

29. The Activity of the False Prophet on the Earth

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why the antichrist will demand worship from all people living on the earth. In this topic, we will see that Satan tries to imitate the Trinity and their work to deceive the people of the earth with an unholy trinity.

Revelation 13:11-12 says, “Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” We have already been introduced to Satan and the antichrist. With these verses we are being introduced to Satan’s attempt to imitate the Holy Spirit. This beast is later called the false prophet. In Revelation 19:20, we read, “Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.” Together these three, Satan the antichrist and the false prophet, are Satan’s attempt to imitate the Trinity and we could call them the unholy trinity. We see that this beast will arise and will work together with Satan and the antichrist to deceive the people of the world.

We see that this beast has two horns like a lamb but speaks like a dragon. A lamb is known as a kind and gentle animal. As a result, we see that Satan will use this beast to deceive the world by his gentleness. However, he will speak with the authority of a dragon. We saw, in chapter twelve, that the dragon was Satan who tried to destroy Christ. This makes it clear that he will actually be speaking for Satan. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 says, “And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” Throughout history, Satan has tried to deceive people by having his messengers come as angels of light. In these verses, we see that the false prophet will come in this same way.

However, this false prophet will not point to himself as an object of worship. He will exercise the same authority as the first beast, the antichrist. This means that he will do great miracles to deceive the people of the world. He will not use these miracles to try to get the people to worship him. Instead, he will cause all those living on the earth at that time to worship the antichrist. The antichrist is the one whose deadly wound will be healed. Revelation 13:3 says, “And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.” This is the antichrist that the false prophet will cause the people to worship.

We go on to read about some of the signs that the false prophet will do to deceive the people. Revelation 13:13-15 says, “He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted *power* to

give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.” These verses show us that Satan will make it possible for both the antichrist and the beast to perform great signs.

“Caesar” was the Roman title meaning *god*. The Roman emperor took that title and made emperor worship the religion of the Roman Empire. The Caesars were all military and political leaders. The antichrist will be a military and political leader. In contrast, the beast will be a religious leader. However, his message will be to worship the antichrist. Here, we see some of the signs that the false prophet will perform to back up his message. We see that he will make fire come down from heaven to the earth as the people watch. This will be his way of imitating the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:2-3, where we read: “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them.” Satan will do whatever he can to imitate the Trinity in his efforts to deceive the people during the tribulation.

We see that the beast will deceive the people of the earth by these signs. 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 says, “And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” Those who reject Christ will experience this strong delusion and believe the signs of the beast. This beast will tell the people of the earth to make an image to the beast (antichrist) that was wounded by the sword and lived. Revelation 13:3-4 says, “And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?’”

The people will obey the beast and make an image of the antichrist. Nebuchadnezzar gave us an example of a powerful ruler who commanded the people to worship his image in Daniel 3:4-6, where we read: “Then a herald cried aloud: ‘To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, *that* at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.’” Here, we see that all of the people of the earth will be commanded to worship the image of the beast. Daniel 9:27 says, “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.” Then, Matthew 24:15-16 says, “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”

We also see that the beast will perform another sign with this image. We see that the beast will give breath to the image of the antichrist. Suddenly all false religion that is present in the world will be changed. We see that the beast will give this image the power to talk. Then, he will announce that any who will not worship this image of the antichrist will be killed. Those who are

followers of any false religion will immediately begin to worship this image, just as the Babylonian leaders did at the time when Nebuchadnezzar set up his image. Nebuchadnezzar warned that all who did not worship his image would be thrown into the fiery furnace so they would be killed. Here, we see that the beast will say that all who do not worship this image will be killed.

We go on to read about the mark that will be required by the false prophet. Revelation 13:16-18 says, “He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number *is* 666.” This number is often referred to as “The Mark of the Beast”.

Here, we see that the false prophet will require all to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads. Suddenly this false prophet will no longer act like a gentle lamb. Instead, he will show his true character as he becomes the one who orders the death of any who will not take this mark. Here, we see that the goal of the false prophet will be to immediately destroy everyone who will not take this mark. This will include the small and the great. This will include the rich and the poor. This will include those who are free and those who are slaves. The false prophet will enforce this command by saying that no one can buy or sell unless they either have the mark that has the name of the antichrist or the number of his name.

Most of the tribulation saints who are still alive will be killed at this point in time. These are the ones that are described in Revelation 7:9 and 14, where we read: “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands...And I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’” These are the ones who will also ask how long it will be till those who killed them will be judged.

The Lord wants all true believers to understand the number that will be the number of the mark of the beast. We see that his number will be the number of a man which is the number six hundred and sixty-six. The number of God is seven as Genesis 2:3 says, “Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” The antichrist, as powerful as he will be, is still a man. Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” His number will come short of God’s number of perfection. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why this number is called the number of man. This number is a reminder that all are sinners and have come short of the glory of God. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain the number of man.