

# **Week 9**

## **The Beast**

### **Rev 13-14**

**The Great Beast (Anti Christ)**  
**Rev. 13:1-10**

*Revelation 13:1-10 (NIV)*

<sup>1</sup> And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. <sup>2</sup> The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. <sup>3</sup> One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast. <sup>4</sup> Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?" <sup>5</sup> The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. <sup>6</sup> He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. <sup>7</sup> He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. <sup>8</sup> All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. <sup>9</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear. <sup>10</sup> If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.

**The Origin of AntiChrist – vv.1-3**

Motivated by Satan

Of Gentile stock

Embracing the Kingdoms of the Gentiles - Daniel 7

His Heads are the great and terrible beast - Rome

His body is that of the Leopard – Greece

His feet are that of a bear – Persia

His mouth like a lion – Babylon

AntiChrist is a composite embracing everything that the world has offered. All nations will look to him for leadership and honor and he will embrace all that the world has to offer.

Federated – 7 heads, 10 horns and 10 crowns. The beast is two separate things at once.

**He is an international system of government.** Such an interpretation is not without literary merit. It is quite common to refer to kings by the nation that they lead. Since the allusion in the text is to the kingdoms of this world we must conclude that there is a kingdom represented here as well. Much has been made, for example of the 7 heads and their correspondence with the 7 hills of the city of Rome. There are also 7 continents, including Antarctica. The point is, AntiChrist is a Gentile world system of government that is greater than the person himself.

**He is a singular, powerful leader over all of that government.** This great beast with its heads, horns and crowns is still one entity and is one world leader capable of being worshipped, and of eventually being judged with the lake of fire.

Resurrected – One of the heads has a fatal wound that has healed. This is not a reference to the system of AntiChrist, but the leader himself. In this way Satan mocks God by portraying his AntiChrist in the same way that God has pictured Christ – the lamb that was slain – but here are some linguistic gymnastics of interest. There is a big difference between the words “looking as if” and the word “seemed.” I think John doubts the fatal nature of the beast’s wound, though in every appearance it “should have been fatal. Remember, Satan masquerades as true but never measures up to the truth.

#### **The Actions of AntiChrist – vv.4-10**

**Redirects men’s worship to Satan** – Rather than repent and worship God the beast substitutes Satan and the world gladly accepts.

**Creates Awe** – The Beast convinces all of his power and authority.

**Blasphemy and Slander** – He claims to be God (blasphemy) and says derogatory things about anything Godly (slander)

**Conquest** – He subjects everything and everyone, particularly the righteous to death and captivity.

*Revelation 13:11-18 (NIV)*

*<sup>11</sup> Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. <sup>12</sup> He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. <sup>13</sup> And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. <sup>14</sup> Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. <sup>15</sup> He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. <sup>16</sup> He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, <sup>17</sup> so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. <sup>18</sup> This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.*

**His Identity** – Often called the False Prophet because of his work. He is identified by his work more than his origin. He is distinguished by

**Similarity to the truth** – Horns like a lamb, but words of a dragon. His “appearance” is that of godliness, but his teachings belie his appearance.

Authority over men – He derives his authority from the beast, and his authority rises from his healing of the first beast.

Spiritual Authority – The ability to perform miracles with power over nature and the supernatural.

Mental Authority – Because of his miracles and message the False Prophet exercises authority over the hearts and minds of men deceiving them into following the beast. His control is seen in man's response to his efforts

They create an image and animate it – The image is most likely established in the temple in Jerusalem. Through his Satanic empowerment the False Prophet animates the image and men worship it.

They execute those who will not worship –

They mark themselves to identify with the beast –

## Theories on the mark of the beast

The number 666 has inspired all manner of interpretive systems.

**Alpha numeric cipher** – The numbers are an encryption pointing to a specific name. Some have ciphered the name as “Nero” for example, and point to the world leader as a world tyrant

**Incompleteness** – This theory says that the number of perfection, and therefore God, is 7 and that 666 is an approximation but constant failure to reach that perfection.

**Combinations** – Any number is sets of three that may workout to 666. Ronald Reagan was once labeled AntiChrist because his full name “RONALD WILSON REAGAN” has three sets of six letters. Others have done similar mathematical computations for every world leader known in history.

**Identification** – Fearing that any form of numeric I.D. could lead to identification with the AntiChrist Christians have resisted telephone numbers, Social Security (adamantly because of the 3 sets of numbers on the card), zip codes, credit cards, ATM cards, and currently national I.D. cards as a means of preventing terrorist infiltration.

The fact is, when the number of the beast appears those affected will know about it! Christians should not fear any of these things because the text says that though deceived, the world knows exactly what they are doing and openly embrace the beast and his mark.

## The Lamb and the 144,000

### Rev. 14:1-5

*Revelation 14:1-5 (NIV)*

*<sup>1</sup> Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. <sup>2</sup> And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. <sup>3</sup> And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. <sup>4</sup> These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. <sup>5</sup> No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.*

With the rise of the false prophet the Lord calls home his witnesses. The 144,000 are gathered to heaven (by death?). God is about to finish his work. The time of final judgment is here.

## The Final Warning

### Rev.14:6-13

*Revelation 14:6-13 (NIV)*

*<sup>6</sup> Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. <sup>7</sup> He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.” <sup>8</sup> A second angel followed and said, “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.” <sup>9</sup> A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, <sup>10</sup> he, too, will drink of the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. <sup>11</sup> And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.” <sup>12</sup> This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God’s commandments and remain faithful to Jesus. <sup>13</sup> Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.”*

### This final warning contains three announcements

**Salvation is of God alone** – a final call to repentance, this time by an angel, but we see no marker in the text that there is any response.

**Babylon is Doomed** – The interpretations of the City of Babylon vary greatly. Specific suggestions are

Babylon

Rome

Jerusalem

New York City

Ancient Babylon was the first city to rebel against God and form its own religion. The figure may be a symbol of a culture that has no room for God because they have manufactured their own God.

**Identification with AntiChrist is death** – This is significant because it is the opposite of identification with Christ. Many will face eternal judgment for remaining neutral about Christ when they needed to choose. Here these will rebelliously choose the Beast and pay the consequences.

## The Final Wrath

Rev.14:14-20

*Revelation 14:14-20 (NIV)*

*<sup>14</sup> I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one “like a son of man” with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. <sup>15</sup> Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” <sup>16</sup> So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. <sup>17</sup> Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. <sup>18</sup> Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” <sup>19</sup> The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s wrath. <sup>20</sup> They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses’ bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.*

**The harvest** – The metaphor is used in other places in a positive manner, but here it indicates that ripeness of man’s sin. The origin of the harvest is heaven and those commissioned to bring the harvest about are pictured as those who make quick, productive and indiscriminate progress. This is where we get the common metaphor of the “grim reaper.”

**Another revised metaphor is the use of grapes.** Other references to grapes are to their link to prosperity. Here they are used for their juiciness and its visual link to blood. The final harvest will be a bloody mess.

**The city** – most likely Jerusalem, though Babylon is the most recently named city.

**The flow of the blood** – not an ocean 4 feet high and 180 miles wide. More likely a splashing four feet high over the 180 mile radius. In other words, gruesome war unlike any seen before.