

God's Final Message

Third Angel's Message – Part 2

The New King James Version is used, unless otherwise quoted.

Third Angel's Message:

Rev. 14:9-12 - ⁹Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." ¹²Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

To understand the image to the beast, as well as its mark, we need to unpack the identity and behaviour of the earth beast, as found in Rev. 13:11-18:

Earth Beast

- a) **Rev 13:11: Beast** - As we have seen before a beast represents a kingdom, nation or political power (see Dan. 7:17)
- b) **Vs. 11:** Notice that the earth beast in this verse was 'coming up' after the description of the sea beast being taken captive in Rev. 13:10. In other words the earth beast was developing as a young nation in the late 1700s as the reign of the sea beast was coming to an end. 'Coming up' also expresses that this nation arose gradually and peacefully, just like a tender plant grows out of the earth.
- c) **Vs. 11: Beast ... from the earth** – If the sea in prophecy represents many "peoples, multitudes, nations and languages" (Rev. 17:15), then the 'earth' must stand for the opposite, viz., a territory sparsely populated and previously unoccupied.

Notice also that the earth provided help and relief to the persecuted church (the woman):

Rev 12:16 – "But the _____ helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth."

Earlier in this chapter (Rev. 12:6) we saw that the church found refuge in uninhabited places, paralleling the reference to the earth mentioned in the verse above:

Rev 12:6 – "Then the woman fled into the _____, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days."

Thus it appears that the 'earth' is a reference to sparsely populated areas where God's faithful saints found shelter and protection from the persecuting papal beast. Rev. 13:11 picks up on this positive aspect of the 'earth'.

From the above, as well as the other identifying characteristics below, there is only one power that meets these specifications, viz., the United States of America that emerged as a nation in the late 1700s.

- d) **Vs. 11: Two Lamblike horns** – Indicating youthfulness, innocence, gentleness. America particularly stands out for its two distinct principles of civil and religious liberty, the former called republicanism (a representative civil government – ‘a state without a king’) and the latter Protestantism (a representative religious government – ‘a church without a pope’). America’s founding fathers were well aware of the dangers of merging church and state and endeavoured to keep the ‘2 lamblike horns’ distinct and separate.

In 1787 the Constitution of the USA was ratified, and in 1791 the Bill of Rights was approved (the first 10 amendments to the Constitution). Below is the first amendment. Embedded in this amendment are the two lamblike horns – religious and civil liberty:

“The First Amendment prohibits Congress from obstructing the exercise of certain individual freedoms: **freedom of religion**, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and right to petition. Its **Free Exercise Clause** guarantees a **person's right to hold whatever religious beliefs he or she wants**, and to freely exercise that belief, and its **Establishment Clause prevents the federal government from creating an official national church or favoring one set of religious beliefs over another.**” (Wikipedia)

See some statements from the founding fathers of the USA constitution, clearly spelling out America’s two lamblike horns, viz., separation of church and state. Many such statements exist, but a few have been selected:

“There is **not a shadow of right in the general government to intermeddle with religion**. Its least interference with it [religion] would be a most flagrant usurpation.... **An alliance or coalition between Government and religion cannot be too carefully guarded against.**” [*James Madison in a letter to Livingston, 1822, from Leonard W. Levy- The Establishment Clause, Religion and the First Amendment, page 124*].

“**Religious matters are to be separated from the jurisdiction of the state** not because they are beneath the interests of the state, but, quite to the contrary, because they are too high and holy and thus are beyond the competence of the state.” (*Isaac Backus, An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty, 1773, as quoted by Albert Menendez and Edd Doerr, compilers, The Great Quotations on Religious Liberty, Long Beach, CA: Centerline Press, 1991, p. 7.*)

“For the **civil authority** to pretend to **establish particular modes of faith** and forms of worship, and to **punish all that deviate** from the standards which our superiors have set up, is attended with the **most pernicious [harmful] consequences to society**. It cramps all free and rational inquiry, fills the world with hypocrites and superstitious bigots--nay, with infidels

and skeptics; it exposes men of religion and conscience to the rage and malice of fiery, blind zealots, and dissolves every tender tie of human nature. And I cannot but look upon it as a peculiar blessing of Heaven that we live in a land where everyone can freely deliver his sentiments upon religious subjects, and have the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without any molestation or disturbance--a privilege which I hope we shall ever keep up and strenuously maintain." (*Samuel West, Dartmouth, MA, Election Sermon, 1776, as quoted by Albert Menendez and Edd Doerr, compilers, The Great Quotations on Religious Liberty, Long Beach, CA: Centerline Press, 1991, p. 103.*)

- e) **Vs. 11: Spoke like a dragon** – A nation speaks through the action of its legislative and judicial authorities. This therefore refers to the USA Congress that will in future pass laws that reflect a spirit of intolerance and persecution like those the dragon [Satan] inspired the sea beast to enforce over the nations it ruled (laws that were intolerant of minority rights, resulting in persecution of these groups)
- f) **Vs. 12: Exercises authority on behalf of first beast ... worship first beast** – The USA will in future act like the mouthpiece, agent and enforcer of the papacy's agenda. This means America will have to enter the field of religion, and seek to dominate worship, just like the papacy has always done in the past. This will go against America's very foundational principles of the separation of church and state.
- g) **Vs. 13: Performed miraculous signs ... fire from heaven** – These miracles will convince people that the 'image' carries God's blessing. **Miracles and wonders** characterised **Jesus'** earthly ministry as well as that of the apostles:

Acts 2:22 – "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by _____, _____, and _____ which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know."

Acts 2:43 – "Then fear came upon every soul, and many _____ and _____ were done through the apostles."

So this earth beast will deceive many into thinking that this movement carries God's special blessing and endorsement. The fire from heaven brings to mind two biblical stories:

- i. The fire that fell from heaven at Pentecost (Acts 2).

Acts 2:1-4 – "¹When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from _____, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of _____, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Just as the miraculous signs of the Holy Spirit convinced people to accept Jesus, so at the end there will be a **counterfeit** Holy Spirit revival, accompanied by miracles and wonders.

- ii. The story of Elijah in 1 Kings 18 where fire fell on the altar of this faithful prophet (1 Kings 18:38) showing him to be the true representative of God.

1 Kings 18:36-38 – “³⁶And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant ... and that I have done all these things at Your word. ³⁷Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.”³⁸Then the _____ of the _____ fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench.”

In Rev 13, the earth beast however functions as a **counterfeit of Elijah** (*‘a false prophet’ – the very title the USA gets in Rev 16:13*), bringing fire down from heaven, and leading people to worship the **wrong god**. So be aware of miracles! They are not always from God:

2 Cor. 11:14 – “And no wonder! For _____ himself transforms himself into an angel of _____.”

Rev. 16:14 – “For they are spirits of _____, _____, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

- f) **Vss. 14-15 – The beast was granted/given power** – This means that there is a **power behind the earth beast**, giving it the ability to perform signs. This power can be none other than Satan. So at the end of time, we can also expect Satan’s spirit powers or spiritualism to play a major role in deception.
 - i. These deceptions are foretold in Rev. 16:13 where 3 unclean spirits that looked like frogs will come out of the mouth of the dragon [Satan], the beast [the sea beast, viz., the Papacy], and the false prophet [another name for the earth beast, the USA who will act like a counterfeit prophet]
 - These 3 unclean frog-like spirits come out of the **mouth** of this end time evil trinity. The mouth is an instrument of speech. So the message of these 3 entities appear to counteract the message of the 3 angels from God, and is part of what constitutes the ‘wine of Babylon’ or false teachings of Babylon in Rev. 14:8.
 - The image of a frog is drawn from the Exodus plagues in Ex. 8. When Moses stretched out his hand over Egypt for the first 2 plagues, they were counterfeited by Pharaoh’s magicians:

Ex. 7:22 – “Then the magicians of Egypt _____ with their enchantments; and Pharaoh’s heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said.”

In the above passage, the magician counterfeited the plague of the blood by seemingly transforming some water into blood.

Ex. 8:7 – “And the magicians _____ with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.”

Here again, the magicians reproduce ‘frogs’ by trickery.

However after the frog plague, the magicians could not counterfeit any further plagues:

Ex. 8:18 – “Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they _____. So there were lice on man and beast.”

This means that the **last counterfeit or deception was the frogs.**

- Similarly at the end of time, the message of the 3 frogs serve as the **last counterfeit** or deception to the world.
- ii. Note that the 3 ‘frog’ messages come out of the mouths of the very 3 powers that constitute **end-time Babylon** (see Rev. 16:13), which are:
- **The sea beast**, which we have discovered to be the Papacy (*see Third Angel’s Message – Part 1*).
 - The **dragon** (i.e. the Devil using Spiritism). According to Rev. 16:14, there are ‘spirits of demons’ coming out of the mouths of this threefold alliance. This is a reference to demonic forces playing a key role in deception at the end of time (see 2 Thess. 2:9-10; Rev. 13:13). Babylon is also called a “a home for demons and haunt of every evil spirit” (Rev. 18:2). Thus Satan, as the ultimate source of this spiritualistic / demonic power will use spiritism to drive his agenda of misleading the world by bringing in the element of the supernatural. He will be behind the manifestations of miracles, signs and wonders at the end of time.
 - The **‘false prophet’** . This refers to the land beast, serving as a counterfeit Elijah (*see Rev. 13:13 above*). A false prophet is a religious leader that seduces people away from God. Prophets are also known for performing miracles. So the USA will be playing a key religious role to lead people away from God, empowered by the false miracles from the Dragon. Thus we need to look at the churches of America as fulfilling the description of the false prophet, as the ones who will put pressure on the State to enforce their [the churches’] agenda. This will create a union of church and state (*see below*). Since Catholic America is already included in the description of the Sea Beast, we can only look

to apostate **Protestantism** in America as meeting the interpretation of the 'false prophet'.

- iii. Not only will Satan be behind the Earth Beast's signs and miracles, but will himself, as the crowning act of his deception, appear on earth before Jesus comes. This is referred to in 2 Thess. 2 by the apostle Paul. In that passage the Papacy is referred to as the man of sin / man of lawlessness (see 2:1-8) who will ultimately be destroyed by the splendour of Christ's 'coming' (vs 8).

2 Thess. 2:3-10 – ³Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His _____. ⁹The _____ of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

However, something interesting takes place in vss. 9-10. The Greek word for 'coming' in vs. 8 is ***parousia*** a technical word used in the Bible to refer to Jesus' personal and visible arrival at His Second Coming. The next verse (vs. 9) however uses this same Greek word to refer to the 'coming' of the lawless one that will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders. So vs. 9 tells us that there will be a **counterfeit personal and visible 'second coming'** by the Ultimate Lawless One, viz., Satan himself. He will try to imitate Christ's return before He comes and perform many counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders – which is the very context of Rev. 13. It is not possible for Satan to accurately and completely counterfeit Christ's Second coming. Christ protected us from this deception by telling us that when He comes, 'every eye will see Him' and His coming will be as 'lightning that comes out of the east and shines to the west' (Matt. 24:27). He further warned that a local christ is a tell-tale sign that deception is involved (Matt. 24:23, 24). The sad truth about why people are deceived by such an appearance by Satan, is found in 2 Thess. 2:10, viz., because they do not love the truth. It is important dear friend to love truth, and the sources of truth are both Jesus, who is the Way the Truth and the life (John 14:6), and His Word (John 17:17).

g) **Vs. 14: To set up an image on behalf of sea beast** – ‘Image’ means likeness:

2 Cor. 4:4 –“Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the _____ of God, should shine on them.”

Here Jesus is referred to as the ‘image of God’.

The sea beast’s power and control is derived by using secular power to control consciences (i.e. by combining church and state). For the earth beast to set up an image to the sea beast, it must **set up a similar form of government**, i.e. combining church and state. This will, as it has always done throughout history, result in the loss of religious liberty, and thus cause America to depart from the very principles upon which it was founded. America will form an image to Rome when its leading Protestant churches will unite, and put pressure on the State to enforce its laws in order to inflict civil penalties on minorities who disagree with its views. This will particularly take place when the USA enforces Sunday worship, which Rome claims as the special sign of her supremacy. When America enforces Sunday-keeping it will enforce the worship of the Papacy (*more on this in Part 3*).

The Earth Beast will be continued in Part 3...

Personal Reflection

- It is clear that the USA is the earth beast, and will be enforcing the agenda of the sea beast
- I will not base my faith on miracles or the supernatural, but on God’s Word
- I accept Jesus into my life / recommit my life to Jesus

What personally stood out for me in this lesson:

*Prepared by Shandrell Penniken /
shandrellp@worldonline.co.za*