

The Book Of Revelation

Study 66

Revelation 13:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ *Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.*

² *Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.*

As we look at the scriptures again here we are reminded that in this chapter, we find seven features of the ultimate dictator, Anti-Christ.

His Ancestry,
 His Authority,
 His Acclaim,
 His Adoration,
 His Arrogance,
 His Activity,
 His Admirers

And last week we looked at his ancestry to see that he is the reflector of his father the devil. He will be attributed with the same features as Satan. So much with his ancestry.

We want to now go forward to look at the next feature;

HIS AUTHORITY

Revelation 13:2 (NKJV)

² *Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.*

As John looked more closely at the **beast**, he **saw** that it incorporated the characteristics of the animals from the vision recorded in Daniel;

Daniel 7:3-7 (NKJV)

³ *And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.*

⁴ *The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.*

⁵ *And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'*

⁶ *After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.*

⁷ *After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.*

The **leopard**, **bear**, and **lion** were well-known in Palestine. They dramatically emphasize the characteristics of the nations they represent.

The **lion** was a fitting symbol for the fierce, consuming power of the Babylonian Empire.

The ferocity, strength, and stability of the Medo-Persian Empire led to its depiction as a **bear**.

The Greeks' swift conquests, particularly under the mercurial Alexander the Great, reflect the speed and viciousness of the **leopard**.

John lists the three animals in reverse order from Daniel, since he was looking backward in time. Daniel, looking forward in time, listed the animals and the kingdoms they represent in chronological order.

Like the indescribable fourth beast of *Daniel 7:7*, which represents the Roman Empire, Anti-Christ's final empire will be a composite of the empires that preceded it.

It will incorporate all the ferocity, viciousness, swiftness, and strength of the other world empires.

This powerful empire, unparalleled in human history, will be Satan's last and greatest attempt to stop the reign of Christ.

But like all Satan's other attempts to thwart God's purposes, it will ultimately fail.

Because the **dragon** (Satan) is the source of Anti-Christ's **power** no human force will be able to withstand him. **The dragon** works his **power** through **the beast**, using him to make war against God.

Nor will the holy angels intervene, because God's supernatural restraint of Anti-Christ will be removed;

2 Thessalonians 2:7 (NKJV)

⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.

Now that will allow Anti-Christ to rise to power at God's appointed time, and will temporarily let sin run its course.

The Anti-Christ will share Satan's **throne**, (chapter 2:13), just as the true Christ shares His Father's throne (3:21; 22:1,3).

Anti-Christ will possess **great authority** over the entire world; he will have complete unrestrained freedom of action and will answer to no one.

Some find it incredible that anyone could rise to such a position of absolute authority. But there are parallels in human history, albeit on a much smaller scale.

Inevitably, turmoil in society aids such a ruler's rise to power.

Dictators gain control by offering solutions to society's seemingly unsolvable problems.

Adolf Hitler, for example, took advantage of the chaotic economic and political conditions in Germany following World War 1.

He promised the German people that, under his leadership, the downtrodden nation would again rise to a place of prominence, power, and wealth.

Desperate for a way out of their dilemma, many people believed his message.

Eventually, the Nazi party grew so strong that Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany.

From that position he went on to seize absolute power.

Anti-Christ, a dictator more powerful and evil than Hitler, will rise to power amid the frightening and unprecedented chaos of the Tribulation.

He is ultimately powered by Satan and then given power by the people.

Now what about;

HIS ACCLAIM

Revelation 13:3 (NKJV)

³ 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.

A startling event will help Anti-Christ solidify his hold on the world.

John saw “**one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed.**”

The interpretation of that phrase has been much debated.

Some commentators argue that the head whose fatal wound was healed was a kingdom that will have been destroyed and restored. They see the death and resurrection miracle as the revival of the Roman Empire.

Anti-Christ, they believe, will unite the countries occupying the territory of the ancient Roman Empire into a new empire.

That revival of power will so amaze the rest of the nation that they will also submit to his rule.

There are several difficulties with that view, however.

The most obvious problem is that while verse 3 speaks of **one** of the **heads** being **slain**, other passages specify that the beast himself is slain.

Revelation 13:11-14 (NKJV)

¹¹ Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

¹² 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.

¹³ He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

¹⁴ 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.

Revelation 17:8-11 (NKJV)

⁸ The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

⁹ Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

¹⁰ There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

¹¹ And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

The personal pronoun in the phrase **his fatal wound** also indicates that one of the kings is in view, not the empire as a whole.

Nor does it seem likely that merely reviving the Roman Empire would cause the worldwide astonishment and wonder mentioned in this verse.

Finally, the phrase **as if, slain** is used in *chapter 5 verse 6* of the Lord Jesus Christ, implying that it is also used of a person in this passage.

Granting then, that it is a person who dies and is restored to life, the question remains as to the identity of that person.

And again, the view that it will be the resurrected Judas Iscariot has little to commend it. That idea is based on the fact that Judas, and Anti-Christ are both called the “**son of perdition** [or destruction], and that Jesus called Judas a “**devil**”

John 17:12 (NKJV)

¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 (NKJV)

³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

John 6:70-71 (NKJV)

⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

⁷¹ He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.

Now there would be little point in a resurrected Judas; how would anyone recognize him, since no one would know what he looked like?

A more popular view links the death and resurrection in this passage with Emperor Nero. It was widely believed at the end of the first century that Nero, who had committed suicide in A.D. 68 would rise from the dead.

But it is doubtful that many Christians (especially the divinely inspired apostle John) believed in the Nero resurrection myth.

Further the beast will suffer violent death at the hands of another;

Revelation 13:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ 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.

Remember now that Nero took his own life.

The head whose **fatal wound** will be **healed** can only be the future Anti-Christ. Whether his death is real or fake is not clear.

It may be that Anti-Christ is really killed, and God, for His own purposes allows him to be resurrected. Most likely, Anti-Christ's alleged death and resurrection will be a counterfeit of Christ's death and resurrection, staged, as one of the “lying wonders” perpetrated by the false prophet

Revelation 13:12-15 (NKJV)

¹² *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.*

¹³ *He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.*

¹⁴ *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.*

¹⁵ *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.*

2 Thessalonians 2:9 (NKJV)

⁹ *The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,*

Anti-Christ's resurrection will also be phony, since he never really died. Or perhaps Anti-Christ will explain his extraordinary powers by claiming to be the reincarnation of the Christ spirit, as some have suggested.

Certainly in a world where New Age pantheism and Eastern mysticism are extremely popular, more people would be inclined to believe in a reincarnation than a resurrection.

Whatever actually happens, the people of the world will believe that Anti-Christ, already popular because of his great powers, has also transcended death.

Since the Tribulation will be a time where the world will experience death on a scale unprecedented in human history. Anti-Christ's seeming invulnerability to death will win him greater, more widespread acclaim.

As a result, the **whole earth** will be **amazed and follow after the beast**.

2 Thessalonians 2:8-12 (NKJV)

⁸ *And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.*

⁹ *The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,*

¹⁰ *and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

¹¹ *And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,*

¹² *that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

Thus his acclaim! Now to his adoration,

HIS ADORATION

Revelation 13:4 (NKJV)

⁴ *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 world's fascination with the Anti-Christ will quickly become worship.

He will encourage and demand that worship by "*exalting himself above every so-called god or object of worship. So that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God*" (2Thess 2:4).

Not content with acclaim, Anti-Christ will seek adoration; not content with respect, he will require reverence; not content with being hailed and heralded, he will demand to be worshiped.

And those who *“did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved”* will be deceived into worshiping him.

That deception will be fostered by the Anti-Christ’s associate, the false prophet, who *“makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast [Anti-Christ], whose fatal wound was healed”*

Now only will the deceived unbelievers worship Anti-Christ, but they will also (wittingly or unwittingly) worship the dragon (Satan) because he gave his authority to the beast.

By worshiping Anti-Christ unbelievers will actually be worshiping Satan, the real power behind him.

Some people will fully understand that; most will probably be deceived, like those of whom Paul wrote in *1 Corinthians*;

1 Corinthians 10:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ *Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.*

²¹ *You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.*

As the people of the world worship Anti-Christ they will cry out in awe,

“who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?”

By blasphemously referring to Anti-Christ in superlative language reserved for the worship of God, Anti-Christ’s worshiper’s will attribute deity to him.

The implied answer to both rhetorical questions is **“No one!”** in the political, military, and religious realms, Anti-Christ will reign supreme and unchallenged by earth and hell.

When one gets this kind of **authority, acclaim and adoration**, it leads to **arrogance** and we will look at that next time we meet.