

Revelation 13 pt 2
Beastly Prophets and Religion

How many of you have

Hexa kosioi hexekonta hexaphobia.

Gorman:

As a teenager, I had an aversion to phoning a friend who had the prefix 666; recently, residents of a town in Louisiana were given the option of changing telephone prefixes from 666 to 749. There is even a technical term for the fear of the number: Hexa kosioi hexekonta hexaphobia.

In the first part of this chapter, we saw the first beast who took the form of oppressive rulers and was, or is, the Dragon's proxy on earth. The dragon is Satan. We saw the unholy trinity of Satan and the two beasts. The first beast continues to be referred to as "the beast", but the second is going to be referred to as the "false prophet" (Rev 16:13; 19:20; 20:10) . So the unholy trinity is Satan, the beast, and the false prophet.

The Beast from the Earth

11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. **12** He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. **13** He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. **14** And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who *had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

15 And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. **16** And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the freemen and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, **17** and *he provides* that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, *either* the name of the beast or the number of his name. **18** Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six (666).

We have seen here in Revelation that the church is attacked and does seem to lose, at least temporarily, but not ultimately. Amen or ouch!

The beast does get victories for a while.

Don't be surprised at the temporary losses – 1 Pet 4

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; **13** but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. **14** If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

V. 11 Again we see a parody of Christ. The second beast, i.e. false prophet, is 'like the lamb with horns' (5:6) His description fits the warning of Jesus against false prophets. Matt 7:15

The text says that he looks like a lamb, but he spoke as a dragon. As a dragon, he speaks with lies and beguiling deceptive speech. He may appear harmless and gentle, but his words are destructive.

This second beast represents all the false prophets and false religions of the world, i.e. all the philosophies of deceit that draw hearts and minds away from the true God revealed in Christ. To what

degree it all plays out and leads up to ONE final figure is not exactly clear, but as “birth pains” intensify, so too, the attacks of the beast and the false prophets will as well.

v. 12 The false prophet, or 2nd beast, rises up to lead the “earth dwellers” to worship the first beast. (anti-Christ type leaders who follow the Dragon).

The unholy trinity is after control of the nations and will use political and religious agents in order to deceive and dominate the world.

THE HARDEST THING TO REMEMBER AND DIGEST IS THAT this unholy trinity is on God’s leash. We should not allow ourselves to despair or respond with unrighteous anger. Rather we need to walk by faith, trust God’s Providence, and hold fast to Christ and His Word.

This “prophetic beast” is the minister of propaganda for the global anti-Christ movement. Thus, we have an unholy connection between some sort of religious/philosophical power and a beastly governmental power.

Rome mingled worship and politics through the worship of Emperors

Islam, Christianity, and secular states have mingled worship and oppressive power to do great harm over various time periods.

Ancient and tribal religions have done the same thing in various parts of the world. Child sacrifice to appease the gods has a long track record in world history.

Sadly, a form of child sacrifice as part of a modern secular cult-like mentality has become a huge issue in our own day. Even worse, it can even take on a ‘religious’ tone of its own. The rhetoric has been taken to a whole new level as the beastly reality is becoming clearer. The opposition to the Christian position on life has dropped any pretense of a rational argument and is going for straight up mockery of God.

<https://thepostmillennial.com/watch-pro-abortion-groteque-display>

Last weekend, May 7-8, pro abortion protestors in front of a church sang, “Thank God for abortion” The most fanatical among them shouted “If God murdered his son, why can’t I.”

<https://beginningandend.com/abortion-activists-storm-church-chanting-if-mary-had-known-about-abortion-we-wouldnt-have-this-nonsense/>

In French speaking Canada protestors entered a Christian conference and began yelling, “If Mary had known about abortion, we wouldn’t have to deal with all this nonsense.”

Voice mail sent to Wisconsin Family Action center after it was fire-bombed : (woman) “I’m so thankful that the good Lord finally took action on people like you.” (man) “You think you’re following the will of ___ Jesus. You’re following the ___ will of the devil” (man) “Burn little Jesus freaks, burn, burn, burn) (Deace montage 5-11-22)

Tragically, those on the other side have used violent tactics in the past.

In past decades, “religious” men in white robes and hoods burned crosses and bombed churches to reveal their own contempt for God.

The diabolic forces of evil have shown themselves in various ways over the years. It seems that when the evil one starts to feel at home and in charge, he shows his true face, even if hidden behind a white hood, an Anti-fa style mask, or a mega-phone shouting “Thank God for abortion.”

In modern times, a stark example of the religious beast supporting the 1st beast is in North Korea where the ruler is seen a sort of God.

A clear example from scripture comes from Acts 12

21 On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. 22 The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" 23 And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

Rev 13 – Horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon...

The 2nd beast may look like a player on the side of the lamb, but is actually doing the bidding of the dragon, intentionally or unintentionally. This has been happening for a loooooong time as voices within the visible church have taken steps to erode faith in God's Word and in God Himself.

From the early heresies of the ancient world to the philosophical, academic, and religious skepticism and opposition of the Enlightenment and modern world, the things of God have come under attack.

In 1789ff the French revolutionaries turned Notre Dame into a cathedral to the "goddess of reason."

2021 – the president of the Harvard chaplains' group is an atheist

EX: April 3 2022 prayer to the "God of pronouns" in a mainline denomination in Iowa.

The Devil is enraged because the church is associated with Jesus.

John 15:18 "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

It is common to hear that the world hates the church because it is full of hypocrites, etc. While that may be true to some degree, the REAL reason is that the church is associated with Christ, and they hate Him. Churches that have abandoned any semblance of biblical belief about Christ are not hated by the world because the Jesus they proclaim is made in their image so that the world will embrace him. But he is not the Jesus revealed in scripture. They don't need the redeeming Jesus, the reigning Jesus, the coming again Jesus to accomplish their goals and agendas. They try to enlist Jesus to their cause so that their dragon like vision is reached.

V. 14 a beastly imitation of Christ

He performs 'miracles' to draw people away from Christ. Mark 13:21– Jesus warns against those who would lead the people astray. Paul spoke of the one coming is according to the working of Satan with power and signs and wonders 2 Thess 2:9

V. 15 The trickery of a false prophet. – His method of operation is deceit with plausible sounding worldly wisdom.

v. 16-17 homage to the beast

Daniel and his friends refused to worship the statue of the emperor, and at the time of John, Christians were killed for not bowing before the image of the Roman emperor.

The beastly rulers of the State require loyalty or else one might not be able to carry on normal life business or activities. Need I reference the past two year???

Remember that this is symbolic apocalyptic writing so we must be wary of trying to find the EXACT example of the mark of the beast.

Just as there are many beasts, so too there are many 'marks'. This is also a parody of God who put a mark or seal on His own followers as we saw in 7:4; 9:4.

v. 18 the number of the beast

For the past 2000 years, hundreds of names have been proposed as THE NAME – the number 666. No one name has been given that has convinced a majority of scholars.

It is easy to turn a name into a number. It was often done in ancient times. But it is much harder to turn a number into a name. The possibilities are almost endless, especially when you start changing names from Hebrew to Greek to Latin to English or vice versa.

One scholar identifies three rules that commentators have used for making any desired name equal 666: 1) if the proper name by itself will not yield it, add a title; 2) if the sum cannot be found in Greek, try Hebrew, or even Latin; and 3) do not be too particular about the spelling (Salmon in Beale)

My guess is that if you play around with the names, titles and alternate spellings, the names of half the people in this room could yield the number 666. You may be sitting next to the 2nd beast.

The important thing is the function of the 2nd beast. His role is to persuade mankind to offer its allegiance to the 1st beast, who is Satan's proxy. The 1st beast aims to control and oppress. The false prophet aims to make the 1st beast sound plausible. He pretends to champion truth while leading the world astray.

In Orwellian fashion, he may seek to change the meaning of words and ideas or simply silence the voices who oppose him. I'm not on a beast hunt per se but it seems to me that our current age of global media makes the job of both beasts easier in many respects. It can also act as a safeguard against beastly narratives if non-beastly voices are allowed to be heard.

God's people have always been exposed to false religions and at times they have been seduced into following after them. It may have been for social or financial reasons, or it may have simply been a total collapse of faith and a leap into idolatry.

Dangers from within have been all too common for both the OT saints and the church age believers.

In Dr. Francis Schaeffer's last public speech to a convention of religious broadcasters in 1984, he spoke of his concern that American evangelicals were drinking from the culture. As he left the platform his last words were, "Accommodation, Accommodation, Accommodation."

It is nothing short of societal foolishness to seek to undermine the key building blocks that God instituted for human flourishing.

One way to gain power is to simply access people's brains – TIN HAT ALERT, right. It would be if such talk wasn't being put out by one of the most powerful men in the world.

WEF chair Klaus Schwab – chips in the brain 10 years from now. In a Chicago speech to a council on global affairs he spoke of the "What the fourth industrial revolution will lead to is a fusion of our physical, digital and biological identity."

I'm not a globalist or a biologist, but that sounds a bit creepy to me. It would make it easier for the beast to exercise control if he could 'read your thoughts.'

The message of Revelation is hard to interpret, and it presents some hard truths about our world and the reality of spiritual warfare. We don't want to dwell on that. We have jobs, homes, families and activities to fill our lives.

What's so sad is the reality that so many seem to be on the wrong side of the spiritual battle. One thing this book should do is motivate us to pray for those held captive to the schemes of the enemy. They need our prayers, and they NEED US to stand firm in proclaiming the rock-solid message of Hope in Christ.

While the 1st beast represents worldly governments opposed to the kingdom of God, the 2nd beast represents the intellectual and spiritual forces that undermine a firm faith in God and his word. When faith is undermined, it is easier for the schemes and idolatries of Satan to keep the world fixated on the here and now.

Remember 1 Pet 5 “the Devil is a roaring lion seeking whom he can devour. RESIST him, FIRM IN THE FAITH.”

THE deceiver wants people to look to man-centered solutions rather than to God. Rom 1 speaks of worshipping the creature rather than the Creator; professing to be wise, they have become fools.

The level of deception and evil we have seen in the course of world history, past and present just doesn't make any sense if we eliminate the cosmic warfare that is going on behind the scenes. There is a thief who comes to steal, kill, and destroy. We can and perhaps should wish that it were not so. Jesus lamented that his own people in Jerusalem did not recognize their day of visitation. We should pray for hearts to recognize Christ before it is too late.

It would be all too easy to accommodate the culture and pretend that all is well, but that is not what our world needs. They need to see believers who stand firm and hold forth the Bread of Life, the Living Water, and the good news of the Gospel.

That's what changed the ancient world.

I could go on and on with stories of our age today that underscore the depth of the spiritual battle, but I want to end this section of Revelation with some characteristics of those who 'overcome' and finish well. We'll take a summer break from this book and look at some Psalms and Parables, but let's not take the summer off spiritually.

What does it take to finish well?

Kenneth Boa suggests seven characteristics; all are demonstrated in Revelation.

Intimacy with Christ – Rev 2:4 – Don't abandon your first love

Fidelity to the spiritual disciplines 1:3; 3:3 Sardis and “He who has ears, let him hear...”

A Biblical perspective on the circumstances of life 1:4-8

A teachable, responsive, humble, and obedient spirit 2:7 He who has ears...

A clear sense of personal purpose and calling 1:6

Healthy relationships with resourceful people 3:4 Those who walk in truth

Ongoing ministry investment in the lives of others - theme of overcoming and standing firm

This is NOT job description to tire you out. These are traits that flow out of the first one – Intimacy with Christ. Intimacy with Christ is NOT burden; it is a blessing available by faith.

There are seven traits, one for each day. Perhaps this summer you could take one a day and make it a focus of prayer for your life, mine, and those you love.

There is no cruise control in the Christian life. The Devil doesn't take the summer off.

Ask God to build these traits into your life individually and OUR life as a church body as we cling to Jesus.

Amen.

God of pronouns

<https://redstate.com/alexparker/2022/04/07/christian-church-leads-prayer-to-the-god-of-pronouns-the-great-they-them-who-breastfeeds-n547068>

<https://firstpresbiowacity.org/sermon/how-could-you/>

Klaus Schwab

<https://futuresciencenews.com/2021-05-12-globalist-klaus-schwab-global-health-pass-microchip.html>

<https://ground.news/article/0c3be03e-8bb9-4bef-8587-7e7c794fd6f3>

<https://humansbefree.com/2020/11/klaus-schwab-great-reset-implantable-microchips.html>

<https://www.armstrongeconomics.com/international-news/great-reset/schwab-advocates-putting-chips-in-our-head-so-government-can-read-our-thoughts/>

Steve Deace show montage 5/12/22

--	--