

False Prophet

09/28/2014

Hymns: 38 Fairest Lord Jesus 65 This is My Father's World
Psalm 83:1-5;16-18

If you've been following the news lately, you know that Israel has been battling Hamas in Gaza. Presently they have a ceasefire agreement, but of course, that can change. You've probably also heard of something called the *Iron Dome*. Can anyone tell us what that is?

First deployed in April 2011, this **antimissile system** has proven itself **the** most effective yet with a 75 to 90 percent success rate.

From Wikipedia we learn:

The system is designed to intercept and destroy short-range rockets and artillery shells fired from distances of 4 kilometres (2.5 mi) to 70 kilometres (43 mi) away and whose trajectory would take them to a populated area. Israel hopes to increase the range of Iron Dome's interceptions, from the current maximum of 70 kilometres (43 mi) to 250 kilometres (160 mi) and make it more versatile so that it could intercept rockets coming from two directions simultaneously.

In the Bible, the prefix *anti-* can mean not only:

against [antimissile, antibiotic, antianxiety]
and "opposite of", [antimatter, antigravity]
but also "in place of",

The word antichrist takes that *anti-* prefix and adds *Khristos*, that is *Christ*, which is Greek for the Hebrew *Messiah* meaning "Anointed One" referring, of course, to Jesus Christ. We're going to look at the Antichrist in further detail today.

Review

Last time, we explored the topic of Satan's Superman. In our study, we found the following names for him:

Little Horn [Daniel 7:8]
King [Daniel 8:23]
Prince that shall come [Daniel 9:26]
Man of Sin [II Thessalonians 2:3]
Son of Perdition [II Thessalonians 2:3]
That Wicked [one] [II Thessalonians 2:8]
The Antichrist [I John 2:22]
The Beast [Revelation 13:4]

We also learned about his attributes, character, and motivations:

Fierce countenance (Daniel 8:23)

He's a Master in evil schemes and deceit [Daniel 8:23, 25]
Prosperous, powerful, and unrestrained [Daniel 8:24-25; 11:36; Revelation 13:4-7]
He's a Destroyer [Daniel 8:24-25]
Lulls his opponents with words of peace [Daniel 8:25]
Great speaker (Daniel 11:36; II Thessalonians 2:9-10)
Has no regard for any god (Daniel 11:37)
Is **not** interested in women (Daniel 11:37)
Does Satan's work through Satan's power (II Thessalonians 2:9)
Performs great signs and wonders [II Thessalonians 2:9]
Liar (II Thessalonians 2:11)
Blasphemes against God and Jesus Christ (Revelation 13:5-6)
Views himself as God (II Thessalonians 2:4)

Can you think of a man in your lifetime who repeatedly boasted "I am the greatest"? He first said this as Cassius Clay and repeated it often after he changed his name to Muhammad Ali. He stood at the pinnacle of his profession and no man could stop him. The Antichrist will make even Mohammad Ali look **humble** in comparison with his **arrogant boasting** that **he is God**.

Of course, time has a way of changing things. While Ali is still alive, we're told he's near death and can no longer boast that he's still the greatest. So too, the Antichrist after a brief period will be humbled by the one true God, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ and cast to his ultimate fate in the Lake of Fire.

Believe it or not, this monster will have a partner. Today, we want to look at this shadowy partner first, then see how these two work together to create a **counterfeit** Christ, how they are the **opposite** of Him, and finally see that that they also will **oppose** Jesus Christ.

I John 4

[1] ... many **false prophets** [that's a key phrase] *are gone out into the world.*

[2] *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that [confesses] that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:*

[3] *And every spirit that [confesses] not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist,*

In Revelation chapter 13 we have the most complete description of the second beast. Last time, we saw that the first beast was a *political* leader. This one is a *religious* leader. That becomes clear as we see many religious terms used in the following description of him:

[11] *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth;*

Notice this differs from the first beast that came up from the *sea*. Much has been made concerning the difference, but it amounts to speculation. We will just note it -- one from

the sea and one from the earth – and move on.

and he had two horns like a lamb, and he [spoke] as a dragon.

Recall we're told in Revelation 12:9 that the dragon represents Satan. This guy will be a very convincing deceiver.

*[12] And he [exercises] **all the power** of the first beast before him, and [causes] the earth and them which dwell therein **to worship** [religious] **the first beast**, whose **deadly wound was healed** [religious].*

You may recall from last time, that this wound was described earlier in this same chapter. Let's quickly jump back there to refresh our memories:

*[3] And I saw one of his heads **as it were wounded to death**; and his **deadly wound** was healed: and **all the world wondered** after the beast.*

*[4] And they **worshipped** the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they **worshipped** the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*

This guy, short of Jesus Christ Himself, will be the ultimate hero. Speaking of hero's I can't help thinking of *the hero* of the nineties: that basketball legend Michael Jordan. By the way, if you think of it, that's a very Biblical name. Anyway, people went **crazy** to watch him play. He built a brand called "Air Jordan" that still sells today. And boy does it!

From an article dated August 27, 2014, The Wall Street Journal Online says:

*Retail sales of basketball shoes rose 20% last year to \$4.5 billion, with the Jordan line accounting for **more than half** of the market,*

Michael Jordan was a phenomenon. Kids dreamed of being like Mike. Perhaps you recall the classic "I want to be like Mike" Gatorade commercial. And while his merchandising *mettle* still glistens, his personal image has tarnished a bit over the years. Still, he does give us a glimpse of at how people love have and worship their heroes.

*[13] And he [does] **great wonders** [religious], so that he [makes] **fire come down from heaven** on the earth in the sight of men,*

*[14] And [deceives] them that dwell on the earth by the means of those **miracles** [religious] which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast [religious], which had the **wound by a sword**,*

Did you catch the extra detail there? His deadly wound will be by a sword.

and did live.

[15] And he had power **to give life unto the image** of the beast, that the image of the beast should both **speak**, and **cause** that as many as would **not** worship the image of the beast **should be killed**.

[16] And he [causes] all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

[17] And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had
the mark, or
the name of the beast, or
the number of his name.

[18] Here is wisdom. Let him that [has] understanding count the number of the beast: for it is **the number of a man**; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

For centuries people have speculated about the meaning of the number 666. The verse says it is associated with the beast and with the number of his name. It seems to me to be referring to the first beast alone, that is, the Antichrist, the political leader.

Counterfeit

Do you remember any plays performed back when you were in junior high school? Despite the passing of a half century, I remember one. It was entitled Mr. Black and Mr. White. Everyone loved Mr. White. He was dressed in white, wore a big smile, and was charming. He gave the children candy and kissed the babies. Mr. Black was dressed in black, austere, and unappealing. As the story progressed, we learned that despite appearances, Mr. White was evil and Mr. Black the man of good character. The lesson to be learned **is** sometimes appearances can be deceiving.

With that in mind, let's step back and look at something very interesting from the Bible:

Revelation 6

[2] And I saw, and **behold a white horse**: and he that sat on him had a **bow**; and a **crown** was **given** unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Who **is this** rider on a white horse? Let's compare this verse to another later in the same book:

Revelation 19

[11] And I saw heaven opened, and **behold a white horse**; and he that sat upon him was called **Faithful and True**, and in righteousness he [does] judge and make war.

What's similar?

1. White horse
2. A man sitting on it
3. Making war

What's Different?

1. First comes from some unknown place
 2. is unnamed
 3. has a bow and is **given** a crown
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1. Second comes out of heaven
 2. has two names Faithful (Revelation 1:5) and True (John 14:6)
 3. judges in righteousness

Let's read a bit more about this second rider:

*[12] His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were **many crowns** [not just one]; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.*

[13] And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. [That's an indisputable identifier of Jesus Christ (John 1:1)]

[14] And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

*[15] And out of his mouth [goes] **a sharp sword**, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

*[16] And he [has] on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**. [Revelation 17:14; John 1:29;36]*

There's **no mistaking the identity** of the second rider. He's the Lord Jesus Christ. That first rider sounds more like the Antichrist. The verse describing him is positioned ushering in the Tribulation period. We learned last time that he wins the world over with a peace covenant. The bow without arrows is believed to symbolize that he comes in peace. This is an example of where the Antichrist poses as a **counterfeit** Christ. Here's another:

Satanic Trio

Revelation 16

*[13] And I saw **three** unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of **the dragon**, and out of the mouth of **the beast**, and out of the mouth of **the false prophet**.*

The Bible clearly represents God as a trinity, three in one – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Satan's counterfeit for that is more of a trio. We have Satan that old Serpent, his Superman the political world ruler, and the Seer the Second Beast the False Prophet and religious leader.

Other Parallels:

Antichrist	Christ
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Rides white horse	Rides white horse (Revelation 19:11)
Satanic Trio	Triune God (Matthew 28:19)
Demands worship	Every knee shall bow (Romans 14:11)
Claims to be God	Is God (John 1:1)
Rules whole world	Thousand year reign (Revelation 20:6) Forever and ever (Revelation 11:15)
Conquers through words of peace	Jesus is called the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)
Works miracles	People thronged Jesus because of His miracles (Mark 3:9-10)
Appears to recover from a fatal wound	Jesus rose from the dead (I Corinthians 15:4)

Opposite:

Antichrist	Christ
Embodiment of evil, wickedness	Embodiment of good Hebrews 4:15; I Peter 1:19
Deceiver	Truth (John 14:6)
Boaster	Humble (Matthew 11:29)
Fierce Countenance	Lamb (John 1:29)

And finally, that third use of the prefix *anti-* is *against*:

Daniel 8:25 this evil prince *shall also stand up against the Prince of princes*

II Thessalonians 2:4 he **opposes** God

Application

While we **who** know the Lord will never have to deal with the Antichrist, we certainly face many trials thrown at us from the forces of evil. Did you know the Bible talks about **a missile defense system** of sorts. It's not the Iron Dome. It's much better. We need not fear Satan or his henchmen.

Ephesians 6

[10] Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord**, and in the power of his might.

[11] Put on **the whole armour of God**, that ye may be able to stand **against the wiles of the devil**.

[12] For we wrestle not **against** flesh and blood, but **against** principalities, **against** powers, **against the rulers of the darkness of this world**, **against** spiritual wickedness in high places.

There's our enemy and it comes from the same source that will empower and direct the Antichrist.

The passage goes on to describe the whole armor of God:

[14] ... loins girt about with truth, ... breastplate of righteousness;

[15] ... the gospel of peace;

But then we get to verse 16:

[16] Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

There it is our anti-missile system.

[17] And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit [there's the sword that will deal the final blow to the beast], which is the word of God:

When those missiles of life come at us, let's remember we have a sure defense. Let's trust God and by faith **allow** Him to shield us from all evil that comes our way.

Benediction

Now unto the King

eternal,

immortal,

invisible,

*the **only** wise God,*

be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (I Timothy 1:17)

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