

Message #1056
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"THE BEAST OUT OF THE SEA AND THE EARTH"
{Revelation 13:1b-18}

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INTRODUCTION

Our world is void of strong, visionary, charismatic leaders. One cannot help but thank back during World War II and the vast amount of leaders worldwide--good and evil...

Franklin Roosevelt {USA}
Winston Churchill {Great Britain}
Josef Stalin {USSR}
Adolf Hitler {Germany}
Benito Mussolini {Italy}
Foreign Minister Togo and Emperor Hirohito {Japan}
Chang Kai Shek {China}
Mao Tse Tung {China}
Ghandi {India}

Who do we have on the world scene who can compare to these giants?

George W. Bush {USA}
Tony Blair {Great Britain}
Kim Jong II {North Korea}
Fidel Castro {Cuba}
Osama ben Ladin {al-Quaida Terrorist Leader}
Yasser Arafat {Palestine}
Prime Minister Ariel Sharon {Israel}
Vladimir Putin {Russia}
Kofi Annan {Secretary General of the United Nations}

Occasionally a leader will surface that commands our attention; however, sadly, the world does not have many, if any, genuinely dynamic leaders on center stage.

The world is in disarray today--more than any time in recent history.

...our own nation is divided over the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

...the threat of terrorism keeps everyone on edge

...our lives changed on 9/11

...the extremely long political campaign has created even great distrust in our leaders--it seems to last ad nausea.

The forces of evil seem to have been unleashed.

...the Middle East is a caldron about to boil over

...Israel

...Palestinians

...Iraq

...Iran

...Pakistan

...Saudi Arabia

...North Korean President, Kim Jong II is boasting his country has nuclear capabilities

It's a scary world out there! It is ripe for the type of leader that can really lead the world astray! Hal Lindsey said it all when he titled his book: "Satan is Alive and Well on Planet Earth!"

The Apostle John wrote...

"Dear children, the last hour is here. You have heard that the Antichrist is coming, and already MANY such antichrists have appeared..." {1 John 2: 18}

The spirit of antichrist is prevalent everywhere today! Everywhere! We are reminded of Jesus' words to His disciples... "Watch out that no one deceives you. For MANY will come in My name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are beginning of birth pains. "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of Me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but whoever stands firm to the end will be saved.

"So, when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand--then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the roof of their house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days...for there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never will be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There He is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect--if that were possible. See I have told you ahead of time. {Matthew 24: 4-24}

Jesus was preparing His disciples for what the Apostle John wrote in Revelation 12-13-17 about the coming Satanic trilogy: Satan, the False Prophet, and the Antichrist.

THE BEASTS OF REVELATION 13

The Beast Out of the Sea

In chapter 12 of the Revelation the Apostle John saw a great red dragon with seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns, which has been interpreted as a manifestation of Satan.

...describes his fall from heaven

...portrays his quest to destroy Jesus

...and his desire to keep Jesus' followers from being effective in the world

In chapter 13 we see a beast rising out of the sea--another manifestation of Satan as a worldwide evil power on earth. What was read for us earlier this morning parallels what the Prophet Daniel wrote...

"Before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.

"The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it.

"A second beast looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!'

"I saw another--a third beast--one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.

"After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast--terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns." {Daniel 7:2-8}

The beast Daniel saw represented four great world empires of his day and following...

- ...First was Babylon, like a lion
- ...Second was Medo-Persia, like a bear
- ...Third was Greece, like a leopard with four heads
- ...Fourth was the ferocious Roman Empire

John writes in Revelation 17:8...

"The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come!"

Whoever this "beast" is they will "astonish the world!" This corresponds to what John wrote in chapter 13...

"Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshipped the beast and asked, 'Who is like the beast?

Who can make war against him?'" {13:4}

...Satan could not bring Jesus to worship him

...but the day is coming when the world will bow and extol him

...so cunning is he that he could deceive the very "elect" if that were possible according to Jesus!

We turn to Revelation 17 to get an interpretation of the "beast out of the sea" of Revelation 13...

"The beast you saw was alive but isn't now. And yet he will soon come up out of the bottomless pit and go to eternal destruction. Understand this: The seven heads of the beast represent the seven hills of the city where this woman rules. They also represent seven kings. Five kings have already fallen, the sixth now reigns, and the seventh is yet to come, but his reign will be brief. The scarlet beast that was alive and then died is the eighth king. He is like the other seven, and he, too, will go to his doom. His ten horns are ten kings who have not yet risen to power; they will be appointed to their kingdoms for one brief moment to reign with the beast. They will all agree to give their power and authority to him. Together they will wage war against the Lamb, the the Lamb will defeat them because he is Lord over all lords, and King over all kings, and His people are the called and chosen and faithful ones." {17:8a,9-14}

There are many interpretations to these passages.

...I've searched and searched for a consensus--there is none

...Therefore, I can only give you my interpretation--which is subject to error; however, I've found some good scholars who agree I believe that this speaks of a revival of the remnant of what we once knew as the Roman Empire. In my lifetime we've seen the formation of the...

...European Common Market

...and most recently the European Economic Community

...organizations moving towards what I'm speaking

I believe that out of these...or, perhaps yet another organization...will come a coalition of nations in Europe whose leader will be a satanically controlled person somewhere in the geographic area of the old Roman Empire.

"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. 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." {13: 7-8}

...this revived Roman leader will be given extraordinary power

...he will do horrific things

...thousands will die because of their faith--martyrs of the faith People will follow this leader blindly...and he will receive his power and authority from Satan.

...people will be powerless to stop him.

The Apostle Paul warned of his coming...

"Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and that many of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God." {1 Thessalonians 2: 3-4}

He is deceptive and ruthless like none before him...everything God stands for he is in direct opposition. Listen to the text again...

"Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority of the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, 'Who is like the beast?'

Who can make war against him?

"The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander His name and His dwelling place and those who live in heaven. 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. All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast...

"He who has an ear, let him hear.

"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." {13: 4-10}

CONCLUSION/APPLICATION

How do we respond to all of this?

First with confidence...not fear. Jesus said...

"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.

Rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

Secondly, we need to put on our armor and be prepared for whatever comes...! Paul wrote...

"Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Therefore, put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." {Ephesians 6: 10-38}

And never, NEVER, NEVER, forget...

"The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world!" And that God will

NEVER leave us nor forsake us...no matter what we face in life...and to all who overcome awaits a crown of righteousness. And remember, the world may be in chaos...but God will prevail...He is still on the throne! Hallelujah!
"If God is for us...who can stand against us!"