



**SOLID  
BREAD**

## A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 65: The Rise of the Beasts, Part 2

September 24, 2023

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The last time we had class was two weeks ago as our prophecy conference was last week, and it surely was a busy, informative, and amazing event!

- B. I know many of us felt like we were drinking from a fire hose! The amount of information was quite large. Some of us are still processing all that we learned.
- C. A quick review is in order:
  - 1. We are now in **Revelation Ch 13** where we are being introduced to some new details concerning the antichrist and the false prophet.
  - 2. We have learned that this is a point in the chronology of end-times events where The Tribulation is halfway complete. This is 3 ½ years into those seven years.
  - 3. A series of pivotal events have taken place which places the world on its final and most precipitous descent into depravity and trauma.
  - 4. These are the final 42 months before Jesus Christ's physical Second Coming. The conditions in the world are unimaginably difficult and deceptive.
  - 5. The antichrist has died and has been resurrected by the occultic powers of Satan. As I have shared, I believe the antichrist is somehow a different entity AFTER his resurrection than he previously was.
  - 6. All that said, this resurrection event that is navigated by Satan is very convincing to the unsaved masses. They will be astonished according to **vs. 3**, and they will follow the antichrist blindly and enthusiastically at this juncture.
  - 7. His miraculous return to life will be a key reason they will say in **vs. 4**: "*Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?*"
  - 8. There may be a suggestion here that the antichrist's fatal head wound was gained as the result of some sort of attack on him. His return to life convinces the depraved masses that nobody can overcome him with any sort of conflict.
  - 9. The antichrist takes full advantage of this new opportunity that he has.
- I. All of this sets up the information which follows in **Revelation 13:5-7**
  - A. "**The beast was given...**"

**NOTE:** In **vs 5** we see that the antichrist is given two abilities: EXPRESSION and AUTHORITY. Both are stated in such a way as to suggest unlimited dimension. There are three points I want to bring out here:

    - 1. First, I want you to focus on the words "*was given.*" This, again, is a reminder that nothing happens outside of God's sovereign control.
      - a. That is true in each of our personal lives just as it is true in the dramatic "end times events" which we are studying.

- b. God ALWAYS remains in perfect control, even when things don't appear to be going well.
- c. He allows challenges. He allows evil to express itself, He allows trials and setbacks, He allows election fraud, He allows good laws to be affronted, He allows personal setbacks in health, finances, jobs, and relationships...
- d. God could change everyone's situations so that they do not sin, or so that they do not experience any sort of pain and suffering.
- e. However, this would also mean that we would not have choices or free will. We would be robots, robbed of the relationship with God that involves choice and redemption.
- f. We would not be able to choose right or wrong because we would be supernaturally "programmed" to only do what is right and to only experience what is good.
- g. If God operated this way, there would be no meaningful relationships between Himself and His creation, or between He and us.
- h. Here, in this text, we see that the beast "*was given*" something. What the beast was given was ultimately given by God. The simple fact is God is 100% in control, and whatever the beast will be given will serve God's ultimate purposes and no one else's.
- i. As we have seen throughout our study to this point, the various actions and expressions of evil are always subject to God's sovereign control.
- j. This condition is true in our personal lives too:
  - Satan had to receive God's permission to test Job (***Cf. Job 1:12***), and he could only test Job within God's permitted parameters.
  - Satan also wanted to test Peter. Jesus told Peter in ***Luke 22:31***, "*Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat.*"
  - Whatever challenges and trials you may be experiencing, the fact remains that there may have been a celestial conversation about it behind the scenes.
  - We know from our earlier lessons that Satan is accusing us before God day and night (***Cf. Revelation 12:10***).
  - Perhaps, Satan wants to test you and I as well, and God is allowing him to do so, however within the limits and boundaries that God sets.
- k. But back to our operative point here - - there is NOTHING that occurs (even a maximum expression of evil such as we see here in the final half of The Tribulation) that steps outside of God's oversight and His sovereign control.

2. The second point is the antichrist (AKA, the beast) was given "*...a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies*"

**NOTE:** This is clearly a big assessment point. It is going to be a pronounced feature or quality about the antichrist because it was something Daniel noted about the antichrist as well.

**(Cf. Daniel 11:36), speaking of the antichrist...** *“And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.”*

- B. Other translations say the antichrist will: *“speak monstrous things against the God of gods,”* or, *“speak dreadful things against the God of gods,”* etc.
  - 1. In other passages in **Daniel**, the antichrist’s speech is noted to be *“pompous”* and *“boastful.”*
  - 2. The larger point is these things the antichrist speaks will be unparalleled. No greater level of blasphemy in previous history.
  
- C. I want to point out once again in this Daniel passage that it says *“what is decreed shall be done.”* Again, this will all be by God’s design, and all will take place according to God’s perfect purpose and plan.
  
- D. Further down in **vs. 6**, we see that there are four specific targets of the antichrist’s blasphemies: (1.) God, (2.) His name, (3.) His dwelling place, and (4.) those who live in heaven. I want to take a brief look at each of these:
  - 1. God – we’ve mentioned this one already. Ultimately, the antichrist, fueled by Satan, is directing all his venom against God. This is what the Bible says in multiple texts.
  
  - 2. His (God’s) name – this is essentially a subset of the first target.
    - a. Today, we see people using direct vulgar, disrespectful, and blasphemous language against Jesus Christ.
      - It is common to hear this from the far left because they hate God. All their actions and depravities boil down to the simple fact that they hate God.
      - They hate the fact that God has supernaturally wired them to have a conscience which reminds them that they’ve departed from God’s laws and values. That’s why they are always angry.
      - They do not want the Gospel because that implies their choices are wrong, and they WANT to live in their sin.
      - And so, we see over and over that many people today direct all sorts of vile language against Jesus Christ, because *“Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through (Him)”* – **Cf. John 14:6**
    - b. Because Jesus Christ is the ONLY means of salvation and the ONLY way to have eternal life, the antichrist will then – as people do now – blaspheme God’s name.

3. The third target of the antichrist's blasphemous language will be God's "*dwelling place*," or as some translations put it "*His tabernacle*." Scholars differ on what this means, but it's most likely one of two things:
  - a. First: The physical temple in Jerusalem that the antichrist will abominate. I think this is less likely to be the target because that temple will be built in unbelief and in a rejection of the truth of Jesus Christ and of the Gospel.
  - b. Secondly: Heaven. I think this is more likely the target. Satan will have just been thrown out of heaven, and he will be nursing some resentments about that place. It is also WHERE God is. This is the more likely target of the antichrist's blasphemous rants.
  
4. The last of the four targets is: "*those who live in heaven*."

**NOTE:** I think this is a reference to you and I, for that is where we will be living at this future point in time. Already, right now, we are seeing that WE will be targets of the antichrist's blasphemous language. **Question: "Why?" We need to consider several things we have already learned.**

- a. Every effort will be made by the antichrist and by the unsaved masses to discredit the reality of the Biblical Rapture.
- b. I believe, as I have shared multiple times, that fallen angels will re-enter the physical sphere of human experience very soon AFTER The Rapture and they will work to convince those who are left behind that it was NOT The Rapture.
- c. Remember, truth of all forms, especially Biblical truth, is not welcome in this depraved world. It's not even welcome in some churches.
- d. The doctrine and the imminence of The Rapture is fiercely attacked in many churches today, so why should we be surprised to imagine that blessed event will be attacked and discredited vociferously AFTER it takes place.
- e. The worst thing the antichrist can admit is God's Word is true. He will blaspheme against those who "*live in heaven*" because the reality that the saints of God are actually there undermines his deceptions and his ambitions.
- f. Not only will The Rapture of so many saints leave a deep impression on an unsaved world which they will try to explain away. However, remember, the Two Witnesses are also visibly revived, and taken up into the sky before the eyes of Antichrist's followers as well.
- g. As we learned in this class, this event with the Two Witnesses will present very convincing evidence against the antichrist and against all his deceptions. It will remind the unsaved world of what REALLY happened a few years earlier during The Rapture.
- h. And so, the antichrist needs to erode Biblical truth, and to cast discredit on the Raptured saints. He will employ any and all means to dishonor them.

**NOTE:** All this to say, the beast will be given the EXPRESSION of blasphemy, and it will be unparalleled. To that point in history, no person or entity will have blasphemed God and the things of God to the degree which the antichrist will do.

3. The third point I want to bring out concerning what's being GIVEN him is this: the antichrist will be given "authority" and "power."

**NOTE:** In my translation, "authority" is mentioned in **vs. 5** and "power" is mentioned in **vs. 7**. Within the context here of **Revelation Ch. 13**, they are both aspects of the same attribute.

- E. One of the first things we need to take special note of is the statement in **vs. 5** is that the beast was given the right to "exercise his authority for forty-two months."
  1. Again, the antichrist is "given" this authority, however, the question deserves to be asked, "Did the antichrist not have authority BEFORE this point?"
  2. The answer is "Yes, he did. However, in the last 42 months of the Tribulation, he will be given additional powers and authority, and these will be significant."
  3. It is in the second half of the Tribulation that:
    - a. The mark of the beast is implemented.
    - b. The antichrist will focus on successfully waging war against the saints of God.
    - c. The antichrist will be worshipped.
    - d. It is in the second half of the Tribulation that every person from all corners of the globe will be under the antichrist's agenda.
  4. So, it's not that the antichrist did not have power and authority before, but now a whole new level of those things are given to him by God.
  5. Let's look at some of this new authority and power more closely:
- F. It is at this point that the antichrist is given a new level of permission by God to overcome the saints. This future fact has been on the prophetic agenda since Daniel's time (**Cf. Daniel 7:21, 25**)

*"I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, . . . He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time."* (NOTE: Again, that is 3 ½ years).

**NOTE:** We know the saints of God will be persecuted and killed well before this point. (Recall the 5<sup>th</sup> Seal martyrs as a case in point). Again, this is a special point in God's program. A new level of authority has been given to the antichrist, and believers in Jesus Christ become a target.

- G. I know many people struggle with this fact. "How could God grant permission for the antichrist to overcome the saints?"
- H. Here is where our understanding of God's sovereignty and His ultimate glory must be our sure foundation. We cannot let human reasonings override Biblical truth.
- I. It says the antichrist will "**make war with the saints.**" I need to comment on preppers here. ("Prepares" – Those who come to believe in Christ after The Rapture).

1. There are many believers today who are wrongly preparing for this time. They are wrong because they either (a.) do not understand what God's Word is saying, or (b.) they don't want to understand.
  2. They are convinced they will go through The Tribulation, and they will set up a perimeter, live on rice and pond water, and fight off the antichrist and his supporters with guns and pallets full of ammo.
  3. This is not a plan that is based in truth. In **Revelation 13:7**, the Bible says the antichrist will "*conquer*" the saints. In **Daniel 7:21,25** it says the antichrist will "*prevail against the saints,*" and that they will "*be given into his hand.*"
  4. The Bible makes the point clear that the antichrist is going to prevail in this confrontation.
  5. We know many, possibly most of these saints, are beheaded (**Cf. Revelation 20:4**)
6. The bottom line is the Bible says the antichrist will tactically, energetically, and intentionally war against the saints during the time of the end. He will spend resources and develop plans to do this, and he will be very successful in the process.
  7. All throughout the post-Rapture timeframe and through the end of The Tribulation, the saints of God are under tremendous persecution.
    - a. They are killed by the antichrist according to **Daniel 7:21, 25**. They are also killed by the false global one-world religious system according to **Revelation 17:6+**. They are killed for their faith in the wake of The Rapture and before the Tribulation according to **Revelation 6:9-11**. Somehow they are even killed by the image of the Beast according to **Revelation 13:15**.
    - b. The saints are martyred all during this period because "*of the Word of God and the testimony they had maintained,*" and because they are unwilling to worship the Beast and his image.
    - c. **Reminder:** True believers of our present age will not suffer under this war that the antichrist successfully wages against the saints.
      - In **2 Thessalonians 2:1-8**, it is clearly stated that The Rapture of the Church must occur BEFORE the appearance of the Antichrist, and here in **Revelation Ch. 13**, he will have appeared.
      - This negates any possibility that the Church is in view here in **Revelation Ch. 13** for it will have already been removed from the earth.
      - This is in reference to those who come to saving faith AFTER The Rapture. Times will be very difficult for them.
      - In **2 Corinthians 6:2**, we are reminded that "*NOW is the day of salvation.*"
        - We need to repent, we need to confess our sin, and we need to accept the free gift of grace that is offered by placing our faith in Jesus Christ.
        - There is no matter more urgent than having a right relationship with Jesus Christ. There is no time better than now to do that.

- The Bible says in **Romans 10:9**, *“If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”*