

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

BIBLE TEXT : Revelation 13:1-18; 14:9-11

LESSON 462 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "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).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Revelation 13: 1-18

1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and 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.

2 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.

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

8 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

Bible References:

I The Beast

1. The sea out of which the beast rose indicates peoples, nations, and tongues, Revelation 13:1;

Revelation 17:15.

5 And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

2. The seven heads are seven kingdoms, the seventh of which is the beast's, or Antichrist's, kingdom, Revelation 13:1;

Revelation 17:10, 11.

10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

3. The ten horns are ten kings united under the Antichrist's reign, Revelation 13: 1;

Revelation 17: 12, 13.

12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

4. The beast is a man, deriving his power from the dragon, or Satan, Revelation 13:2;

Revelation 20:2;

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

II Thessalonians 2:3, 9.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

9 *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

II Evil Worship

1. One of the beast's heads is wounded, but healed, Revelation 13:3.

2. Men worship the dragon and the beast, Revelation 13:4, 8;

II Thessalonians 2:4.

4 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.

3. Another beast, or the false prophet, arises, aiding and abetting the worship of the beast, Revelation 13:11, 12;

Revelation 19:20.

20 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.

4. Miracles are wrought, and a lifelike, talking image is made and worshipped, Revelation 13:13-15.

III The Mark

1. The beast blasphemes God, Revelation 13:5, 6.

2. The beast makes war against the saints, Revelation 13:7, 9,

foundation of the world.

9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

11 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.

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 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:

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Revelation 14: 9-11

9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and

10.

3. The false prophet causes an who buy or sell to receive the mark, or the name, or the number of the beast, Revelation 13:16, 17.

IV Warning

1. The number of the beast is 666, Revelation 13:18.
2. Any man who worships the beast or receives his mark is forever lost, Revelation 14:9-11.

Notes:

Much is prophesied in both the Old and the New Testaments about a sinister being, called the "man of sin," "the son of perdition," and "the antichrist." All these terms refer to one and the same person. Since the description of the "beast" in Revelation 13 fits in perfectly with the prophecies in other parts of the Bible, we know the interpretation of this chapter is a prophecy of the Antichrist and his kingdom.

Securing the Kingdom

When reading and thinking about the different names that are used in the Bible to describe the Antichrist, one may feel that the Antichrist will repel men and that he will have difficulty winning the world to his cause. This will not be true, for the Antichrist will use means that are most appreciated by mankind: flatteries, peace, and prosperity. "And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time" (Daniel 11:21, 24).

Flatteries and eloquence turn the minds of men—even those minds, perhaps, that have been diametrically opposed. It has happened many times. Absalom won the hearts of the men of Israel with his flatteries. Herod made an oration to the people of Tyre and Sidon with whom he had been highly displeased, and he heard them exclaim, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man" (Acts 12:22). An eloquent man is a powerful man, and the Antichrist will use his eloquence to attain his own goals, persuading men against God rather than for Him.

Peace is a much sought for item, and men will pay almost any price to obtain it. We are told that the Communist party is actually a very small minority in comparison with the millions of Russia, the people of the European satellite countries, and the multitudes of Red China. Yet the vast majorities in these nations allow small minorities to rule because there is a semblance of peace within their countries and the promise of more.

The cry of the world today is for peace. The cold war is a burden, a threat, and constant worry. Men are seeking in every channel and pursuing every remote possibility in the hopes of securing the guarantee of peace. The Antichrist will promise world-wide peace. His statements and arguments will sound reasonable and wonderful, and for a while peace will be known. "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (I Thessalonians 5:3).

Prosperity will be an added inducement to pay homage to the Antichrist. Prosperity does not usually lead to godliness. Jesus said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark 10: 23). Prosperity is often used as a tool of the devil to lead men away from God, "For the love of money

his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand,
10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

is the root of all evil" (I Timothy 6:10).

Child of Hell

In addition to the "natural" talents and worldly induce-ments that the Antichrist presents to persuade men to his cause, he has a far greater and more powerful influence -- "the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." The Bible says, "The dragon, that old serpent, . . . is the Devil, and Satan" (Revelation 20:2). John saw this beast, or Antichrist, rise out of the sea, which indicates multitudes of people. The beast had seven heads and ten horns, with crowns upon the horns and the name of blasphemy upon the heads.

As John watched, one of the heads of the beast was wounded as unto death. The word is very emphatic, meaning that this was a death stroke. A miracle was required and performed in order that the beast could live again. Some Bible students feel that from the strength of these words, and from the statement: "The beast . . . shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, . . . the beast that was, and is not, and yet is" (Revelation 17:8), the Antichrist is one of the former Christian persecutors returning to the scenes of life. Whether he is one who returns to life, or whether his life is restored at the time he is slain, the miracle of the Antichrist's living will be apparent to all the world: "All the world wondered after the beast."

Television will be a probable medium in that day for the devil to use (as he often does in our day) to demonstrate his power and broadcast his devilment to the ends of the earth. When the United States put its first astronaut into orbit around the earth, word came from many parts of the world that people watched the event with keen interest on television. News is flashed around the world with the speed of light. Ways and means of transmitting news events improve daily, so the devil will have no trouble showing the world his miracles.

The world will be completely won over by this beast, this child of hell. The world will admire him and worship him, saying, "Who is like unto the beast?" The world will know it useless to try to resist his position and authority, saying, "Who is able to make war with him?" He was wounded to death but lives again. Why try to destroy him the second time? He has a secret power, more terrible than the hydrogen bomb. Why vex him into destroying mankind? Men will try to win the day by working for and with him.

Religious Power

The Scriptures sound the warning that men will worship the Antichrist, as well as the dragon who gave him power, seat, and authority. Devil worship has often been heard of in the world, but it has been restricted mainly to dark ages, to the dark and unenlightened countries. But all men, except those whose names are written in the Book of Life, will serve and worship the dragon and Antichrist. How can this be? The answer is given in II Thessalonians 2:3, 4, 8-12. - **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** ³ Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴ 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 2:8-12** ⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: ⁹ *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, ¹⁰ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: ¹² That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. There has come a terrible falling away from the fundamental truths of Christ Jesus, through Modernism, evolution, false doctrines, etc. The Wicked will be revealed, "whose coming is

after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." Because men love not the truth, they shall believe this lie and be damned, who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. How needful to receive a love for God's Truth! How important to serve Jesus Christ today while time and opportunity afford! God's Word should warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come -- flee to the sheltering Blood of Jesus Christ.

Another beast appears, mild in appearance, with two horns like a lamb. What damage could a lamblike man do? Jesus warned of false prophets who would come in sheep's clothing. This beast with two horns is the false prophet of Revelation 19:20. He speaks as a dragon, so men should have no trouble in knowing the source of his power.

The false prophet takes complete control of that instinct in the hearts of men to worship The first beast, whose deadly wound was healed, is made the object of their worship. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead has been the proof positive of God's plan of salvation for mankind; so the devil leads men to absolute destruction by working a miracle similar in appearance. The Antichrist raised from death! Could anything be a greater miracle? The false prophet thinks not, so he causes the inhabitants of the earth to worship the Antichrist.

For a further show of his power, the false prophet causes fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men. When the men of Israel saw the fire fall upon Elijah's sacrifice, they cried, "The LORD, he is the God." In the false prophet's day men will wrongly subscribe a similar miracle as showing the rightness of the false prophet's teaching.

The Mark

The devil has known and always tried to incite the tendency in the hearts of men to have and use something visible in their worship, though God forbids this. The devil uses this inclination fully in the end time, causing the false prophet to suggest that an image should be made to the beast whose deadly wound was healed. The false prophet then has power to give life to the image to the extent that the image should speak and cause all who do not worship the image to be killed.

The devil is not content only to have men worship him and his emissaries; he will also put his brand or mark upon them. The Antichrist gains world wide power and control, both politically and religiously At this time the false prophet causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark. The people have a choice: an innocent appearing mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. If one does not want the mark in plain sight on his forehead, he can have the mark made in his right hand. Men were not given a choice whether to take the mark or not: anyone who buys or sells in that day has to have the mark of the beast — the devil's brand.

Too Far

Sin leaves its mark on the hearts and lives of men, but God is able to erase that mark through the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, when a man repents of his sins. The mark of the beast, however, can never be erased by any means whatsoever, once it has been received. It will be better to lose one's life in that day than to take the mark of the beast. "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and

they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name" (Revelation 14:9-11).

Escape

God has provided a way of escape from this time of terrible trouble and eternal consequences. Jesus is coming back to earth to take away His overcoming saints before the Antichrist is revealed in his reign of blasphemy. God has extended the invitation to all men to be saved. We are living in perilous times, and men's hearts need to be aroused before this sudden destruction comes upon them. God help every soul to take advantage of the golden opportunity and get right with Him today!

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

QUESTIONS

1. What is another name of the beast? Of the dragon?
2. Why will the world wonder after the beast?
3. Whom do men worship in that day?
4. How long will the beast continue?
5. Over whom will the beast reign?
6. What will the false prophet do?
7. In what way will the devil mark the people who serve him?
8. Who will receive the mark of the beast?
9. What will be the end of those who receive the mark of the beast?