



Citadel Of Faith Covenant Church

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ALPHA AND OMEGA

I have always loved the old television show, Batman. In it Batman and his faithful sidekick, Robin were dubbed the Dynamic Duo. Well this is what we notice in Revelation chapter thirteen with the introduction of the second beast. This will be an unholy dynamic duo. The first beast came from the sea and this beast originates from the land. Not only was the origin different, but also the appearance. This beast had horns like a lamb but it spoke like a dragon. We know that Satan is a deceiver and a counterfeit. His desire was to always be *like* God. Knowing that he could never be God, he has longed to deceive people into thinking that he is God. It must be mildly comforting to him to see how many people dress as devils have horns on their cars and have Satanic churches who worship him. Remember what Isaiah 14:13 stated about his desires. (read). We see now a unholy trinity, Satan and the two beasts. The dragon, Satan, appears in Rev. 12:3, then there is the beast from the sea/Antichrist and he receives his power from the dragon. The beast from the earth is called “the false prophet” to indicate the false miracles and prophecies that characterize him. This is not something new. We see that Satan has always attempted to disguise himself as something other than what and who he truly is ..a fallen angel. Read 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.

We’ve already looked at what the first beast looked like, what his range of authority would do. He would be a political leader and have influence over the nations and power systems of the earth. This second beast would appeal to the “spiritual” side of this unholy trinity. Just as Jesus and the Holy Spirit could not speak of themselves but only of the Father, so also is the case with these beasts. Notice Rev. 13:12, this second beast operated in all the power of the first beast (the anti-christ) and actually worship the first beast. This second beast moved the whole of humanity to worship the antichrist. Well how would the whole world be deceived at such a level. Remember we’re in the latter part now of the Great Tribulation. The world has seen inexplicable occurrences. Remember the rapture of the church, the scorching of all the earths grass and the loss of vegetation, plagues of locusts with scorpion powers, lingering diseases, massive loss of life, economic upheaval, heavenly visions which should have created reverence but seemed to deepen the cynicism. Who would make sense of all of this? Who would give reason to the chaos? The second beast would use miracles to bring clarity to these global happenings. Rev. 13:13 mentions that this second beast would be able to literally call down fire from heaven to earth in the full view of people. This underscores how Satan is the prince of the power of the air (Read Ephesians 2:2) Even today Satan is using calamities and catastrophes which are the result of a sin-influenced and fallen world to make people curse God.



Isn't interesting that these calamities are called, "acts of God"? Rev. 13:14 is the most troubling and interesting of all of the occurrences that I've seen thus far. Through the deception this second beast was given, he was able to order the inhabitants of the earth to set up an image of the first beast who was wounded by the sword but yet lived. This indicates that there might have been some false miracle that enabled this seemingly fatally wounded beast to resurrect. Well, an image is now erected. Rev. 13:15 states that the second beast was given power to breathe to the image and enable it to speak. What the image will say is that anyone who refused to worship the beast would be killed. Doesn't this sound familiar? Remember the three Hebrew boys who were given the command with the rest of the kingdom to worship the image of King Nebuchadnezzar? If they failed to do this those individuals would be thrown into a fiery furnace. Well, as the book of Daniel has referred to many other end time events, we see a inference to this moment when this breathing and speaking idol commands the same response. The difference.....Satan has been given power over the earth. This living idol also forced everyone to receive a mark on their right hands or foreheads so that they could not buy or sell anything unless they had the mark which is the name of beast (the antichrist) or the number of his name. Then the cryptic last verse of chapter thirteen says this calls for wisdom and that the person who has insight calculate the number of the beast and that number is the number of a man which is 666. I think that many people wanted to be the wise person in the text and try to figure out who this man might be. More than obsessing over the identity of the Antichrist, we should be more tenacious in ensuring that we are following the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The world economy will revolve around those who will worship the beast, thus having the mark which will give them access to food, clothing, shelter, etc. No beast worship, no life. What will make the power of this false prophet so palatable will be the spirit of the antichrist (I John 4:3) which is already at work in the earth. We have spent a considerable amount of time in our church to emphasize the proper use of spiritual gifts. The reason for this is that gifts, even from God, which don't build of the body or point to Christ are self-edifying. Read I Corinthians 14:2-5. Although the gifts of tongues is a spiritual gift which has the ability to build up a person, we have to know that when that gift is exercised in the wrong way, it actually tears down the church while building the person up. Improper use of spiritual things will pave the way for the most improper use of spiritual things the beast and the antichrist. Improper displays of God 's power actually continue the spirit of the antichrist and acts as a precursor to his unholy Trinitarian expression in Rev. 13. Can you imagine having to choose between your children, aging parents receiving medicine, food, shelter and the necessities of life and that of worshipping the beast. Would you compromise just to allow the innocent to live? All of us grapple with this far away possible scenario. Well, if we made this more apropos to today, we would notice that we make those choices daily. A little white lie, unseen sin, compromise so that we don't seem to be super-holy around our unbelieving friends or family. All of these are current examples of our idol-worship and mark bearing lives which still allow the antichrist to build his momentum and prepare for the ultimate antichrist to come. Let's choose Jesus.

Things to Ponder?

1. What are the differences between the first and second beast?
2. What is the meaning of the wound that was healed on the first beast?
3. What is the danger of using spiritual gifts that don't minister to edify the body or point to Jesus?
4. How do our daily decisions mirror that of the end time believers who have choices to accept the mark of the beast or not?