



**SOLID  
BREAD**

## A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 64: The Rise of the Beasts, Part 1

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### I. Review:

- A. Last week, we concluded **Ch. 12 of Revelation**. We focused on a future war in heaven that will take place between Michael and his angels on one side, and Satan and his angels on the other side.
- B. This war will be at about the midpoint of the Tribulation, and we learned that Satan will lose his access to heaven at this point.
- C. His longstanding role as “the accuser of the saints” before God will end, and Satan will be hurled down to the earth where he will then – and there - be confined.
- D. He will be angry because as **Revelation 12:12** tells us, “*he knows that his time is short.*”
- E. **I want to step back a couple paces here and review the events that we’ve learned will take place right around this ‘halfway point’ of the Tribulation:**
  1. First, there is the death and resurrection of The Two Witnesses. Their ministry begins at the start of the Tribulation, and it ends at the halfway point.
  2. There is the death and resurrection of the antichrist somewhere around this point in time as well. I personally feel the antichrist assumes one form BEFORE his death, and something ELSE after his resurrection.
  3. There is the blowing of the Seventh Trumpet Judgement which signals a transition into the second half of the seven-year Tribulation.
  4. Also, there is the Abomination of Desolation in which the antichrist unilaterally nullifies the covenant he had made with Israel 3 ½ years before. Then he goes into the temple and demands self-worship.
  5. There is the sudden and tactical ambition of the antichrist to exterminate all the Jews. As Jesus warned in **Matthew 24:15-20**, this is a time for the Jews to drop everything and flee into the mountains.
  6. The pursuit of these fleeing Jews by Satan as they make their way to the wilderness of Jordan, which will, by that future point, be part of Israel.
  7. There is God’s supernatural protection of these fleeing Jews, this remnant of believing Jews that will read the Scriptures and take Jesus’ words at face value.
  8. Then there is this war in heaven in which Michael and his righteous angels defeat Satan and his fallen angels, and Satan ends up being confined to the earth.
  9. It will be around this halfway point of the Tribulation that the Mark of the Beast is implemented. We will studying that soon here in **Chapter 13**.
- F. So, as you can see, it is right around the halfway point of the Tribulation that a lot of very significant events occur. **Chapters 11 and 12 of Revelation** detail some of these events so that we can see the changes that are taking place.

1. REALITY CHECK: Things are tough right now in this world. As bad as things will get before the Rapture, it's not nearly as bad as things will become in that period of time between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation.
2. As bad as things will become between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation, I believe this is the time of the Seal Judgements. They are going to get a whole lot worse once the Tribulation starts.
3. And finally, as bad as things will be in the first half of the Tribulation, things will take a precipitous turn for the worse at the halfway point. This is the point where "The Great Tribulation" begins, and it's another way of distinguishing how things become SO much more dangerous and difficult.
4. It's why Jesus said in **Matthew 24:22**, "*If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive.*" By the end of the seven-year Tribulation, there will be very few people left alive.
5. So, it is this final 3 ½ years that are the worst of the worst. It is the start of this final phase that we are at now as we begin our study of **Revelation Ch. 13 (vss 1-4)**.

## II. **Several observations and key points:**

- A. First, in **Ch. 12**, we saw a dragon, representing Satan, with seven heads and ten horns who attempted to disrupt the ministry and destroy the person of Jesus Christ, and who subsequently persecuted Israel.
  1. Now, the scene in **Ch. 13** shifts to describe a beast. This is the antichrist as we will learn in this chapter, who also has seven heads and ten horns, so what do we make of this description?
  2. First, the beast, the antichrist, is very closely identified with the dragon. As **vs. 2** says, "*The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.*"
  3. So, the Bible, at this point in the timeline, ties the functions and features of Satan and the antichrist together very closely.
  4. It's why some commentators try to make the point that Satan and the beast here are one and the same, however it is very clear from the plain reading of the text that they are two different entities.
- B. Second, what **Chapter 13** is describing is the rise of the antichrist, and the focus is on this ascent and his role, particularly after the halfway point.
  1. Prior to now, in **Revelation**, there has been very little discussion about the antichrist, as this surprises a lot of people to hear that, but consider the following:
    - a. Seal Judgement #1 describes the onset and sweeping success of globalism in the wake of The Rapture.
    - b. Some people see the white rider on the white horse as specifically "*being*" the antichrist, but I think it's better to see it as the onset and embracing of

globalism: that political system in which the antichrist will arise and become a superstar.

- c. Remember, each of the first four Seal Judgments describe the onset of events in the world, and the various socio-economic dynamics within which other specific things take place. (i.e. war and conflict, economic ruin and famine, genocide and martyrdom, etc.)
  - d. Seal Judgment #1 is not so much about the antichrist as an individual, but it is about the rapid embracing of globalism and that political system in which the antichrist will subsequently rise and become a star player.
2. The antichrist is first CLEARLY mentioned in **Revelation** back in **Ch. 11** where we read in **vs. 7** “...the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them and overpower them and kill them” (the Two Witnesses).
- a. It’s from this passage that we see the relationship with the demonic horde that comes up from the Abyss earlier in **Revelation 9:11**.
  - b. It’s in **Revelation 9:11** that a direct connection is made between the “King of the Abyss” (named Abaddon or Apollyon) and the beast - - or the antichrist.
  - c. But - - so far, we’ve had very little mention of the antichrist specifically in **Revelation**. We’ve had hints of his power, his spiritual origin, and his worldwide influence, but we’ve not been told anything too substantive, until now.
- C. Third, we see the “dragon standing on the shore of the sea....”
- NOTE: This is a symbolic statement which tells us several things:
1. To start, the dragon (or Satan) having just been cast out of Heaven after his defeat by Michael and his forces, comes to the earth looking for an instrument or means by which he can carry on his warfare against God.
    - a. Remember, he is filled with fury, and he knows his time is short.
  2. It’s here we see Satan is clearly the malevolent power behind the rise and the evolution of the Beast, or the antichrist:
    - a. This conforms to what we are told in **2 Thessalonians 2:4** “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.”
    - b. That statement is true at the onset of the antichrist’s rise to global prominence after The Rapture, and it is true even at the halfway point of the Tribulation.
    - c. This is the point when the antichrist is miraculously raised from the dead, and the intensity of world chaos takes a precipitous and dramatic turn for the worse.
  3. The references to sand and sea denote an innumerable or a great population.
    - a. This is easily seen by a comparison of this passages to the time when God promised Abraham that his seed would be as the sand of the sea in multitude (**Cf. Genesis 22:17**).
    - b. The sea is shown as a symbol of the restless nations of the earth. For example, further in **Revelation**, we will see that the ‘many waters’ are ‘peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues’ (**Cf. Revelation 17:15**).

- c. I would add one more thing here at the risk of getting ahead of myself: this “sea” element suggests that the antichrist is from Gentile origins, and that conforms to what the Bible says elsewhere about where the antichrist will come from.
  - d. Conversely, the “earth” element describing the rise of the False Prophet (**Cf. vs. 11**), MAY suggest Jewish origins. More on all this later....
4. John records in the second part of **vs. 1**: *“I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, etc.”* He then proceeds to describe the beast.
- a. Again, we see the “seven heads and ten horns” element which we have studied before. This is explained in greater detail in **Revelation 17:9-11**.
  - b. We know the ten horns represent “ten kings” which will exist in prominence at this future time, and who will give their power and authority to the antichrist.
  - c. We also see that one of the seven heads has a “fatal wound which has been healed.” We know from the greater counsel of God’s Word that the antichrist is likely to experience a real death and a real resurrection.
    - This, of course, is through Satanic power, and it will serve to counterfeit Jesus’ own death and resurrection. It will be fully convincing to the depraved world at that time.
    - This fatal wound is mentioned also in **Zechariah 11:17** which describes the antichrist, and which reads as follows:

*“Woe to the worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! May his arm be completely withered, his right eye totally blinded!”*

**NOTE:** The phrase which describes the antichrist’s fatal wound is the identical phrase used in **Revelation 5:6** which describes the “Lamb as if it had been slain.”

- d. The words “as if” are used to describe the appearance after having been slain and then being brought back to life.
- e. We know this was a literal fact with the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. There is no justification to take this as merely a “wound” here when it describes Jesus Christ as having been “slain.”
- f. So likewise, the EXACT IDENTICAL phrase being used to describe the antichrist’s fatal head wound should be understood the same way: it is a literal death and resurrection.
  - There are some who struggle with the idea that the beast could *truly die* because this would require a literal resurrection from the dead. They feel this is something that only God is capable of, and they refuse to consider what the Bible is really saying.

- Any reluctance to consider this possibility provides evidence of the tremendous influence that such an event would have upon those who witness such a miracle! That is part of the reason the world is *“astonished.”*
- As a reminder, if the False Prophet is able to give breath to the inanimate image of the beast (**Cf. Revelation 13:15+**), then couldn't God also permit Satan to exercise the necessary power to raise the dead?
- Once again, **2 Thessalonians 2:4** reminds us that, *“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.”*
- It's all counterfeit supernatural processes. Satan desires to deceive the fallen world and he will “pull a fast one” here with the death and resurrection of the antichrist.
- It's interesting that, like the resurrected Christ who retained the identifying marks of His death after His resurrection, so too the resurrected antichrist will retain the marks of wounds which caused his death.
- They will serve to authenticate his identity as the leader who was previously slain - - and this will be extremely convincing to the earth dwellers of that time.
  - Whatever causes the antichrist's death, the Scriptures seem to suggest it is due to a head injury of some type. It leaves the antichrist with right eye blindness and a lame arm.
  - As I mentioned, this resurrection and recovery leaves the world and the antichrist's followers *“astonished”* in **vs. 3**, and it contributes to the way they follow the beast.
  - They exclaim in **vs. 4**, *“Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?”*
  - It's possible that the antichrist suffers this mortal head wound in some sort of war, conflict, or altercation. (We are not told). The result of his recovery is his depraved followers see him as indomitable.
  - I personally believe that this event is PART OF the reason the world takes the Mark of the Beast.
  - No, they do not want to forfeit their lives, and yes, they want to be able to eat and live.
  - However, I think there is an adoration factor as well which causes the antichrist's followers to worship him and to WANT TO BE LIKE HIM (more on this when we study **vss. 16 and 17** in this chapter).

## 5. John describes the antichrist as representing several creatures (**Cf. vs. 2**)

- a. These attributes of a leopard, a bear, and a lion are all mentioned, and this recalls the vision Daniel had back in **Daniel Ch. 7**.
- b. What John sees and records here is a composite of the four creatures Daniel saw in his vision of current and future Gentile kingdoms. These two portions of Scripture are clearly related.
- c. As one commentator puts it: *“The magnificence of Babylon, the vastness of Medo-Persia, the dominating culture of Greek Macedonia, and the organizing might of Rome are united in one state that will aspire to world domination and will achieve it.”*
- d. It’s interesting that the order in which the attributes are listed: leopard then bear then lion, are reversed from what Daniel saw.
- e. Daniel saw it as lion, bear, and lastly leopard, but in **Revelation Ch. 13**. We have John’s vantage point “looking backwards in time,” therefore he sees them in an opposite order.

D. We can arrive at a series of conclusions with this information:

1. The main focus of the antichrist’s kingdom will be those territories which the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Greek empires once comprised.
2. These territories collectively became the Roman Empire, and with it some additional land.
3. As we learned earlier in this class, the Roman empire never went away. It just kept changing form, function, and focus until today it is known as the Roman Catholic Church.
4. The Roman Catholic Church can be traced all the way back to the Roman Empire that was in full sway during the time of Jesus Christ. (We had some earlier lessons in this class on that very matter).
5. Moreover, in the prophecy of Daniel’s 70 Weeks, Daniel was told that the *“people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Cf. Daniel 9:26)*. The “prince” here is a reference to the antichrist.
6. This specific prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and The Temple in A.D. 70 by Rome. Thus, the prince to come has a Roman origin. It’s passages like these, and others, that argue for some form of continuity between Rome and the initial beast kingdom of the very end of time.
7. These things also correct the errant notions that Obama is the antichrist, or Kissinger, or Biden, etc.
8. The Bible is clear the antichrist will arise from that area of the world in which the ancient Assyrian Empire once dominated, an area in or around northern Syria most likely. This would have been part of the Eastern Leg of the Roman Empire.
9. While these ancient empires defined by the lion, the bear, and the leopard will comprise the antichrist’s MAIN seat of power, the Bible also makes it clear he will rule over the entire earth.

