

November 23, 2010

Who Is the Antichrist?

1 John 2:18-29

- 18 “It IS the last hour”- it’s already the End Times!
“antichrist is coming... many antichrists have come”- false prophets and teachers! (**Mt 24:3-14**)
19 “they went out from us”- they could not endure the true teaching and left the Church (**2 Jn 7-11**)
20 “anointed by the Holy One”- Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism (Mk 1:10)
So also, we are anointed and sealed with the Holy Spirit at our baptism into Christ! (Eph 1:13)
22-23 Who is the antichrist? ANYONE who denies Jesus Christ
24-29 This is John’s exhortation to remain in your baptism and the true teaching of Christ (Mt 28:19-20)

1 John 4:1-6

- 1 “Test the spirits”- all Christians are called to be discerning, don’t believe everything you hear!
2 How can we tell that something is from the Holy Spirit? It will confess the truth about Jesus
3 Who is the antichrist? ANYONE who does not confess Jesus Christ
Do these passages indicate that there is one, ultimate, “The Antichrist?”
What do these passages teach us about identifying any of the antichrists?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

Is the Man of Lawlessness/Son of Destruction the same thing as an antichrist?
What are the similarities and differences?

The Lutheran Confessions

Is the Pope the Antichrist?

Apology AC- XV, par. 18.- Relying on human traditions as necessary for salvation is Antichrist-like, (cf Ap XXIII)
Smalcald- part II, art IV- Pope sets himself up as head of the Church, and is thus in opposition to Christ (SA II:II)
Power & Primacy of the Pope- (“A Contrast between Christ and the Pope” & “The Marks of the Antichrist”)

The Beast from Sea

Revelation 13:1-10

- 1 “beast rising out of the sea”- a composite of the 4 beasts in Daniel 7:2-7, 15-27
- | Daniel’s 4 beasts from the sea: | Revelation 13’s Beast |
|--|------------------------|
| 1- Lion with eagles wings → Babylon | Lion’s mouth (13:2c) |
| 2- Bear with three ribs in mouth → Medo-Persia | Bear’s feet (13:2b) |
| 3- Leopard with four wings and four heads → Greece | Like a leopard (13:2a) |
| 4- Ten-horned beast with iron teeth → Roman Empire | 10 horns (13:1) |
| Combined heads = 7 | Total heads = 7 |

Conclusion? The Beast from the sea represents a political/national entity

Why the Sea? The sea parallels the abyss of 9:11, for John the Sea is West and the location of Rome!

- 2 the dragon gave his power, throne, great authority to it- the beast takes orders from Satan
3 “seemed to have a mortal wound...healed”- possibly cryptic reference to Caligula or Nero
4 “worshiped the dragon”- by marveling/worshipping the beast, they marvel the one behind him
REMEMBER! In 2:9 and 3:9-10, the Jewish religion is called a “Synagogue of Satan”
5 Blasphemy for 42 months- 12:14, 12:6, 11:2-3. For the 4th time- What does this equal and mean?
6-7 The Beast torments Christians on earth and mocks both God and those in heaven
8 “all...will worship him”- Roman Empire worshiped Caesar with incense offerings
“book of life of the Lamb”- seen in 3:5, before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4, Rom 8:28-30)

THE BOOK OF LIFE in the OT- Ex 32:32-34; Ps 69:26-28; Dan 12:1; Malachi 3:16-17

In the NT- Luke 10:20; Phil 4:3; 4 times in Revelation

In the Intertestamental Literature- Book of Jubilees 30:18-20; 1 Enoch 93:1-2

10 This verse is an oracle about the Christians who will not sacrifice to the Emperor, God is in control of their circumstances even when the Beast is punishing them! Thus it produces endurance and faith.
 What is the identity of this Beast from the Sea? Initially the Roman Empire, but more broadly “*the beast represents and symbolizes every human authority and everything of the human nature that the dragon can corrupt and control and use in his warfare against the woman (the church) and her seed (individual Christians): political, governmental, social, economic, philosophical, and educational systems, as well as individuals.*” (Brighton, 352)
 From our discussion of “antichrist” above, can we say that this beast is an antichrist? How so/why not?

The Beast from the Earth

Revelation 13:11-18

- 11 “out of the earth”- together with the Beast from the Sea, these two cover the whole world
 “two horns like a lamb”- appears more docile than the first beast, wolf in sheepskin (Mt 7:15)
 “spoke like a dragon”- has the words and teachings of the Dragon, Satan
 16 “marked on the right hand or the forehead”- branding and ownership
 17 “no one can buy or sell”- This Beast has ties to commercialism & materialism
 “the number of its name”- this was called “Gematria” numerical value for names
 18 “This calls for wisdom”- editorial exhortation to the hearers present in the Christian assembly while the book of Revelation is being read aloud!
 “for it is a human number”- interpretations abound on the number 666- Nero Caesar, Domitian are common
 6= number of man Gen 1:26-31- 6th day of creation was Mankind
 7= number of God /heaven Gen ch 2:1- 7th day of Sabbath rest, complete covenant of 3 + 4
 666 = a trinity of evil, (6-dragon, 6-sea beast, 6-earth beast)
 -one short in each number of the perfection of 777
 777 = the Trinity of holiness Father, Son, Holy Spirit

Conclusion? The Beast from the Earth does not force himself on the world like the first beast. He wins the earth’s confidence through deceit and resembling a lamb with meekness and innocence.

What is the identity of the Beast from the Earth? “*While the beast from the sea represents every tyranny by human power and enterprise, the beast from the earth represents religious tyranny.*” (Brighton, 358)

From our discussion of “antichrist” above, can we say that this beast is an antichrist? How so/why not?

THE TRINITY

THE FATHER

- Who was and is and is to come (1:4)
- begets the Son (Ps 2:7)
- sends forth the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:26)

THE SON, JESUS CHRIST

- Is the image of the Father (Jn 14:9)
- Has all authority in Heaven & Earth (Mt 28:18)
- Given the Father’s power, throne, authority (Rev 5)
- Mortally wounded (5:9)
- Raised from the dead (2:8; 5:6)
- Heaven marvels as they follow the Lamb (5:9-10)
- Crucified for Blasphemy (Mt 25:65-66)
- Saves mankind
- At his name every knee should bow (Phil 2:10-11)

THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Speaks what he hears from the Father (Jn 16:13)
- Sent by the Son with his authority (Jn 16:7)
- Glorifies the Son (Jn 16:14)
- Pentecost tongues of fire (Acts 2)
- Guides people into all Truth (Jn 16:13)
- Seals believers with himself (7:3 & Eph 4:30)

THE ANTI-TRINITY

THE DRAGON

- “that serpent of old” (12:3, 9)
- calls forth the 1st Beast (12:17)
- calls forth the 2nd Beast (12:17)

THE BEAST FROM THE SEA

- Heads/horns like the Dragon (12:3 + 13:1)
- claims all authority (13:1)
- Given the Dragon’s power, throne, authority (13:2b)
- Seems to be mortally wounded (13:3)
- Wound is healed (13:3)
- Earth marvels and follows the Beast (13:3-4)
- Actually utters Blasphemy (13:5)
- Wars against the Saints (13:7)
- All who dwell on earth will worship it (13:8)

THE BEAST FROM THE EARTH

- Speaks like the Dragon (13:11)
- Authority of the 1st Beast (13:12)
- Makes the earth worship 1st beast (13:12)
- Fire comes down before people (13:13)
- Deceives those who dwell on earth (13:14)
- Marks the unbelievers with his number (13:16)