

Faces of the Devil

Beast 1 and Beast 2

Thursday, 9/1 at 7 + Sunday, 9/4 at 8:00 & 10:45

12th Sunday after Pentecost / 11th Sunday after Trinity – 2011

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, we read at the end of Revelation chapter 12 that the devil “was enraged with the woman [the church], and went off to make war with the rest of her children...” (Rev 12:17 NAU). The devil wants to separate each one of us from Jesus, our Savior, but Revelation chapter 20 describes the devil being bound for most of the NT era. Therefore, he must work his evil through beast 1 and beast 2.

- The Devil Works through Beast 1:** ^{12:18} And the dragon [devil] stood on the sand of the seashore. ¹[And] I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems [also worn by the dragon; 12:3], and on his heads were blasphemous names [names which express his disrespect for God]. ²And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion [very similar to Daniel chapter 7; therefore, Dr. Becker concluded: “The four beasts of Daniel’s vision are such clear representations of secular rulers that there scarcely can be any doubt that the beast which John saw coming out of the sea is also a symbol of secular government.” (195-196)]. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. // **The devil works through secular governments in various ways:** the Roman Empire, the system of Islam, and even the U. S. government, which has passed many laws against God’s Word, school prayer, and life itself!

- a. **His heads** – ³ / saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed [see Dr. Becker, 198-199]. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; ⁴ ,and² they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?” // Some may conclude: Since he recovered from a fatal wound, *who could ever defeat him?* But we are called to always remember: In Christ we win!
- b. **His mouth** – ⁵ There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and [was given to him] authority to act for forty-two months [the NT era] ... ⁶ And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. // Notice that beast 1 treats God AND God’s children – *citizens of heaven* (Phil. 3:20; Eph. 2:6) – in the same way. Such things will continue – *sometimes more, other times less* – throughout the NT era.
- c. **His aggression** – ⁷ [And] it was...given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and [was given to him] authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation... // Yes, maybe physically, *but never eternally!* The Psalmist prayed (44:22): “For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered [Christians CAN look like losers]. ³⁷ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.” (Rom. 8:36-37 NAS) (“Oh them lions they can eat my body, But they can’t swallow my soul” *Lost And Found lyrics*)
- d. **His worship** – ⁸ All who dwell on the earth [unbelievers] will worship him, everyone whose name has not been

written...in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain [from the foundation of the world]. // Think about God's perspective from the time of creation: people were *saved (predestined)* and Jesus died for all sins – *even before any sins were committed*.

So, pay attention – ⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰ If anyone *is destined* for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with [a] sword, with [a] sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints. // See Dr. Becker, 204.

2. **Beast 2 – false representatives of God, Supports the Work**

of Beast 1 – the anti-God ways of secular government: They are a tag team; see Dr. Becker, 211.

- a. **Characteristics** – ¹¹ [And] I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like [the] Lamb [looked like Christ - good] and he spoke as [the] dragon [like the devil - evil]. // **The devil works through many religions, even many Christian denominations,** to ultimately lead us away from our Savior!
- b. **Mission** – ¹² [And] 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. // *Unbelievers are deceived, so they tend to trust evil governments!*
- c. **Actions** – 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 [he] was given...to perform in the presence of the [first] beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the [first] beast who had the wound of

the sword and has come to life. // *False religions* and even *false Christian denominations* have reported various *GREAT SIGNS* to legitimize their message – so be careful, believe only God’s Word!

- d. **Persecution** – ¹⁵ And it was given to him [beast 2] to give breath to the image of the [first] beast, so that the image of the [first] beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the [first] beast to be killed. // Think about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Dan. 3), since they refused to worship the image of gold, they were thrown into the fiery furnace! *Persecution also continues today!*
- e. **Mark** – ¹⁶ And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, ¹⁷ [in order 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.* // A non-literal “mark” of ownership, even as God marked His own children in Rev. chapter 7.
- f. **666** – ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate [count] the number of the beast, for [it is a number] of a man; and his number is six hundred...sixty-six. // This is tough; does it mean one man, or an office held by one man at a time? Does it refer to the *man of lawlessness* ⁴ “who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god... displaying himself as being God” (2 Th 2 NAU).

Conclusion: Let’s focus on God’s Word: Dr. Becker, 215. So let us →watch, →pray, and →be at peace in Jesus! *Amen!*