

Messages from Revelation 15 of 16

Dragon and the Lamb

#0476

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—December 21, 1973

It's a wonderful thing to walk with God, isn't it? It's a wonderful thing to live for God, to live with Him. We're living right down near the very end of time. That's why we're studying in recent Friday nights, this last book of Revelation. The book of Revelation deals with the great controversy that began long ago and is still going on and is soon reach its climax.

In this book of Revelation, the two great personalities are represented by a dragon and a Lamb. And between these two, the dragon and the Lamb, there's a war going on. That's the theme of the book of Revelation. This brings us to two questions. We wonder why a Lamb would fight. Well, I'll tell you why, friends. As revealed in the book of Revelation, the Lamb fights for love. It's love that moves Him to fight. And when a Lamb is angry, even the dragon had better beware. The wrath of the Lamb as pictured in those closing verses of Revelation 6 is something that's going to make everyone tremble and cry for mountains and rocks to fall on them.

A friend of mine was telling me about a mother whose child burned to death while she was away from home. The mother thought that the neighbors could have done more to save that child, and she could never forgive them. The wrath of the Lamb is the wrath of love, heart burdened love for His children in this world. This is the love of God. This is what makes the Lamb fight.

“...in righteousness He doth judge and make war”
Revelation 19:11.

The second question that suggests itself as we think of a war between the Lamb and the dragon is, how could a Lamb have any chance of winning in a war with a dragon? But friend, He's going to win. He's going to win.

“These...”

The powers of earth working with the dragon and the beast.

“...shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful” Revelation 17:14.

As you read the rest of the verse, you'll see there some other folks that are going to conquer too—those that are with Him. As the 20th-century translation puts it:

“...Those that are on His side will share His triumph”
Revelation 17:14

Are you on His side? There will be no neutrals in this final battle, dear friends.

Revelation 12 shows us that the wrath of Satan increases as his time grows short. He's going to put into this last battle *everything* he has. So it is in Heaven. All Heaven is waiting to pour out its choicest blessings, its richest gifts, its greatest strength and power that the people of God may be successful in this final war between the dragon and the Lamb. You and I will either stand with the dragon against the Lamb, or we will stand with the Lamb against the dragon.

Last Friday night, we were looking at this wonderful prophecy of Revelation 14. I want to review some things tonight and then go on to some other things. In Revelation 14, the prophet sees an angel flying in the midst of heaven with the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth. He announces the present judgment going on in Heaven which began in 1844. He calls all men to the worship of the Creator. A second angel follows announcing the fall of Babylon. Then comes the third angel. He says, “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or his hand, the same shall drink of the wrath of God.” The wrath of God is poured out in the seven last plagues, as you find in Revelation 15 and 16. As God sent a message through Noah before the flood came and destroyed the world, so He's sending this last message just before Jesus comes, just before this awful time of trouble comes with the plagues. He sends this message to tell us what's going to bring the curse and how we can escape it.

The first angel, as we noted, shows us the true worship—worship the Creator, the One who made all things. The third angel points out the false worship of the beast and his image and the reception of his mark. Notice that last verse, it shows the result of accepting this message:

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that
keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus”
Revelation 14:12.

It takes the faith of Jesus to keep the commandments of God. And God is going to have a people that fully vindicate His name and fully keep His law. You can depend upon it, friends. And thank God, Jesus is not going to be ashamed of His followers. Here in this world, they're going to give the lie to the Devil, they're going to resist the wrath of the dragon, and they love Jesus more than they fear men or devils.

In order that we may fully understand this message, we need to understand these symbols. If any man worship the beast and his image and receive his mark in

his forehead. We began this study last Friday night; we'll continue it tonight. This study begins with Revelation 12, the symbol of the dragon, a great red dragon. As we've already noted, the dragon, of course, is the name for Satan. But Satan works largely through human organizations and human beings. We don't see him moving around in person, and the great organization that Satan used 2,000 years ago was the Roman Empire with its great pagan religions. In fact, in Revelation 12, where this prophecy begins, the dragon is represented as being ready as soon as Jesus was born to destroy Him—that's what the Bible says, and that's exactly what happened.

You remember when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a few shepherds came to see Him. A few wise men came from the East. But the world at large paid no attention to Him except to try to exterminate Him. For Herod, hearing from the wise men about the birth of this child born to be king, wanted them to let him know where He was. When they didn't tell him, he finally sent his soldiers down to Bethlehem and did what? Killed all the children there in Bethlehem under two years of age in a frantic endeavor to destroy the man-child, Jesus Christ.

Herod's power was the power of Rome. The soldiers he sent were Roman soldiers. It was Satan working through the Roman power who tried to destroy Jesus as soon as He was born.

After He had grown up and was preaching the Gospel, Satan tried to destroy Him again through Rome. The Jewish priest brought Him before the Roman governor Pilate, who signed His death warrant in answer to their clamors. And there upon a Roman cross, the Son of God was nailed between thieves. How the dragon seemed to triumph. But his triumph was brief, for as Revelation 12 says, the Child was caught up to God and to His throne. The dragon turned his attention to the followers of Jesus, and in the early ages of Christianity, they were persecuted in many ways: Crucified, thrown to the lions, drown, beheaded, and in various ways, Satan sought to destroy the church.

Now we come to something very interesting. When Satan saw that no matter how he persecuted the church, it grew, he decided on a different plan. He would infiltrate the church with pagan philosophies. He would bring about a union of the church of Christ with the paganism, the heathen religion of the world. This is what he did in the second and third and fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era. Gradually, various heathen customs and traditions were brought in. And finally, it would be hard to recognize the church that Christ had established, in the great established church calling itself the one true church of Christ. The Bible says the woman, the church fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared of God.

During the middle ages of the Christian era, the true church was in obscurity. What then was the power that was operating in Europe and calling itself the supreme head over all the churches, and even the corrector of heretics, and even boasting of power to depose kings? That power was pictured by the prophecy of Revelation 13. John says:

“...I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns...” Revelation 13:1.

Here we have another power following the dragon. And notice, in Revelation 13:2, the dragon gave his power and his seat and great authority. So turning from the page of prophecy to the page of history, we shall look for a power coming up, and receiving the power and authority and seat of government from old Rome. A new power but still a Roman power. It is a fact that this is exactly what happened. The Bishop of Rome finally succeeded to the power and authority of the ancient Caesar. And this power called the beast in Revelation 13 and 14 well represents the power which we know in history as the papacy, or the Roman Catholic Church.

As I said before, I have friends in the Roman Catholic Church. I have dear relatives that I love; I love all men for Jesus' sake, but I must declare the truth of God. And if the Roman church was the one way to salvation, as it claims, I would be here preaching for it. But since, according to the Bible, it is an imposter, and has stood up claiming to be the representative of Christ when it is not. I must declare what Bible prophecy says because we're living in a time when this power is to increase. You and I will be brought face to face whether we will worship the beast or worship Jesus. This is the issue. So we're not dealing with an ordinary situation. We're dealing with eternal life.

When we see that power sitting in the seat of Caesar, we recognize the fulfillment of the prophecy that the dragon, pagan Rome, gave him, papal Rome, his power, his seat, his throne, and great authority.

In Revelation, this power is pictured as a crowned power. The Pope wears the Triple Crown, claiming to be the king of Heaven, earth and purgatory. The Bible not only foretells this power's rise, but it tells how long it would reign over the powers of Europe.

Notice the fifth verse:

“...there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue...”

How long?

“...forty and two months” Revelation 13:5.

Thirty days to a month. Twelve hundred sixty days. These are symbolic prophecies, and a day in prophecy represents a year of literal time. So here is a power that would reign over the powers of Europe for 1260 years. And from A. D. 538 when the power of the Bishop of Rome was stabilized, 1260 years brings us to A. D. 1798 when Napoleon's general Berthier entered the city of Rome, took Pope

Pious VI prisoner, proclaimed a republic in Rome, putting an end to the power of the Pope in Rome and carried the Pope captive into France where he died in exile.

Thus the prophecy was fulfilled *precisely*; look at the mathematics of it—exactly according to the prophecy. So there's no question about who the dragon is—that's pagan Rome. There's no question who the beast is—that's papal Rome. And God is calling His people out of paganism and into the light of His Gospel. He's calling them out of the papacy and into the glorious news that there is free salvation in Jesus Christ. And He's calling every one of His children away from lawbreaking to law-keeping through the power of the Gospel.

Right at the time when the Pope went into captivity, according to Revelation 14:10, the prophet tells us in the 11th verse that there was to be another power come up. He says:

“...I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb...” Revelation 13:11.

Here is a new power. You remember that that old power had crowns upon its horns, but this has no crowns. You remember that that other beast came up out of the sea, and the angel tells us in Revelation 17:15 that represents peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues—the great sea of humanity. But this power comes up out of the earth, in contrast with the seas, a new continent hitherto unoccupied. As we have noted, there is one power, and one only that meets the specifications of the prophecy. There is one power and one power only that in 1798, when the papacy went into captivity, was coming up with lamb-like principles in new territory, with no crowns in either church or state. This of course, points to our own nation, the United States of America.

But I want you to notice the change that is predicted.

“...I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he...”

What?

“...spoke as a dragon” Revelation 13:11.

He spoke as a dragon. What a strange thing it would be to hear a lamb open its mouth and speak like a dragon. Here the prophecy takes us into the future. Here we are looking beyond the past, beyond the present, into what will be in a very little while. There is coming, already we see, the shadows of the coming event. There is coming a change in our government.

I read on:

“And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him...”

That's the papal beast. The persecution that took place in old Europe is to take place in this country.

“...and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed”
Revelation 13:12.

Right here in this country, there is to be that which will exalt the power of the papacy, and cause the whole world to follow the leadership of the United States in recognizing the authority of Rome.

I want to review with you a few facts of history that we may see something of how these principles operate. When America was discovered, there were many of the oppressed in old Europe that sought the shores of this new continent as a place where they might worship God. They had been persecuted in Europe. They braved the terrors of the wild Atlantic to come to these shores and here set up colonies, institutions, and homes where they might worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. But so thoroughly had they been saturated with the principles that underlie the Roman Catholic apostasy that some of these dear people, even though Protestants, felt that it was their job to make other Protestants worship the way they did.

And so in New England where these puritans were, if a Baptist or a Quaker came into the colony, he was put into the stocks, and there he had to suffer. Perhaps he was dragged through town tied to a wagon. And there have been instances where worse things happened in the early American colonies. Right there in Massachusetts Bay, Roger Williams, as he studied the Bible, found no evidence that God had appointed His church to *make* people believe and *make* people worship. So he dared to declare this. And the authorities in Massachusetts egged on by the clergy, banished Roger Williams. So he had to flee from Massachusetts out into the forest. There the Indians befriended him. He found among a friendly tribe a place where he could establish a colony which he called Rhode Island. And there he set up a government where all people might be free to worship according to their conscience, or even not to worship if they chose to.

He wrote back to some of his friends in Boston that he'd found more safety among the Christian savages at Narraganset Bay than he did among the savage Christians of Massachusetts Bay Colony.

You see, this principle of force in trying to make people keep what men think are the laws of God is hard to get rid of. It isn't confined to paganism. It isn't confined to Catholicism. Many of the Protestant churches, both in Europe and in America, when they have gotten power, this is exactly what they've done. They've used it to persecute those who did not worship according to the established order.

Now I want to go back to the Bible. In Revelation 13, I want you to notice a very interesting statement:

“And he doeth great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” Revelation 13:13.

In this country, great miracles are to be performed by the power of spiritualism. I'll tell you more about that in another of these lectures on Revelation. Notice what the purpose of these miracles is he:

“...deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do...” Revelation 13:14.

The purpose of these miracles is to deceive; that's always what the Devil is always trying to do, is to deceive people. You know what it is to deceive? It's to get people to think something that isn't so. But most people are greatly impressed by miracles. If a man would come out here and right out in broad daylight bring down fire out of heaven, most people would say he must be a prophet of God like Elijah was. But this says it's going to happen, and it's the Devil's power that's going to do it, right here in the United States.

Wouldn't you think with warnings like this in the book of Revelation, that more people would be interested in finding out what these symbols mean? I thank God every one of you is here tonight, and oh, I hope, all of you; you who are hearing this for the first time, and you who've heard it all your lives, I hope you'll notice what the Bible says, because the power is in the Bible, the power is in the Word of God. He...

“...deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make...”

What?

“...an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live” Revelation 13:1”

An image is a likeness. Here's a clear prophecy that in this country, an image or likeness, of the Roman Catholic union of church and state in old Europe is to be formed. Here in this country, something like that persecuting power that filled Europe with blood during the Dark Ages is to reign. If it were the Roman Catholic religion that was to be enthroned, then it would be the beast itself. But it's an image, a likeness. And it is a sad fact that for over a hundred years, the Protestant churches have been becoming more and more like the Roman Catholic power. Things which a hundred years ago Protestant wouldn't have *thought* of considering are today begin taught and practiced in thousands of Protestant churches.

Until today, it is hard to tell the difference in many places. Prophecy predicted it nearly 2,000 years ago. It's being fulfilled before our eyes. And finally, as the result of this growing tendency of the Protestant churches to become more and more like the papacy, a union of church and state will be formed in this country as it was in the early ages of Christianity back there in Rome. Then what will happen?

“...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” Revelation 13:15.

“Oh,” somebody says, “that could never happen in America.”

Believe me, my friend, the Word of God is always correct. If you'd been back there over 2,000 years ago, you would wonder how the Jewish people, when their own Messiah came, could reject Him and crucify Him. The Bible had foretold in Isaiah 53 that that was what would happen. Did it happen? Yes. And they had the Bible and read it every day. Yet when the One came that the Bible foretold, they nailed Him to the cross.

So today Bible prophecy will be fulfilled. Right here in this nation, the Protestant churches uniting with the Catholics will call upon Congress which will pass religious laws which will bring persecution. It is only the mercy of God that has held it off.

“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: 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” Revelation 13:16–17.

Here you see where the battle is joined. Will you receive the mark of the beast? If you do, then you can buy or sell. But if you don't, then you will be boycotted.

There is a mark in the right hand or in the forehead. Are you going to receive it? Friends, if you reject it, it is because you know what it is. Do you know what that mark is?

A mark or sign or seal represents the authority of the one issuing the edict. For example, the seal of the president of the United States gives his name, his territory, and his office or position. God's mark must be associated with His authority and show His right to rule. The mark of the beast must be a sign of his authority, and show his pretended right to rule. Now the authority of God is the authority of the Creator. Where will we find that? We will find that in His law. It is right in the heart of the law, the Fourth Commandment. This is why we are to keep His authority. Notice how it is presented:

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it” Exodus 20:8–11.

Why are we to worship the Lord? Why are we to work six days and rest the seventh? Because He made heaven and earth and all that in them is in six days, and rested the seventh day, and blessed it and sanctified it. So here is the seal of the living God, the sign of His creative power. This is the mark of His authority. It is God’s flag, if you please, the symbol of the authority of His government. No wonder the Devil hates it. No wonder he shoots at it. No wonder he tries to haul it down. No wonder he tramples it under his unholy feet.

But here comes a power that thinks he can change the law of God. This is exactly what the Roman Catholic power has attempted to do. There would be no Sunday laws in Christendom today if it were not for the Roman Catholic Church. Here is a statement from a Roman Catholic book, talking about Protestantism today:

“It was the Catholic church, which by the authority of Jesus Christ has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is in homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Catholic Church.”

Who put forth this idea? The Roman Catholic Church. I read a statement from a Roman Catholic book called the *Convert Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*. It has the apostolic blessing of the Pope. On page 50, I read:

“Which is the Sabbath day? Saturday is the Sabbath day. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday? We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday” *Convert Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, page 50.

Isn’t that clear? If I keep on keeping Saturday, the seventh day according to the Bible and the Ten Commandments, then do you see I deny the authority of the Roman Catholic Church? But if I accept keeping Sunday, you see I am following the Roman Catholic power and doing what it says instead of what Jesus and His law says. This is the issue.

Notice this statement from a Roman Catholic paper:

“The Catholic church for over one thousand years, before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of a divine mission changed the day from Saturday to Sunday.”

Do you believe it had the power? Why no. How men dare tamper with God's law. So you see what we are dealing with. We are dealing with the mark of the beast, the sign of Catholic power.

Where did the Roman Catholic Bishops get the idea of taking Sunday? Long before the Catholic Church came along, those who turned from God were turning their faces toward the sun and worshiping it. Read in Ezekiel 8 what God showed the prophet. In the courts of the temple, when the Jews had turned their backs on God and His altar, they were worshiping toward the rising sun. This is where sun worship came. It was turning away from God. And in the early ages of Christianity, that apostasy which finally became the Roman Catholic Church, sought new ways to attract the world. It is just like a lot of churches today are trying to fill their pews. They reached out to honor the day called Sunday.

I want you to notice what Doctor Edward T. Hiscocks, author of the Baptist manual, a Protestant writer has to say:

“Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early history as we learned from the Christian fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism with the name of the sun god, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism.”

Sunday came originally from paganism. It got here through the Roman Catholic apostasy. And the Protestant churches carried it on. But God is calling for the unfinished reformation to be completed. God is calling for the reformation that began with Luther and was carried on by Calvin and Knox and many others. He is calling for it to be completed. He wants to bring His people back to full obedience to the law of God. That is the purpose of this three-fold message.

But you can see that this controversy focuses on the sign of worship. Will it be the seventh day according to the law of God, or will it be the first day of the week following the Pope of Rome? This is the issue. And we read that this nation is going to lead all the world in that direction. Where will you stand on that point?

“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” Matthew 15:9.

Jesus says this is vain worship. So today, every follower of Christ is called to choose between the commandments of men and the commandments of God. Jesus said to the leaders of His day, “Ye reject the commandments of God that ye may

keep your own traditions.” There is not room in 24 hours a day to keep the commandments of men and the commandments of God. Whenever men substitute their own ideas, they fill the space that ought to be occupied by the words of God.

I challenge every one of you. Will you dare to take God’s Word and God’s law and carefully examine everything in your life and see whether you are following the traditions of men or the commandments of God? Will you dare to examine the way you dress and see whether you are following the vain customs and fashions of the world, or following New Testament simplicity and modest purity? Will you dare to look over your library, your table, and see whether you are listening to the Lamb or to the dragon? Will you dare to think over what you see on TV and what you listen to on the radio, and raise the question whether your mind is being brainwashed from beneath or washed white and clean from above?

Where is the seal of God put? In the forehead. It gets there through what we see with our eyes and hear with our ears. Here in the forebrain, our ideas are being formed, our ideals are being built up. And Satan is now engaged in a mass program of affecting the minds of men. That is what the media is, as far as the Devil is concerned. God gets to use them a very small percentage of the time.

But in the Bible, you can get it one hundred percent. Thank God, through the wonderful magnifying glass of the Spirit of Prophecy, you and I can fill up our minds with the thoughts of God.

Even the members of the remnant church who allow their minds to be bombarded and brainwashed day by day through listening to what the world listens to and follow what the world follows, they will soon worship the image of the beast, and receive the mark of the beast. And don’t think they won’t. So this message is for everybody. This message is for those who are hearing it for the first time. It is for those who are hearing it again and again.

When Peter heard the warning of Jesus that all the disciples would forsake the Savior and flee, what did Peter say? Not me. Even if everybody forsakes, I won’t. But Peter led the flight from the Savior. He was the one who led all the disciples to forsake Jesus.

Many a star will soon go out. But thank God, He is developing in His remnant church those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And you and I can be among them if we will. There is power in the Gospel of Christ. It is by beholding that we become changed. The new covenant promise is to write this law in our hearts.

It takes time even for God to put this law in our minds. Shall we give Him time? That is what our time is for. The things we see, the things we listen to, the very work we do from day to day, is to be of such a nature that our minds are being filled with the law of God, the thoughts of God, and the love of God. Jesus came down here to this earth to show us how it could be done. He grew up as a child. He learned to read the Bible. He learned to repeat the Ten Commandments. He

studied the Old Testament Scriptures. We have all He had. And we have the wonderful magnifying glass of the Spirit of Prophecy.

Oh, let's ask Jesus to fill our minds that will make us like Him. You and I know what's ahead. Let's share it with others. And remember, the power to do what the Word of God tells us to do is found in Jesus Christ. He died to enable us to keep the law. He died that through His blood, you and I might have our sins forgiven, and do everything He says.

When God puts His seal in your forehead, it means that the work of grace is completed, and your character reflects the image of Jesus.

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