

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas, Sunday, July 17, 2016

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." (Revelation 13:11)

Just over a year ago, I presented a pair of sermons (June 28 and July 5, 2015) on the nature and work of the Antichrist Beast who is the subject of verses 1-8 of this chapter. It was a dense bit of work, and I encourage those here to revisit those sermons to improve your grasp of this work under consideration. Here, I take up the subject of this second, compatriot actor on the stage for the final performance among the human race before Christ takes by force the kingdom for Himself.

As we approach -- and in light of the many compelling proofs it is a strong case to be made that we are approaching -- the consumption of the whole of the human race in the miasma of satanic influence, we must be wise about this subject. The same apostle, who wrote the words under consideration, spoke the following words about this same period:

"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. ... Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." (1 John 5:19; 21)

This passage, taken contextually, has an import greater than the general mandate that we abstain from idolatry. Gill, I believe in this instance quite accurately, intimates how this reference to the "**wickedness**" finds its best expository expression:

"or 'in the wicked one'; Satan, the god of this world; they are under his influence, and led according to his will, and they are governed by him, and are at his beck and command;"

1 John is, as I've frequently expressed from this pulpit, primarily eschatological in focus. While we have a continual duty to know how our sinful flesh tends toward idolatry, and fight against that tendency all of every day, *this* passage has a contextual urgency. An exceptional acute-ness, if you will. A need to be particularly watchful both as to what we are doing within our minds, hearts, spirits, bodies -- and as to the question about with whom we are dealing; this Wicked One in whose lap the whole population of the world has curled up for a comfortable nap!

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. ¶ Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (1 Thessalonians 5:4-6)

When this second beast comes "**up out of the earth**", it is not to be understood as merely incidental to Antichrist -- any more than the Holy Ghost is to be considered merely incidental to Christ. This beast has his own office, his own work to do, his own reputation among the earth dwellers, his own power ... derived from the same pernicious source as the Antichrist beast. An understanding of this evil envoy is as essential -- to a proper view of how the Conflict of Canaan will come to full -- as knowing the character and design of His Majesty the Devil.

If you recall previous discussions about these matters contained in the Apocalypse, when we come upon the events of Revelation chapter 13, a transition has occurred. A transition that has brought forth a spiritual darkness – an absence of any restraining light to curb the full running of the prevailing notions and imaginations of the natural man’s heart, which we know from that blessed record are **“only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5)**. Christ has ruptured the atmosphere, taken the living and dead Gentile saints unto Him in His majestic heavenly Jerusalem, and spirited the remnant of the house of Jacob to the wilderness to be supernaturally sustained from molestation by the dragon (Revelation 12:6, 14).

It is further helpful to consider what has taken place before the eyes of the earth’s inhabitants during the first three and one half years before the presentation of Antichrist and his ally. The rage that we experience in our present state of spiritual warfare – exhibited recently in the explosion across the globe of reaction when we raised the simple and loving warning that God was the author of the Pulse massacre in Orlando, or the road-rage in Nice – should help us to frame this examination. When it is not 50 dead ... not 500 ... not 5,000 or even 50,000 – but rather the extinguishing of the lives of a full third of the earth’s population through bloodshed, starvation, pestilence, and upheavals in the natural world.

“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.” (Revelation 9:15)

When creatures are unleashed from the bowels of the earth and sea, that torment and slaughter mercilessly – and **then** we are given a voice to plainly and efficaciously report that it is the glorious work of God, in His unwavering wrath against the workers of iniquity, for which we must and do give heartfelt thanks – what level of unquenchable hatred will pour from the collective gall bladder of this earth’s inhabitants?

Now – like no time before in the human experience – will the population of the whole earth be in search of a champion to bring them to polity; both civil and spiritual! The Antichrist beast provides civil leadership -- his character being described in the symbols of civil majesty:

“And I ... saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.” (Revelation 13:1-2)

Antichrist has kingship with eminent executive power (heads, horns, and crowns), and in his description, he carries the majesty reflective of the great world powers of history (Assyrian, Medo-Persian, and Babylonian respectively). He is expressly described as having power **“over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” (Revelation 13:7)**. This **man** will sit supreme in the earth, with all the civil and military governance over the troubled political sea of mankind out of which he has precipitously risen **(Revelation 13:1)**. But for all his political swagger, he has a seemingly insurmountable obstacle with which every earthly sovereign has been forced to contend, in fully securing the willing subjugation of the citizenry:

Religion.

"I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth".... (Revelation 13:11)

Where the Antichrist beast is said to ***"rise up out of the sea" (Revelation 13:1)*** -- denoting his ascension from the troubled, political scene of mankind -- this second beast rises from the settled, seemingly more established movements in men; their core belief system. Every expositor chases this analysis from the perspective of some specific religion, with the majority of those available to us harping on the Roman Papacy. I believe this misses the mark entirely ... and frankly believe that is in large part because most of these expositors would find themselves (and the religions they espouse) among those which will heartily ***"receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads" (Revelation 13:16)***.

It is estimated that more than 4,000 distinct religions exist in the earth today. The alacrity with which the human spirit will attach to some belief system -- howsoever flaky and insubstantial -- reminds me of a t-shirt, they sold when I was a much younger man, which had printed on it: "Everybody has to believe in something ... I believe I'll have another beer." Clever. A couple of weeks ago, I did a video news on atheism, and a certain angry tweeter insisted:" [T]here's no way in Hell the world will give up their religion". So you see, even the functional atheists recognize the substantial challenge that will present to Antichrist when he faces the "religious" hordes; though they every one instinctively love it when:

"he open[s] his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them:" (Revelation 13:6-7)

But, we see in the text of Antichrist's first introduction in this work of John the Revelator -- and in the later instructive word-picture provided, from quite a different analytical perspective -- that religion is in fact given up, and all of the earth's inhabitants turn to a full worship of this ***man***:

"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore [e.g., all false religious systems], and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." (Revelation 17:16)

and

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Revelation 13:8)

So clearly there is a work that needs doing. There is a task that needs completion that runs quite parallel to the work of Antichrist; but is necessarily distinct and substantial. Many expositors frame this scene of Revelation 13 (and those passages contributing to its viewing) as an introduction of the three entities in the anti-trinity. The dragon (Satan) represents anti-God; this risen ***man*** who holds civil majesty over earth's kingdoms and peoples represents anti-Christ; and this other beast answering to our great

Comforter, energized by Satan's spiritual acumen, represents the anti-Holy Ghost. This notion of trinity suits the human nature -- as each is created with the imprint on his genetic code that the Holy Trinity rules:

"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:"
(Romans 1:19-20)

Even false religion forces this trinity -- always framed in a way to address the needs humans have in mind (some intelligent being or force designing or running through all things), body (some commitment made in, and impacting our flesh), and spirit (the inspiration of the human spirit toward some concept of nobility).

Two weeks ago, Brother Charles laid out the scriptural authority for the conclusion that saving faith is not the same thing as man's natural faith -- the former a gift from God to His elect, the latter a relatively maudlin movement in the mind and hearts of men. One week ago, Brother Steve cautioned us to distinguish those places in holy writ that use the term "spirit", though the Holy Ghost is not referenced. No accident that these two friends would be moved to focus on those points, so that I would have opportunity here to close that loop in analyses. The Holy Ghost establishes what is taught from this pulpit, and every sanctified soul in this generation knows that!

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7)

This "living soul" is natural to all human flesh, and distinguishes us from the other creatures (both animate and inanimate), granting to us the capacity to discern matters in the moral realm. With that grant, comes the responsibility to do that in accordance with the divine word of God who granted us that mercy. This breath of life, creating an accountable spirit within each of us, is not the same breath referenced in the following passage:

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:"
(John 20:21-22)

As your first **birth** was of the flesh and the second was of the spirit, so was the first **breath** distinct from the second. We must intimately see the difference between this spirit that is in a man -- his inner being, so to speak -- and that Spirit that is in God's elect saints.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16)

This Spirit that, by grace, dwells in us brings those gifts itemized by Paul in 1st Corinthians 12 that are **"given to every man to profit withal"** (1 Corinthians 12:7), that is every elect man to profit the whole

of the church body. The spirit that dwells in every man by nature has quite a different character altogether.

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?" (James 4:4-5)

Every created man has a spirit, and that spirit surges repeatedly in the face of God's word, statutes, testimonies, laws, commandments, and precepts. Those whose Spirits are quickened with the gifts of grace long to know and keep them (**Psalms 119:123-131**). Those whose are left reprobate still swell, but never to good!

"Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible." (Malachi 1:7)

From the beginning, it was so. If you read with discernment the nature of the relationship between Cain and Abel -- the dispute that led that first graceless demon-possessed human to surge in his reprobate spirit and slay his brother -- you will see how indelibly marked this distinction is on the human race. I submit, it is the mark of Cain. I submit, it is the mark of a man!

"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." (Revelation 13:18)

Cain was the first man born for who the blood of Christ was *not* spilled, and his name signifies that spirit that dwelled within him. "**kay'-yin**" denotes "*possession*", which is an allusion to the ability to acquire with the work of your own hands, or "take possession"! The Greek synonym is "**kah'-in**" which translates to "*maker, fabricator (literally smith)*". His religion was his self-sufficiency, so as a tiller of the ground he was convinced that his bloodless "**offering unto the LORD**" (**Genesis 4:3**) was inherently worthy of respect from his Creator. What saith the Scripture?

"But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." (Genesis 4:5)

On the other hand, gentle Abel's name intimates the presence of that blessed Spirit common to the elect saints. "**Heh'-bel**" signifies "*breath*", or that spirit planted in the righteous soul that causes us by God's mercy to:

"[Offer] unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." (Hebrews 11:4)

These two spirits -- the one dead and the other quickened -- have possessed the breasts of men for all of the history of the Adamic race. We understand that they have different qualities, as Paul instructed the Romans:

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Romans 8:15)

However, there is still a type of strength in that rebellious spirit of mankind that produces a fervor -- a pitch of energy and audacity that drives allegiance and devotion to a team, a cause, a person. We see it operating in the people who followed Nimrod in the plains of Shinar where:

"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. ¶ And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." (Genesis 11:4-6)

We see it also displayed in the bizarre and destructive behaviors of the priests and prophets of Ba'al who squared off with Elijah on Mt. Carmel:

"And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them." (1 Kings 18:27-28)

In scripture and in history -- as this group of highly-educated and intelligent persons know much more thoroughly than myself -- there are a multitude more instances where the human spirit has engaged toward the performance of some great earthly thing: A monument, a military campaign, a sporting event, an arts or entertainment masterpiece, a global corporate monstrosity, a worldwide "religion", or a scientific phenomenon that pushes the human understanding of God's creation to new frontiers. All such, regardless of how it is framed by the doer or received by the observer, is as that Preacher informs us:

"But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." (Ecclesiastes 11:8-9)

There is no credible basis to conclude that any of the world's false religious systems have the least value to the eternally-culpable soul of man. But that does not change the compelling reality that the spirit that is in man -- though wholly without the loving movements of the Holy Ghost -- causes him to be lifted up in passions; which passions must be directed if that man is to be ruled!

So we return, now having a more complete examination of the spirit that moves in mankind by nature, to this scene on the world stage as spiritual night falls upon the hearts and minds of the earth dwellers, as the prophet Amos foretells:

***"Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?"
(Amos 5:20)***

We've preached and published, time and again, that there are only two demographics in this earth: The saved and the damned; the elect and the reprobate; those who believe and those who believe not (**John 3:16, 18**); Those whom God loves and those He hates (**Romans 9:13**). The whole of the Revelation, and all those prophecies throughout scripture that pertain thereto, are about the final dividing up these two groups -- violently in the earth first, and then before the throne of God -- and then the dispensing the good things and evil things prepared for the members of each. There is no third group.

So, then, we should not be in any way puzzled by the character of this second beast -- The False Prophet. He is the fulfillment of all false prophets who have walked the earth from Cain forward, just as The Antichrist is the fulfillment of all antichrists about whom this same Revelator speaks in his earlier epistle.

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." (1 John 2:18)

Having considered his office, now let us consider his presentation; or more expressly how he is able to draw the spirits of men -- whose faux-religious fervor has splintered into thousands of expressions across the globe -- into commonality of obeisance to Antichrist.

"and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon" (Revelation 13:11)

He presents as peaceful. The Antichrist's horns are majestic and crowned -- reflecting the ferocious enforcing power of civil rule. This beast reflects subtle power, like a gentle lamb, that encourages the power of the human spirit to express itself. There is a deceit in it, for sure ... but a deceit that is heartily and joyfully received by a generation about which it is plainly said:

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (2 Peter 3:5-7)

A world of faithless men, fatigued by the blistering judgments of the righteous God of creation pouring relentlessly out upon them for three and a half years now, would absolutely jump at the opportunity to believe that they can bring an end to it; that they are able to draw upon their own spirits to remove this power from off their heads and send it to whatever horrible place from whence it was spawned! Even today, the irreligious fill their forensic armories with arguments that religion is what brings wars and slaughters of every kind. They lay the warring mischief of false prophets from every age -- at the feet of the true followers of God and Christ. Their shtick is that blind adherence to a religious faith leads weak-minded, uneducated hordes to commit atrocities in the name of their gods; yet those who seek higher learning and place their faith in the reliable structure of science will naturally tend toward a

desire to preserve mankind and appeal to their noblest nature. Religion = bad; Secular Humanism = good.

He offers them peace. He convinces them, through the application of **"all power and signs and lying wonders," (2 Thessalonians 2:9)** that the horrors they have endured were not flowing from a **"God of judgment" (Malachi 2:17)**, but were the work of violent **men** under the insane influence of one religious delusion or another. Disruptions in the natural world are not evidence of Christ arising **"to shake terribly the earth." (Isaiah 2:19)**, but are easily explained by the study of science. When men apply their mighty strength to destroy each other, they bring horrible things to pass -- famine, pestilence, plague, death -- but if they let go of their differences, come together, join hearts and minds and voices they will have the power to deal with the true enemy of the human race!

I find no exposition of this part of this verse that does not misapply the sentence -- do gross violence to the rules of grammar that every one of us learns -- and therefore miss the point of the passage. They paint this beast who **"had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon"** as a spiritual synonym to the false prophet of Christ's warning:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." (Matthew 7:15)

This is not a semantic discussion. It is a spiritual one. The warning of Christ was to the members of the Gentile church who must occupy the earth until His triumphant return. This church, as the Apostle Paul expressly warns, must be **"in perils among false brethren" (2 Corinthians 11:26)**, about which passage Brother Sam preached a few weeks ago. And Christ again warns that even in the throes of the final days of the Gentile church, the threat of false prophets are even greater:

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matthew 24:24)

But it is very much **not** possible! This passage in Revelation -- as I've many times reminded you and remind you again now -- is **after** Christ has returned and taken his Gentile elect away, and has ensconced the remnant of the Jews upon Mt. Zion, protected by an impenetrable wall of fire from this raging mob. There are no saints to deceive! This prophesying beast is not about the business of deceiving the elect; he's about the business of exalting the Antichrist beast, as is described by Paul:

"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." (2 Thessalonians 2:4)

When this second beast arises -- the consummate humanist, with every irreligious talking point refined to excellence -- it is said that he presents like a peaceful lamb **"and"** speaks as a dragon. "And" is a coordinating conjunction, reflecting a cooperative or coordinating relationship between the clauses before and after the junction. This beast appears like a peaceful messenger (lamb) **and** what comes from his lips are the words of Satan! The voice and message with which he is gifted flows from His Majesty **"the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world" (Revelation 12:9)**. Remember please,

that it is in the context of the rising Antichrist -- necessarily with his adept advertiser -- that Paul gave these chilling, prophetic words:

" Even [Antichrist], whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)

It is by Satan's power that this beast speaks ... and more to the point of this sermon, it is Satan's message of old that carries the day:

***"Ye shall not surely die: ... ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."* (Genesis 3:4-5)**

The worship of deities by any name must be done away with ... man is his own champion! Man can assume, through the proper application of his own intellectual prowess and mastery of the natural world around him -- "***science, falsely so called***" (1 Timothy 6:20) -- control of his own destiny. Man can take up his own life again, and do away with any unhealthy reliance upon notions of all-powerful beings in the skies. These words, with the consummate displays of "***great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men ... miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast***" (Revelation 13:13-14), bring hope to these benighted souls. Hope in this amazing superman, about which the passage says this second beast:

***"had power to give life unto the image of the [Antichrist], that the image of the [Antichrist] should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the [Antichrist] should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: "* (Revelation 13:15-16)**

Look! This is a generation of humans who prattle ceaselessly about their capacity for individuality in thought, look, action, belief, etc. As their insolence increases ... their pride increases ... their abominable rebellion against all things righteous increases ... they become infinitely more brutish and contentious. Do I need to provide anecdotal evidence of that reality to this group of highly tuned individuals?

So, what will it take to congeal the population made up of such audacious sinners? What formula will work to bring a world of rebels -- who have spent years and years in mutual combat with one another, and seethe with rage from their God-apportioned punishments in the earth -- to the point where:

"These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb...." (Revelation 17:13-14)

It takes a master pitch-man, combined with the awesome display of political and military prowess, to convince the inhabitants of all the nations of the world to cast off every distraction of religiosity and

join Antichrist in his campaign to unseat Christ. This friend of his has the chops for it, and both are energized by all of the wisdom, intellect, and physical strength of the fallen angel general, Satan.

We here, who have been given by the mercies of the King of Peace **"eyes before and behind" (Revelation 4:6)**, can see the trajectory and we believe the report given us. We know that all these who are deceived by this trinity of darkness and wickedness, who take the mark of the beast **"or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:17)**, face this end along with their deceivers:

***"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."* (Revelation 19:20)**

It is good ... I mean really, really good ... to have an intelligent understanding of the deceivers' doctrine. Of course, every doctrine other than the blessed doctrines of grace, mined from the ceaseless bounties of the written Word of God is essentially a worship of the flesh, as James tell us:

***"This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish."* (James 3:15)**

But whatever banner under which they gather, they're all functional atheists today, and when there is no righteousness left in the earth to engender the slightest motion in their confused hearts and minds --where they presently are **"accusing or else excusing one another" (Romans 2:15)** -- the masks will fly off and they will become raging atheists! Secular humanism -- or whatever it will be called in that dark time -- will have its heyday! Humans will join together -- the number of a man, even that Antichrist beast, emblazoned on their fluttering ensign -- and will ride into the slaughter of **"the supper of the great God" (Revelation 19:17)**, at Armageddon.

It should not be, therefore, any surprise that we watch as the numbers of those who claim no religious affiliation at all are growing faster than any other belief system in the world. Yet another indicator that we are coming to that hour when we shall see the return of our Christ. It is cause for great and intelligent rejoicing.

I love you all. Amen.