

OBSERVATION STUDY SERIES

# REVELATION

ANOTHER BEAST

13:11-18

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## Revelation 13:11-18

### Another Beast

As we continue to observe a major interlude in the seals, trumpets, and bowls (the one before the seventh trumpet judgment begins), we again encounter heinous treachery. In reality, deception is nothing more than a trick, a sham, a fraud, a pretense... but it can be lethal... and in this case, it will be...

***Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon.*** Revelation 13:11

Here is another beast, different than the beast described for us in the first half of this chapter. The first beast came up out of the sea; this one comes up out of the earth. The first beast had ten horns; this beast has two horns. The first beast had diadems (the sign of a ruler) on his horns; this beast has horns like a lamb. The first beast had a mouth like a lion; this beast speaks as a dragon. This beast is very different from the first beast, but they have frightening features in common—the second beast exercises all the authority of the first beast.

***He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.*** Revelation 13:12

The first beast will receive his authority from Satan, and Satan has a lot of authority. (Remember though, all authority comes from God, Who will always and ever be in control.)

We are told that the first beast exercises all the authority of the first beast *in his presence*—the first beast is definitely the premier sovereign of the two. The second beast makes the earth and the earth-dwellers worship the first beast. We are reminded that the first beast had previously experienced a fatal wound. His miraculous resurrection is obviously part of his persona—one of the reasons the world will worship him.

***He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.*** Revelation 13:13

The second beast performs great signs to the world. One of his signs is making fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. Hmmm... does this sound familiar? Think about the two witnesses who were just killed by the first beast...

Satan (through the first beast, and now through the second beast) is mimicking what he has seen before. He's a copycat artist—the great deceiver.

***And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.*** Revelation 13:14

Reason with me for a moment... The two witnesses tormented the earth (and righteously so) for 42 months before the beast came on the scene and defeated them. One of the reasons the earth now worships the beast is because he was able to murder the two witnesses. What did the two witnesses do during their tenure in Jerusalem? Yep. They brought fire out of their mouths and killed anyone who wanted to harm them. Do you think the world will remember the fire from the two witnesses? Do you think the second beast will impress on them that his power and authority are greater than that of the two witnesses? Will that cause the world to follow him and his master, the beast, even more closely? Yep.

By the way, the Greek word for “fire” is *pur* and is the exact same word used in Revelation 11:5 (the fire from the witnesses' mouths) as it is here for the fire from heaven. It carries the idea of lightning. If someone were able to cause lightning to strike the earth whenever they desired, would you sit up and take notice? Yep. (It also gives us a whole different picture of how formidable the two witnesses were for their 42 months on the earth.)

So what exactly is the deception? Well... the two witnesses were *true* prophets of God. What does this guy (second beast) want people to believe? He wants the world to believe that he, too, is a true prophet of God—that is why, a little later on in Revelation, John will call him the false prophet.

How is he able to deceive all the unbelievers on the planet? By the signs which he is given the ability to perform. No matter what technology affords the human race during this time, the ability of a human to perform supernatural signs will be the ticket to gain the following of the earth-dwellers.

We are reminded here that the second beast's power to perform great signs seems to be connected closely with being in the presence of the first beast. The first beast, or anti-christ, who claims to be God, will have a partner-in-crime—the second beast, or false prophet. He will perform signs in the presence of the one who claims to be God. He will attest to the world that his powers come from the one whose presence he is in. He will say, *“How do I perform these great signs? Through the power that my God gives me! When I am in his presence I am able to perform these great signs! Let me remind you of what I can do! Watch out! Here comes a lightning bolt!”*

He won't neglect to remind the world that their “God” proved himself to be God through his resurrection from the dead, which is intended to usurp the resurrection of the Son of

God, Jesus Christ. (We subsequently learn that the beast's death was caused by the sword.) Through his elaborate treachery, the counterfeit man of the cloth will be able to deceptively corroborate the divinity of the beast.

His next move will be to thoroughly convince the world that the beast deserves to be worshiped (after all, even unbelievers accept the fact that only the one, true "God" deserves to be worshiped). So he will tell the earth-dwellers to make an image to the beast.

***And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.*** Revelation 13:15

He will be given the power (he will not have it on his own) to give breath, or a spirit of life, to the image of the beast. The image will then be enabled to speak. Those who do not worship the image of the beast will receive a death sentence. Grammatically, it is the image who orders their executions. It has been a common practice through the centuries for idols to be synonymous with false gods. This larger than life image seems to encompass the life being of the beast, himself through the evil spirit which resides in it.

When people follow a false god, they ultimately worship it... and those who refuse to do so in due course are killed...

***And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.*** Revelation 13:16-17

We have now reached a fairly familiar place in Revelation—the mark of the beast. The mark will be placed on the right hand or forehead of every unbeliever on the earth. Whatever their social position is, small or great; whatever their financial status is, rich or poor; and no matter their state of freedom, free men or slaves—they will be forced to receive it. Without the mark, no one will be able to buy anything at all—no gas for their cars, no food for their families, no clothing, no parts for their plumbing or electrical needs... nothing... period. And no one will be able to sell necessities to anyone without the mark either.

The mark is defined as the name of the beast or the number of his name. Yes... another familiar detail is about to be disclosed...

But before we go to the next verse let me point something out to you. People often get, well... paranoid about what this mark is. They think about certain technological advances and think it might be the mark of the beast. But we must remember more than just the fact that the beast is going to give the earth-dwellers a mark. Unless there is a

temple that is rebuilt (which there is not), and a seven year covenant or treaty that has been broken (which there is not), a world ruler who has come back to life (which there is not) you don't need to worry. The first six seal judgments need to take place first, which they have not. The first six trumpet judgments need to take place, which they have not. The two witnesses need to make an appearance and torment the earth for 42 months, and they have not.

I could go on and on with events that need to take place before the mark of the beast is even a possibility—we're just not there yet! And we certainly don't need to worry that we could possibly miss these events—no one will miss them! The global media won't let anyone miss these things! Not to mention everyone will experience all these events in the heavens and on earth first! The mark of the beast won't come until all these other things either have taken place or are in place.

In addition, we don't need to worry that we might *accidentally* take the mark of the beast. It's not something that you might do now and then later someone will say, "*Oooh! You have the mark of the beast and you didn't know! Now you're stuck!*" For instance, I'm not going to let anyone put a "chip" inside of me, but it won't be because I'm afraid it's actually the mark of the beast, or that someone could forcefully turn it into the mark of the beast in the future—it just doesn't line up with Scripture. When the mark of the beast is given, believe me, everyone will know what it is at the time!

The anti-christ will use the effects of this mark to find out who and where the Jews are, along with anyone who helps the Jews at that time. The whole world will take the mark; whoever doesn't will eventually, if not immediately, die...

At that time, the Jews who believe in their Messiah will not take the mark. They will be put in prison, they will be sick and hungry and in need of everything including clothing. Those who help the Jews (the brethren of Jesus in Matthew 25) will take great risks for the sake of the Jews, but they will not take the mark. It seems reasonable that only a believer would be willing to put his life at risk for those whom the anti-christ was hunting down.

Now on to the verse that it seems everyone in the world is aware of...

***Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.*** Revelation 13:18

Twice in Revelation we are given helpful information that only goes to the one who uses wisdom to understand it. The one who has understanding will be able to calculate the number of the beast because it is that of a man. The number is... are you ready... don't be scared, now... I'm going to actually write it... here it goes... I'm holding my breath because it's the most terrifying number in all the world... **666!!!!!!** (Hmmm... nothing happened on my end, did it on yours?) We all actually survived THE NUMBER!

We have all heard the stories of people who were afraid to take a telephone number which read something like, “666-0666” Of those who would not stay in hotel room number “666” or take the license plate number “666 ANTI”. One night while I was teaching a two year course on the book of Revelation, I turned to the white board and wrote “666” in gigantic numbers. The entire class gasped. I chuckled inside because I had expected their reaction. I wanted to make a point—most people (including Christians) are superstitiously intimidated of an innocent little math number. I wanted them to know that they, too, were probably affected more than they would like to admit.

How about you? How do you feel when you see the number 666? Does it make you want to back up a step or two? Would you rather not be in its presence?

The number 666 won't hurt you! Nothing is even in place yet! Let me tell you something—this number is a *blessing from God!* God has given us this number to *identify* the beast. That is the blessing. This is the mark of the *beast*—not the mark of the *people*. Do you see it? God has marked *him*. This is a good example of the true biblical meaning of the word “anoint”. God will mark him so he can be identified. “666” is God's blessing to all who live on the earth during that terrible time! Those who know God's Word will know the truth about the beast. Therefore, when the man who is the beast is identified they will be able to reject him, rather than follow him.

Sooooo... do not be afraid to live at “666 Tribulation Lane”! I'm sort of smiling because I know how much this number bothers most people. But the truth is that God is doing nothing more than telling us how to identify the man—the number itself is nothing to be afraid of. It's not a *bad* number—God made math and He did it to help us. (By the way, one early manuscript reads “616” which really ruins a lot of popular books.) Okay, enough about this... but I hope the next time you run into the dreaded number “666” you will consider what the Bible actually says about it rather than entertaining trepidation. Perhaps you will even be able to offer a prayer of thanksgiving to our wonderful God for sovereignly planning everything out down to the last righteous detail—and all for His Glory!

One other thing before we leave this section. Have you ever heard of the “unholy trinity”? You've just met them! While the Holy Trinity consists of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, the unholy trinity consists of Satan the dragon, the beast the antichrist, and another beast the false prophet.

The two trinities are diametrically opposed to one another and yet the unholy group sets out to mimic the true. Just as God the Father gives His authority to Jesus Christ, His Son, so also Satan will give his authority to the antichrist. And just as the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ, the Son of God, so will the false prophet glorify the antichrist.

Another interesting similarity, or should I say contrast... The false prophet gives the image the ability to speak forth death on behalf of the antichrist, but the Holy Spirit gives Christians (who are being conformed into the “image” of God's Son) the ability to speak forth life on behalf of Jesus Christ...