

Sent: Wednesday, February 2, 2022 5:50 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Revelation 13:1-10

"Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus in the Christ? This is an antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son!" (1 John 2:22)

We're still in the middle of the Tribulation period in our study of Revelation, about "things to come," and John, the beloved disciple of Christ, is seeing it all in a vision and recording it for us, as instructed by God, while in exile on the Isle of Patmos!

Remember last week's lesson on Revelation 12? About Satan! John sees "the great red dragon," once known as "Lucifer, the anointed cherub," who wanted to be equal with God (according to Isaiah 14:14), and so (way back when) rebelled and "with the swipe of his tail" took "a third of the stars of heaven" (other "fallen" angels) with him out of the glories of heaven! Later showing up in the Garden, as the "serpent"! And later (among other things) seen contesting with God over the fate and fortunes of Job; then trying to destroy Israel and the Messianic line of Christ, and still later (verse 4 says), "standing before the woman" (speaking again of Israel) seeking to prevent the birth of the Christ child and, failing that, working to keep Him from the cross, and disrupt God's redemptive plan!

1 Peter 5:8 says, "he's our adversary, prowling around (in our world) seeking whom he may devour! And so, whether we realize it or not, we're at war, "battling with the principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world"! And, somewhat surprisingly, we learned that he, Satan, still has access to heaven, where Revelation 12:10 says he "stands before God, day and night, as an accuser of the brethren"! But we know that won't last forever, because John, in his vision, saw an upcoming battle which will take place between him and Michael the archangel, at the same time as the Tribulation period will be occurring on the earth! A battle MacArthur describes as "the war of the ages," and the real "Star Wars"! A battle, incidentally, which Satan will lose, resulting in him being thrown down to the earth, and cast out of heaven forever!

And that sets the scene for our lesson last night on Revelation 13:1-10! (Remember, we're still in the middle of the Tribulation!)

Revelation 13:1 says, "And the dragon (Satan) stood on the sand of the seashore." MacArthur says he's "taking a position in the midst of the nations of the world, represented by the sands of the seashore, as if it's his rightful possession! But, in reality, he's a usurper who seeks the world's worship and adoration, as he continues his war against God," and is going to try to prevent Jesus Christ from establishing His earthly kingdom, by establishing his own kingdom!

Verse 1 continues! Then John "saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and on his head blasphemous names." Not by chance! Satan is summoning his chosen one, out of the "sea of mankind"! He's actually the "Antichrist, out of the abyss"! (And he may already be on the scene in our world! Maybe!)

Remember, in Revelation 11:7, when John was told that God would send "two witnesses" who would "prophecy for twelve hundred and sixty days (or three and a half years), clothed in sackcloth...and that when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them..." and allow their bodies to lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three and a half days, when all of a sudden they would be given "the breath of life from God and ascend in heaven in the cloud"! This is apparently the same beast John is speaking about in Revelation 13, where he's going back in time to reveal the beast's original summoning by Satan!

In Revelation 13:2, John writes that "the beast he saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority!" Walvoord describes the beast as having the combined attributes of all three animals: the majesty and power of the lion, like the Babylonian Empire; the strength and tenacity of a bear, like the Medo-Persian Empire; and the swiftness of a leopard, like the Greeks under Alexander the Great, as seen in perfect parallel with a vision and prophesy by Daniel (in Daniel 7:7-8)! Plus, the added power coming from Satan himself!

And so, the beast will become a great world leader, with the greatest confederacy of nations ever assembled coming under his control and bidding (with the "seven heads and horns" perhaps representing, according to Walvoord, the "remnants of a confederacy of nations that will form a revised Roman Empire). MacArthur calls it, "a demon-possessed man who leads a final Satanic world empire"! And God, our sovereign God, will allow it all to come to fruition for a season!

Revelation 13:3-4 says that he "will suffer a fatal wound," but be healed (perhaps trying to "fake" a resurrection and imitate Christ!) and that "the whole earth will be amazed and follow him...and worship the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast"! And worship the beast as well, saying, "Who is like the beast?"

And the beast will be "given a mouth to speak arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months...against God...and it will also be given to him (given, by our sovereign God) to make war with the saints...and all who dwell on the earth will worship him," but only "those whose names have not been written from the foundations of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain"! (Believers will have to stand alone and many will be martyred!)
Wow!

We shouldn't be surprised! It's all been prophesied!

Daniel saw it all in a vision and was astounded, but unable to understand it all! Daniel 8:23-27 says: "Then a king will arise; insolent and skilled in intrigue. His power will be mighty, but not by his own power, and he will destroy to an extraordinary degree and prosper and perform his will; he will destroy mighty men and the holy people. And through his shrewdness he will cause deceit to succeed by his influence; and he will magnify himself in his heart, and he will destroy many while they are at ease. He will even oppose the Prince of princes, but he will be broken without human agency. The vision of the evenings and mornings are true; but keep the vision secret, for it pertains to many days in the future!" Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for

days. Then I got up and carried on the king's business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it!" Wow!

John probably wasn't too surprised! In his first epistle, he had already warned about an antichrist that would be coming "in the last hour" (1 John 2:18) And then, in 4:4, he spoke of the "spirit of antichrist which is already in the world," but then added these encouraging words: "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world!"

The apostle Paul spoke of "the lawless one who would be revealed...the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason, God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false..." (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12)

And Jesus explained it when He spoke to His disciples about the coming of the Antichrist! In John 14:29-30, "Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe. I will not speak much more with you for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me!" And in the same setting He also gave these words of comfort: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, not let it be fearful!

"If anyone has an ear, let him hear!"

Lowell