Peace and safety,’ then sudden destruction shall come upon them…”* [1 Thessalonians 5:3]

Compare Revelation 13:1 to Revelation 4:6. The Beast comes out of a turbulent sea, but around the throne of God is a sea as smooth as glass. Peace will not come from anything the world manufactures. It only comes from God. Jesus says to his disciples then, and in every age, *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give you. Do not let your heart be troubled…”* [John 14:27] Jesus repeatedly said that the false prophets proclaim all is well and at peace. Beware of politicians and political systems, or anyone else for that matter, that comes offering peace and security that only God can offer. Develop this discipline and you might just avoid getting the Mark of the Beast.

* **The Beast will come with great authority and power**. [vv. 1,2] **“Seven heads”**: though his power comes from the dragon, he ultimately is under the control of God. Seven is perfection. His rising fits exactly into God’s perfect plan for the ages. **“Ten horns**”: horns represent power and the number ten represents completeness or totality. He has, for a season, absolute and total power to rule the earth. **“Ten Crowns”**: Absolute authority on the earth for a season. Or it could mean a ten-kingdom coalition. Satan gives it his authority and power, but, ultimately, he cannot give what is only God’s to allow!!!
* **A fatal head wound that has been healed** [vs. 3] This is a resurrected empire or antichrist. Not so much an individual past antichrist or specific past world order, but the dream that never dies. The dream of a perfect World Utopia, and of a savior. Satan, nor any of us, can ever create anything out of nothing. Only God can do that. We can only create or reshape that which God has made to suit our purposes. God created a perfect paradise. The devil and our first parents destroyed it. Jesus came as the perfect Savior, and he was crucified. People, ever since, have tried to reshape him to fit their image, even as the people did when he was on this earth. Ultimately, every utopian idea or following of some pseudo savior is idolatry. In the end, it is devil worship or worship of his perversions of that which God created.
* **Government, pseudo-savior, and devil worship.** Remember, God ordained the concept of government to be good, whether family, church, or civil. But the devil and spirit of antichrist recreates it as a perversion of the original. So, it is devil worship to trust in these perversions. *“The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.”* [vs. 3] *“Men worshipped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshipped the beast, and asked, ‘Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?”* [vs. 4]

1. **The Pre-Wrath Tribulation**. [vv. 5-18] Remember, this is not sequential, but a parenthesis moment, describing the main characters in the final days. Your teacher believes that the trumpets are God’s wrath against the world, that comes after the great tribulation that the Antichrist wages against the church.

* **“The beast was given…authority for forty-two months,”:**  [vs. 5] Authority for what? To blaspheme God and to wage war against the saints. [vv. 5-7] From whom does that authority come? Seemingly, it comes from Satan. But ultimately it comes from God. Only he can allow the Enemy to attack his people [see Job 1&2] And God sets the terms: forty-two months or three and one-half years. [vs. 5]

We often speak of the Great Tribulation in terms of Seven Years. We have already seen that, before the Seven Trumpets of Wrath are blown, great numbers have already come out of “the Great Tribulation.” [*Rev. 7:14*] These are those who are, “…a great multitude that no one can count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language.” [Rev. 7:9] That parallels what we see in Revelation 13:7, *“He was given great power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.”*

This is not a Tribulation for the non-believers. They are safe from the attacks of the Beast or the Beast Master (Satan), because they worship them. *“All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names are not written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world.”* [vs. 8] His blasphemies and wars are against “God and his name” [vs. 6], “those who already live in heaven“ [vs. 6], and “the saints” [vs. 7].

This will be a time of great martyrdom of believers. And it might even be those who are now reading this prophecy in the book of Revelation: *“He who has an ear, let him hear: If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.”* [vs. 9&10] **Application**: It is wrong to deny the possibility of Christians going through the Great Tribulation based on the cavalier assumption that God would never allow those he loves to experience such pain and suffering. History proves otherwise. As does God’s cherishing of those who are martyrs. Secondly, on the off chance that your teacher may be right, we should be building our endurance and faith right now, so that we can stand, should we be called to live in these days yet to come.

**Pre-Wrath View:** The second three and a half months, after the Christians have been raptured, will be God’s wrath. There is a parallel in the two time periods. In the **Great Tribulation**, the Devil and his minions pour out hell’s wrath on Jesus’ true followers, and they stand firm to the end by God’s grace. In the **Great Wrath**, God pours out heaven’s wrath on Satan’s followers, and they will not stand in the end.

1. **The Beast out of the Earth**.[Revelation 13:11-15] Most scholars call this Beast “the false prophet.” [Rev. 16:13, 19:20, 20:10] With this Beast we now have the **unholy trinity**: The Dragon is he Anti-Father; the Beast from the sea is the Anti-Christ; and the Beast from the earth is the Anti-Holy Spirit. Satan counterfeits everything that is holy, and renders it an unholy copy of the real thing. That’s why the gullible are so easily deceived. Only discerning believers know the difference.

* **A Lamb with two horns** [vs. 11] Almost always, in Jewish literature, the lamb is associated with temple worship, or organized religion. Two horns may speak of **two governing authorities that work hand-in-hand: church and state.** Religion puts the crown on the king’s head, and the state gives it’s sword to protect the interests of religion. It has always been that way: The Emperors of Rome were also the Pontifex Maximus (Chief Priest of the Roman religion); Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of a new Holy Roman Empire by the Bishop of Rome. He was given the sword of the state in exchange, corrupting both church and state. America’s Founding Fathers saw how both state and church were corrupted when in league with each other, so their Constitution forbade such a union. When there is no separation, the state does corrupt things in the name of God, and likewise the church does corrupt things by using the backing of politicians and political methods. Beware of such unions. Evangelicals of all people, shouldn’t sell their souls to any political party, or trust in any political leader to accomplish biblical goals or bring religious security.

This final marriage of three beasts is the ultimate corruption. Notice this lamb is *“coming out of the earth*” [vs. 11] **It is man-made and earth-centered, not spirit-produced and heaven-centered**. This is carnal religion. Perhaps it is the final realization of the World Council of Churches: Pan-religion; the union of Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, and every other faith. Beware of any Pope, Imam, Guru, or Preacher who has the following powers: 1) *“miraculous signs, causing fire to come down from heaven.”*  He can even do what Elijah did, and what the great witnesses of Rev. 11:5 did. Jesus warned us not to be fooled by miraculous signs, [Matthew 7:18-23]. Even false prophets can do miracles, heal the sick, and prophesy. Even King Saul prophesied while he was consorting with a witch. Even Balaam’s donkey prophesied.

**And here’s the danger**: *“Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first Beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth.”* [vs. 14] But **the righteous won’t be fooled** by signs, wonders, and miracles. **They will listen to the words and watch the actions of those who speak pseudo-spiritual talk**. *“…but he spoke like a dragon.”* [vs. 1]

*“He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.”* [vs. 15] Beware of preachers who call us to give our allegiance to political movements, or look to governments or civil princes to accomplish the work of God’s kingdom!

*“He was given power to give breath to the image of the first Beast so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.”* [vs. 15] **In the history of the world there has been no greater evil and slaughter of humankind than those conquerors and their systems who have been given religious license to do the work of hell in the name of God.**

On his deathbed, Alexander the Great wrote a proclamation justifying his conquering of some 150 nations and kingdoms, and slaughtering over a million people, by saying that he had brought world peace and the superior religion of Hellenistic Greece to the barbarian nations. This last Antichrist, and his One World Order, like Alexander will claim the same thing with the help of his false prophet. But, like Alexander, and every other beastly power, from Egyptian Pharaohs to Communist dictators to many of today’s world leaders, they speak with the voice of the Dragon.

1. **The Mark of the Beast**. The false prophet will persuade most, and force many, to *“receive a mark on the right hand or on his forehead.”* [vs. 16] The Greek word for “mark” is a business term, describing seals of ownership that owners put on their property. When it came to slaves, they usually put that mark of ownership on their hands or foreheads.

* ***“It is man’s number. His number is 666.”*** [vs. 18] In Hebrew symbolism, six is the number of the human, for Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day. Three is the number of God. So , **three sixes are man declaring himself to be God**. This is the Mark of the Beast. Which Beast? Perhaps all three. The Dragon: the Archangel Lucifer who declared himself to be greater than God, and tried to take over heaven. The beast from the sea declares himself to be greater than Jesus Christ, and his system to be the great substitute for the kingdom of God and the paradise Jesus promises. The Beast from the Earth: declares himself to be greater that the Holy Spirit, and able to exercise the Spirit’s power and authority. The Mark of the Beast is man and his conceit to think that he can build what only God can create and sustain.
* **Wearing it has consequences**. On the one hand, *“…no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark...”* [vs. 17]. In the time of St. John, no one could conduct business without a certificate proving that they had declared the Roman Emperor was the chief among gods, nor could they conduct business unless they participated in their trade guild idolatrous orgies. In Communist China or Russia, Christians who didn’t toe the atheist lines lost their jobs, freedoms, and lives. Today, in America, we are beginning to see how people lose their social media voice, and even their jobs, when they don’t toe the politically correct line. **The day will come when we will have to lose everything if we choose to have the Seal of God’s ownership on us, rather than the Mark of the Beast’s ownership on us.**

**Yet, there is an opposite consequence**: that of wearing it: *“All of the inhabitants of the earth will worship the Beast—those whose names have not been written in the Book of Life.”* [vs. 8] **The truly saved will not be owned by the state, religion, or the savior de jour**. *“If anyone worships the Beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on the hand, he too will drink the wine of God’s fury…”* [Rev. 14:9&10]These people will not be raptured, will face the wrath of God for three and one-half years, and then hell forever.

* ***“This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight let him calculate…”***[vs. 18] There’s lots of speculation about this mark. Will it be a computer chip inserted in the forehead or hand? A passport of some sort that we carry in our hand? Who knows? In its simplest application, it is allowing some mark to be put on you that satisfies the New World Order. It will indicate that you are compliant to its blasphemies. It is a mark of ownership. In Nazi Germany, it was giving full allegiance to Hitler and his authority coming before God, country, and family. IF you truly belong to God, know his Word, are Spirit-filled, have the presence of Christ in you, and are willing to go the distance for Jesus, you will know—for you will have wisdom and insight.

Beware of the social media craziness out there. Note well: the Mark of the Beast is NOT a COVID vaccination, or a vaccination passport but, rather, it is obeying authorities when they ask you to disobey God and his Word.