



## A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 67: The Rise of the Beasts, Part 4

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### Review:

- A. It's been three weeks since we last had our study in "A Biblical View of the End Times," as I have done a couple of special lessons on the conflict taking place in Israel.
- B. Events in the Middle East continue to evolve quickly. In the same way corruption, confusion, cover-up, and antisemitism continues to flourish over here in response to this Middle East Conflict.
  1. Yesterday, during their football game, the Michigan State Spartans displayed a massive photo of Hitler on the videoboard. They lost 49-0.
  2. Some of the so-called 'squad leaders' and other liberals in DC continue to assert that Israel bombed a hospital and killed hundreds of innocent people, even when the plain evidence says otherwise.
  3. Also, in churches across America right now, there are passionate pro-Palestinian initiatives and anti-Israel messages being advanced.
  4. Pro-terror demonstrations are being held in virtually every major city in our nation. Their basic message is that Israel is in the wrong and needs to be eradicated.
  5. BLM has come alongside the terrorists to support them. No surprise! They are also distributing a great deal of anti-Israel materials in schools all over our nation this past week.
  6. London police report a 1,353% in anti-Semitic hate crimes since Hamas first attacked Israel. This is similar to other cities' reports as well.
  7. One does not have to look very hard to realize that a proper (and a Biblical) view of Israel and the Jews is in short supply in every single institution of our world.

**NOTE:** It's this sort of widespread deception, this sort of mainstreaming of depravity, this sort of widespread approval of tyranny and misinformation, and this sort of patently wrong messaging which will characterize a key figure of the Tribulation: the False Prophet.

### I. The False Prophet is the focus of our lesson today (*Cf. Revelation 13:11-18*)

#### A. The high-altitude view:

1. Here, we have another key figure identified in the Tribulation scenario, and his entire goal is to support the lawlessness and the agenda of the Anti-christ
  - a. The antichrist supports the False Prophet, and the False Prophet supports the antichrist. They work together as a team.
  - b. Ultimately, they both gain the source of their power and inspiration from the dragon, which we already identified to be Satan.

2. The three together: Satan, the antichrist, and the False Prophet form the unholy counterfeit trinity that many Biblical commentators mention.
  - a. Recall: Satan counterfeits everything that God does and that which God represents.
  - b. So, here we have Satan as the counterfeit figure of God in the trinity, the antichrist is the counterfeit Jesus Christ, and the False Prophet is the counterfeit Holy Spirit. Each party in this unholy trinity takes on a comparative role that aligns more or less with the functions of the Biblical trinity of the Godhead.
  - c. We'll see that a key function of the False Prophet is much like that of the Holy Spirit in relation to Christ. He wields equivalent power to the antichrist (***Cf. Revelation 13:12***), yet he retains no glory for himself.
  - d. His role is to act in constant witnesses of the first beast, the antichrist, thereby counterfeiting the role of the Holy Spirit to the Son of God.
  
3. Some have interpreted this second beast, the False Prophet in the passage we just read, to describe a system or movement. However, the Bible is clear it is an individual.
  - a. The False Prophet is referred to multiple times as "he," so it is clearly a masculine person.
  - b. Like the first beast, the antichrist, the False Prophet is mentioned in the Greek as 'therion.' Once again, we have this intriguing term which suggests something non-human, or not fully human.
  - c. This term was used in ***Revelation 6:8*** as being one of the instruments of death in the Fourth Seal. It is used to describe the antichrist, and here it is used to describe the False Prophet.
  - d. As I have shared before, it is my personal belief that this term is suggesting a 'nephilim component.' This lines up with other passages in Scripture which emphasize that the very end of time will be like the days of Noah.
  - e. I believe it is why the antichrist and the False Prophet will be thrown directly into the Lake of Fire at the Lord's physical Second Coming. They are not redeemable because they are not human, or not fully human.
  - f. At some point, they may have been, but according to ***Revelation Ch. 13***, they no longer are. As such, they bypass the Great White Throne judgment which is reserved for all of faithless HUMANITY from all the ages of human history.

#### **B. Now, digging a bit deeper into the details of the False Prophet:**

1. He "*comes out of the earth.*"
  - a. Remember, the antichrist in ***vs. 1 of this chapter*** "*comes out of the sea.*" We learned that this is probably a reference to the antichrist's Gentile origins.

- b. But here, the False Prophet in **vs. 11** “comes out of the earth.” The meaning is different than that of the antichrist, and it may indicate a Jewish origin. Many scholars feel this is the case.
  - c. I am not dogmatic on this earth-sea distinction because the *Gentile* kingdoms which Daniel saw arise from the *sea* (**Cf. Daniel 7:3**) are also said to be four kings which arise from the *earth* (**Cf. Daniel 7:17**).
  - d. Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum suggests the mention of “earth” here with the False Prophet merely denotes his human origins, and he may be correct. However, I mention this point all the same, as many scholars see this issue just as I have stated it here.
2. The second thing we note about the False Prophet is he has “two horns like a lamb.” (**vs. 11**).
- a. This is not the first time there has been mention of horns in conjunction with a Lamb.
  - b. In John’s vision of the throne room of heaven in **Revelation 5:6**, just before the opening of the first seal, John saw “a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”
  - c. In the Bible, horns frequently symbolize power. The Lamb of God is seen as having seven, the number of completeness.
  - d. This second beast, this False Prophet, has two, and that is the Biblical number denoting witness. This is because the False Prophet will serve as the ultimate witness to the first beast, the antichrist.
  - e. In the same way as Jesus Christ declared the Spirit of God should “testify (*lit., bear witness*) of Me” (**Cf. John 15:26**), so the third person in this “end-times trinity of evil” bears witness to the antichrist.
  - f. Concerning the descriptive phrase “like a lamb,” we need to remember Paul’s warning in **2 Corinthians 11:13-15** that Satan’s “ministers,” false apostles, and deceitful workers will follow Satan’s pattern. They will appear as one thing, but in truth they will be another.
  - g. The Bible teaches that there have been many false apostles and deceitful workers in the church, and especially as we get nearer to the time of the end.
  - h. However, none of those will be more convincing than this final False Prophet. His appearance “as a lamb” is a disguise. It masks his true inward nature.
  - i. Who he really is will be evident by observing the fruit of his labors. Note: This is a principle that we would be wise to consider carefully, and two passages which underscore this are:

(Concerning our current times): **Matthew 7:15-16** – “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.”

(Concerning the end times): **Matthew 24:11-12** – “Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.”

- j. The takeaways are: Outward appearance doesn't matter. Degrees don't matter. Oratorical abilities don't matter. None of these things matter. What matters is substance, truth, and fruit.
- k. Many commentators and scholars on end-times issues and Biblical language have concluded that the false prophet comes winsomely and persuasively.
- l. He will likely burst on the world scene with convincing words and mannerisms that elicit sympathy, support, and good will from others.
- m. Given his distinction “*as a lamb*,” he may come from within the former establishment of the “church.” He may be an extraordinary preacher, prominent figure, or skilled orator whose demonically empowered words will deceive the multitudes.

3. This is why in the last part of **vs. 11**, it says: “*he spoke like a dragon*”

- a. Although the False Prophet looks like a lamb, his language and words are energized by the will of the dragon, or Satan. This fact is noted several specific ways:
  - It is the False Prophet who makes the world worship the antichrist. (**Cf. vs. 12**)
  - He orders those who dwell on the earth to make the image of the Beast. (**Cf. vs. 14**).
  - He deceives the inhabitants of the earth. (**Cf. vs. 14**).
  - He is the enforcer of the Mark of the Beast required in order to buy or sell. (**Cf. vs. 16**).
- b. The fact that his speech is like a dragon reminds us of the original introduction of deception into the human race in the Garden of Eden.
- c. There, we read in **Genesis 3:1**, “*Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made, and he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said . . . ?’*”
- d. Like the devil himself, the False Prophet’s mouth will be directed in opposition to God’s Word.

II. SOME RELATED THOUGHTS FOR OUR OWN TIME:

- A. Our churches today are filled with false prophets, and the evidence is in their words:
  - 1. They cast doubt on the veracity of God’s Word (i.e. virgin birth, the deity of Jesus Christ, etc.)
  - 2. They take positions which are in opposition to Scripture. (i.e. They support homosexuality, etc.)
  - 3. They push agendas which are in conformity to a godless culture (i.e. “wokeism,” “open borders,” BLM, etc.)

4. They refuse to properly interpret and teach Scripture (i.e. They only emphasize God's grace and not His coming judgement, they mock the Rapture and Bible prophecy, they water down the Gospel, etc.)
  5. They align with the world's passions. (i.e. pro-Palestinian and anti-Jewish sentiments, climate change, etc.)
- B. **(NOTE: I could continue this analogy, but the point is clear).** The pulpits and our leaders in our churches today are largely comprised of false prophets and false teachers who display in their words and choices that they REFUSE to conform to God's Word. They are misleading and deceiving many.
1. These deceivers and false teachers we see today are – in many ways - the forerunners of the final False Prophet, and we must not be deceived by them.
  2. As I said, these false teachers abound. They are actively promoting apostasy which is a departure from the truth, and they are collectively assisting the world's move toward a final satanic kingdom.
- C. Getting back to some further details about the False Prophet: It's not just what he says that deceives many, but it's also what he does....
1. **(Cf. vs. 13)** – *“He performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven...”*
    - a. NOTE: This is similar to what the Two Witnesses were also able to do **(Cf. Revelation 11:5)**, but here it is used to deceive the masses.
    - b. Just like Jannes and Jambres who opposed Moses, and through occultic means, duplicated Moses' miraculous signs **(Cf. 2 Timothy 3:8)** - - so the False Prophet here will seek to demerit the miraculous signs and message of the Two Witnesses by performing similar wonders.
    - c. Notice the *“in full view of men”* element. This miraculous sign will be a very public spectacle. It's all part of the strategy of deception.
  2. That's the first thing the False Prophet does to deceive many. The second thing is he gives breath to the image of the antichrist so that it could speak.
    - a. The Greek word here is *“pneuma”* from which we get our medical prefixes suggesting various issues related to breathing. However, the larger Biblical meaning of the term is more akin to a “living spirit.”
    - b. Whatever the precise meaning of this verse is (there are debates) it appears also to be a miraculous event as opposed to some sort of technological marvel which John did not fully comprehend.