

INTRODUCTION

Someone said recently, “Do you know what you get when you cross a tiger with a parrot? I don’t know either, but when he talks, you listen!” When the Antichrist is going to reign on this earth after Jesus has raptured the church and the Christians into heaven. He’s going to have such power and wisdom in what he says that when he talks the world is going to listen. Tonight we’re going to talk about the “demonic duo”—the Antichrist and the false prophet. Let me remind you what is going to happen prophetically. We believe Jesus Christ could come back at any moment to rapture the church and the believers who are alive today will be caught up to be with the Lord. We will not be here during this seven year time of Tribulation. During this time of Tribulation there will be one world ruler who will come on the scene and preach, “Peace! Peace!” and the world will fall at his feet and follow him. For the first three and a half years his reign will be relatively peaceful as he makes alliances around the world but we’re clear that the last three and a half years of this period will be a time of great judgement and the wrath of God will be poured out. At the end of the seven year period Jesus Christ will return at the Battle of Armageddon and we are getting pretty close to that in our study of the book of Revelation.

As I preach on this, some say, “Are there some books I can read that kind of go into more detail about this?” The best one I would recommend is the one by Billy Graham entitled, *Approaching Hoofbeats*, because pretty much everything I am saying Billy Graham has the same idea in his book so I encourage you to get that book and read it if you want more details.

Tonight we are going to look at these two who are going to be servants of the devil.

Revelation 13:1-3: “And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea and I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.”

I. ANTI-CHRIST: THE BEAST FROM THE SEA

First we’re going to talk about the Antichrist, the beast from the sea. So when it says “he came from the sea” we’re not talking about a saltwater creature but the word “sea” here is a picture of a “rising out of the turmoil of political chaos.” This is clarified in Revelation 17:15 “Then the angel said to me, ‘The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.’” So this picture of the sea waters is a picture of political chaos of all the nations. Arising out of political chaos will be one individual whom we call the Antichrist. We call him the Antichrist because the Bible says in 1 John 2:18 “...you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour.”

A. His description

Notice three things about him. Number one is his description. It's no mistake that John describes him as a beast because in the eyes of John who has already had a vision of the holiness of God, this is a hideous creature to him. It has nothing to do with his physical appearance, but what he will do is what makes him so hideous to John. Look at chapter 13:1. These descriptions are so fantastic that a lot of people get tripped up and say, "There is no way in the world I can understand that!" The Jews use numbers to symbolize something Gematria. And they also use other things to symbolize other powers and antecedents. In other words look in verse 1, "ten horns," if you think of an animal with ten horns, ten is the number of governmental authority. Horns represent power. Then it says "seven heads" and you know seven is a number that represents perfection; head means wisdom. This man has unbelievable wisdom. "Ten crowns on his horns" we know those are crowns representing authority "and on each head a blasphemous name." What that means is he doesn't use his wisdom for good, instead he uses his extreme wisdom for evil and wickedness.

Then it says in verse 2, "the beast I saw resembled," Here are three pictures and if you know Bible prophecy they ought to ring a bell with you: Leopard, bear and lion. In the book of Daniel chapter 8, Daniel sees the same three animals. He reverses the order for Daniel; it's a lion, a bear and a leopard. For John it is a leopard, a bear, and then a lion. Why? Because Daniel is looking forward when he sees these and in a sense John is looking backwards. What do these three animals represent? It's really clear from Daniel that these represent three great world powers that were to come on the scene after Daniel prophesied it. The leopard is the representative of the Greek dynasty under Alexander the Great because Alexander the Great was so swift in the way he conquered lands he is described as a leopard. Alexander the Great died at the age of 33. He died of a broken heart because there were no more worlds to conquer. There's something about this Antichrist that is going to be reminiscent of Alexander. The bear—no, it's not Russia—instead that is the Empire of the Meds and the Persians because whereas Alexander moved swiftly to conquer lands like a leopard the Empire of the Meds and the Persians moved slowly, but surely. They rumbled along, but they conquered just as surely. Of course the lion represents what we believe to be the Roman Empire that came after that, because it was like a lion in its regal dynasty. So there's something about this Antichrist that reminds John of the character of Alexander the Great, the great Grecian dynasty, the Meds and the Persians and even the Romans.

Notice something very interesting about him verse 3. It says there is something about this Antichrist that really attracts the people's attention and it is that he has been fatally wounded and he comes back to life. That reference appears three times in this chapter. We can't avoid it because it's too important. What that means is some people believe the Antichrist is going to be injured in some way, maybe even killed and revive! Satan is the great imitator of God. Everything good God has ever done Satan has tried to imitate and it could be that just as God raised Jesus from the dead after he was killed that Satan is going to revive—not resurrect—Jesus was resurrected, Lazarus was not he was revived? He died again. The Antichrist is going to die again but Satan might revive him. Can't you imagine if we saw some world ruler assassinated on television and then a week or two later he comes back to life, don't you think that person would be pretty popular?

Now if you go out of here saying that I believe John F. Kennedy is the Antichrist you have missed what I have said so listen carefully! What if now this is a big IF—just pure speculation. What if John F. Kennedy suddenly came back on the world scene and said, “I know that you all saw me shot, but actually they put me in Cryonics and shipped me off to an obscure island like Scorpio. Then, they came up with some medical techniques and now I have been healed and I am alive again.” Don’t you imagine he would be an amazingly popular world figure? Sure he would! Now if you go out of here and say that I said that JFK is the Antichrist, I will deny it! I don’t believe he is. All I am saying is IF something like that happened, don’t you think the world would be astonished by it? There is going to be something miraculous about the Antichrist.

There are many references to the Antichrist in the Bible other than Revelation 13. Don’t let anyone deceive you, because they say, “Where is the coming of the Lord?” Jesus hasn’t come back yet. When is he coming?” Because Paul says, “Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day [the Second Coming] will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.” (2 Thessalonians, chapter 2:3) This is the Antichrist. “He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.”

Have you ever read in Matthew 24 or Luke 21 what Jesus talks about when he says, “When you see the abomination of desolation in the temple, Jews had better run for the hills? Because that’s when it is happening.” This is what Paul said is going to happen This is exactly what Daniel said is going to happen and exactly what the book of Revelation says is going to happen. There’s going to be a time when the Antichrist is going to set himself up in God’s temple in Jerusalem and say, “Worship me!” But don’t think he’s going to be all-powerful, because in verse 8 of the same chapter “And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.” (2 Thessalonians 2:8) That’s what Jesus is going to do to the Antichrist when he comes back. “The coming of the lawless one,” the Antichrist “will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refuse to love the truth and be saved. (2 Thessalonians 9-10)

B. His desire

Second, look at his desire in verse 4. It says, “Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, ‘Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?’” The desire of the Antichrist is to be worshiped! Satan’s desire has always been to be worshiped. He wanted to be like God. He wants to *be* God. That’s why it says in Isaiah that Lucifer exalted himself up and said, “I will make myself like the Most High” (Isaiah 14:14b) That’s why Satan took Jesus up on that mountain and gave him the panoramic spectacle of all the kingdoms of this world. He said, “Jesus, all this will be yours if you will just bow down and, worship me.” In a sense, Satan is going to be worshiped when they worship the beast.

C. His destruction

Look his destruction. When I say his destruction, I am not talking about how he will be destroyed but what he will do in his destructive reign. Look at verses 5-10:

“The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. [Three and a half years] He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. He was given power to make war against the saints [the Tribulation saints] and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.”

When Jesus died on the cross it was not God’s afterthought. It wasn’t a “plan B” It was something God planned from the very foundation of the world. The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. The Antichrist is going to blaspheme God. He’s going to stand on the earth and stand in the temple in Jerusalem and shake his fist at God and say, “God, if you are God destroy me right now. There is no God! Worship *me* instead!” He’s even going to blaspheme those who are in heaven.

Where are we going to be during the reign of the beast? In heaven! The Antichrist is going to blaspheme the Christians. Millions are going to disappear mysteriously when the rapture occurs. I can just imagine the old Antichrist saying, “You folks want to know what happened to all those fanatical Christians? I’ll tell you what happened to them. God destroyed them. They just disappeared and good riddance to them! They were all fanatical anyway!” He’s even going to blaspheme those of us who are in heaven. He’s going to make war against all of the Tribulation saints those who have accepted Jesus during the time of the Tribulation. He’s going to be very destructive in his power.

That brings us to a very interesting point. While we are talking about the Antichrist, I’ve told you Satan is always trying to imitate God. Satan even has an unholy trinity just like God, the Father God, the Son and God, the Holy Spirit. Satan who tries to imitate God in everything has imitated him with his own *unholy* trinity. Look Revelation 16:13. Since we are talking about two persons of this unholy trinity, let’s go ahead and look at all three of them. “Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast” (number two) and out of the mouth of the false prophet.” There you have Satan’s unholy trinity: 1) Satan, himself; 2) The beast (the Antichrist) and 3) The false prophet. Satan tries to imitate God, the Father. The Antichrist is his imitation of the Christ and the false prophet we are going to look at tonight is Satan’s imitation of the blessed Holy Spirit.

II. FALSE PROPHET: THE BEAST FROM THE EARTH

Look at the second character of Satan’s demonic duo, the false prophet—the beast from the earth. Revelation 13:9. This is a little interlude John gives the Christians who read this during any time, any age. “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.” In other words

John says you are going to face trouble in whatever age you live. Now here it is! “This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.”

Which saints are we talking about? In this instance all saints. The Christians in the early church were persecuted. They needed patient endurance. Christians today who are persecuted need patient endurance. Even during the time of Tribulation those Tribulation saints will need patient endurance.

Now let’s look at this second beast. Beginning in verse 11 John says, “Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth.” Now this is not the usual word for earth meaning “planet.” It is a word literally meaning “land,” “dirt.” It’s like a farmer would go out and pick up a handful of earth so many people believe this is talking about the land. In the Bible when it speaks of “the land” it is usually a reference to Israel so it could be this false prophet is going to come out of the nation of Israel. Verse 11b. “He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon.” A lamb doesn’t have horns but this one does, symbolically meaning he has evil. “He exercised all the authority of the first beast [the Antichrist] on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed.”

A. He serves Satan

Notice three things about this false prophet. Number one He serves Satan. When I say false prophet, I’m talking about someone who is like a preacher; someone who is like the Prime Minister of the Antichrist, his right-hand man, his Vice President. He’s the one who does things for the Antichrist. He has great power to speak and it says here that “he spoke like a dragon” and “he gets his authority from the dragon,” from Satan himself. He’s going to cause people to worship the Antichrist. Now the false prophet doesn’t want to be worshiped. He wants people to worship the Antichrist. That’s why I have said he is like the Holy Spirit in Satan’s imitation, because the Bible says that’s what the Holy Spirit does. The Holy Spirit doesn’t want to be worshiped himself. He’s always bearing witness for Jesus, wanting us to worship Jesus Christ. That is the role of the Holy Spirit. That’s what this false prophet is going to do, he’s going to try to get people to worship the beast, the Antichrist.

B. He makes miracles

The second thing he does is makes miracles. Just because you see miraculous things happen, don’t think it is all from God. If you’ll remember in the Old Testament even Pharaoh’s servant caused some kind of miracles along with Moses. Just because you see a miracle, don’t go running off thinking God is absolutely in it because Satan has power to imitate God even in terms of signs and wonders. We read that in II Thessalonians. Let’s read about it here in verse 13 “And he [the false prophet] performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men.” Billy Graham says that very well could be a nuclear bomb he causes to be dropped that explodes in the air. Verse 14 “Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.” That’s the third time it says the Antichrist was killed or was fatally wounded and then he lived. When it says he was wounded by the sword, it could mean it was some kind of a violent

attack, an assassination attempt. Verse 15. “He [the false prophet] 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.” He’s going to be a miracle maker.

I want you to try to visualize what John saw two thousand years ago. John saw an image he could not relate to. When I say the word “image” what do you think of? You may think of a statue or carving but the word “image” can simply mean a picture. The thing that made this vision so remarkable to John is here was an *image* of this beast that he saw and suddenly that image starts doing something John could not imagine happening: The picture, the image, started speaking! I wonder if any of you have a box with a screen on it that has an image that talks to you in your home. I imagine everybody in this room does. It could be that is what John saw. He had no point of reference in his own time. All he saw was a picture, an image, but suddenly that image starts to speak and move and give orders. It could be that’s exactly what John saw, something that in our generation is not at all fantastic. Something that in our generation does not surprise us at all and this image spoke and told everybody, “You must now worship me! I am your God!”

C. He controls commerce

The third thing about the false prophet that is really amazing is he not only serves Satan and makes miracles but he controls commerce. He is going to be the Prime Minister of the Antichrist. Now this is a portion of scripture you have heard referred to many times but, perhaps, you’ve never understood it. Here it is in Revelation 13:16:

“He [the false prophet] also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man’s number. His number is 666.”

This false prophet is going to control commerce. Somehow he is going to require that everyone have some kind of number or something on their hand or their forehead. Now to you and to me does that sound too fantastic? Don’t we have the technology to make that work today? Today when I walk into a restaurant or I get gas or something, I have a credit card here that they slide through a machine and it registers with a company office hundreds of miles away and it approves my purchase. If I don’t get approval for that purchase, I am not allowed to leave without paying for it. In a real sense I am controlled in that sense already. How many of you go to the grocery store and notice that no longer does the checkout person punch in all of the numbers of all the prices of the groceries. They scan the bar codes. There are a lot of people who believe this could be the basis of what this is going to be. The only problem with credit cards is they get lost. Now they are putting pictures on credit cards. I promise you the very next step even beyond putting your picture on the credit card is putting the credit card ON you! You are known as a number right now. We have so many numbers right now I’m known as a Social Security number, a Texas Driver’s License number I’m known as all these different account numbers. One of these days, somebody is going to say, “Hey let’s forget about that. Let’s just get one number for you. It’s a number you’re given when you are born and we’ll give everybody one number and to really

make it easier we can imprint it on you so nobody can see it, either on your hand or your forehead. Nobody can see it. It’s a little bar code that’s your number.” So when you walk into a store, they just scan you and your purchase. There are many people who want us to move to a “cashless society” anyway. Many people want us to move toward one world monetary systems. Every time you hear any government official talk about the “New World Order” do you know what they are talking about? They’re talking about a one-world government one-world monetary system, one way of control. The only way something like that can work is if everybody participates. The old false prophet and the Antichrist are going to say, “Listen! We’re going to have to *make* you participate. If you don’t participate, you can’t buy! You can’t sell! You cannot eat!” Now if you think I am saying grocery store checkout persons are the Antichrist or credit cards are wrong, you’re mistaken. Credit cards are wrong because many people misuse them and abuse them. There are some people who don’t even like to have anything to do with computers because they think the Antichrist is going to use a computer. He probably will, but that doesn’t make the computer bad. He may use the television, but that doesn’t make the medium of television wrong itself or the medium of a credit card or bar codes wrong in themselves. These are just tools he very well could use.

And he says you’re going to recognize this by the number 666. I’ll tell you if you study as much as I have studied about this, you’ll almost burst out in laughter to read all the fantastic interpretations of 666. I’ve heard of everything from Napoleon to Edie Amin to Hitler to Jimmy Carter to everybody you can imagine. I’m sure somebody has figured out it is Bill Clinton somehow by putting all the numbers in and transposing them. Let me tell you what I firmly believe 666 means. Look at verse 18, “Calculate the number of the beast, for it is a man’s number,” or literally the number of a man. Do you remember when we started the study of Revelation I gave you what all the different numbers in Jewish Gematria means? One is the symbol of unity; two is a number symbol for witness; three is the number for God the trinity Father, Son, Holy Spirit; four is the number of the earth; five is nothing but a division of ten but the number six is the number of man. Man was created on the sixth day; he labors for six days and rests on one; seven is the number of perfection. Six is a man’s number so I don’t think this is trying to be any kind of strange message for you to figure out and transfer numbers and letters. All it is saying is that it is a man’s number, 666. But six in three multiples of three is the number of God; it is man’s attempt to be like God. It’s as if he’s trying to be 777—perfection—in the idea of God but man always falls short. Ladies some of you may think you’re a ten but the best you can go is a six. Some of you guys may wish you were a ten, but the highest you can go is a six. Six is almost seven and the Old Testament does not literally say God created us a little lower than the angels. Look in the Hebrew text; it literally says God created us a little lower than Elohim than God. Man will never be God, as much as he wants to be God, he will never be God. So this is what 666 represents. I believe the ultimate attainment of man without God. The Antichrist will get closer than anybody else. He wants to be 777—the trinity of perfection, but the best he will ever do is 666. I think John is saying when you see a man stand up and claim to be God, that’s when you will recognize this is the one the scripture warns about.

CONCLUSION

Having said all that, the good news is if you are born again and you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, thank God you are not going to have to deal with this

character! If you are saved and you are glad to be saved say, “AMEN!” Sometimes I ask that question and my next question is, “If you’re lost and you are going to Hell and you are excited about it, say “AMEN!” Nobody ever says anything to that. If you are not a Christian and you have never been born again there are many, many reasons you ought to accept Jesus. One reason you ought to accept Jesus is because he died for you, and he loves you with an unending love. There are several deadlines you are facing. One deadline is your own death. You don’t know if you’ll be alive tomorrow morning and if you have not settled the question of your own salvation, you need to accept Jesus tonight. There’s another deadline. You may be saying, “Pastor, I feel great! I’m so strong! I know I have years to live!” There’s another deadline. Jesus could come to rapture the church at any moment and you would be left behind during this terrible time of Tribulation. So if you’re not sure you’re sure that you’re sure that you’ve been born again you make that decision tonight!

OUTLINE

I. ANTI-CHRIST: THE BEAST FROM THE SEA (vs. 1-10)

A. His description (vs. 1-3)

<u>CHRIST</u>	<u>ANTICHRIST</u>
Son of God	Son of perdition
Man of sorrows	Man of sin
Lamb	Beast
Seed of woman	Seed of the serpent
Truth	Lie
Holy One	Wicked one

B. His desire: To be worshipped (vs. 4)

C. His destruction: His blasphemy will lead to his fall (vs. 5-10)

Satan's Unholy Trinity (vs. 16:13)

1. The Devil-Anti-Father
2. The Beast-Anti-Christ
3. The False Prophet-Anti-Spirit

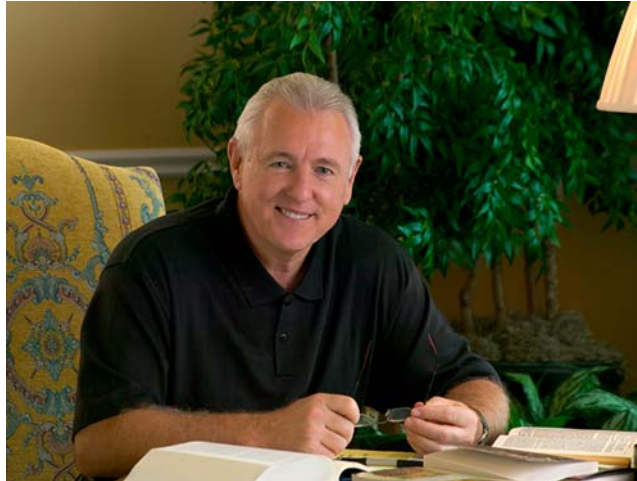
II. FALSE PROPHET: THE BEAST FROM THE EARTH (vs. 11-18)

A. He serves Satan (vs. 11-12)

B. He makes miracles—makes an image of antichrist come alive (vs. 13-15)

C. He controls commerce—credit cards may be imprinted on a forehead or hand (vs. 16-18)

"666" =The ultimate attainment of man without God. A trinity of imperfection



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For the Joy...
Pastor David Dykes