

Who Is The False Prophet Of Revelation? (#3)

Ezra 7:11-12

Revelation 19:19-20

Revelation 13:12-14a

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With the recent announcement of Pope Benedict XVI's resignation, much news is swirling around the internet as to unstated reasons behind this rare resignation (the first in approximately 600 years). I was particularly interested in the report of a Vatican correspondent by the name of Paul Badde, especially in light of the sermon that was preached last Lord's Day about the foundational lie of the False Prophet of Rome, upon which all its other lies are built. The article states,

"The Church is built on the rock of Peter, and we have the assurance of *non praevalent* ["the gates of hell shall not prevail"]," said Badde. "But when the rock realizes he is starting to crumble away, then it is only fair and right that he exercise his sovereign liberty, and choose not to be the rock anymore but instead make way for the next Peter, the next firm and solid rock."

<http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/Pentin-Theories-Popes-Retirement/2013/02/19/id/491051#ixzz2LPSYFIhb>

As we learned in the previous sermon, one of the chief characteristics of the second Beast of Revelation that has two horns like a lamb is that he speaks like a dragon (Revelation 13:11). In other words, like Satan (the dragon in the Book of Revelation), this False Prophet of Rome is a liar—the arch liar of Satan. The foundational lie upon which all lies are built that flow from the lips of the False Prophet of Rome is that its authority comes directly from Christ, when Christ said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). We saw in the previous sermon that Peter was not the strong and firm rock upon which the Church was being built, but rather that Christ Himself was that immovable Rock upon which the Church was being built.

It is to Mark Twain (1835-1910) that the following words are attributed, "A lie can travel halfway around the world, while the truth is putting on its shoes." Dear ones, lies spread so fast and are embraced by the masses because by nature we have itching ears to hear some claim to truth that alleges to be from the ancient Fathers; that claims to be passed by word of mouth (even though it is not found in Scripture) from Christ, to the apostles, to the alleged successors of Peter; that claims to be confirmed by miracles; and that claims to be a truth that is possessed by a worldwide Church that is over a billion strong. After all, such incredible credentials make certain (don't they) that the itching ears of people have been satisfied with the truth? Absolutely not, in no way do such credentials give certainty to the claims of truth by the False Prophet of Papal Rome. Only the Holy Spirit can give such certainty as He speaks in the infallible pages of Holy Scripture. In fact, the Apostle Paul warned his son in the faith, Timothy, that times of apostasy would come in which professing Christians would turn to such false teachers (like the False Prophet of Papal Rome): Read 2 Timothy 4:3-4.

And so the False Prophet of Papal Rome (that appears as a lamb, but is really a Beast in sheep's clothing that speaks lies on behalf of Satan) has added to the foundational lie that Peter was the rock upon which the Church was being built, the following lies (and many more not mentioned): the Papal Church of Rome is infallible and cannot err; the Papal Church of Rome has preserved the inspired oral teaching of Christ and the apostles in its oral tradition (which it claims is equal to Scripture); justification before God is not by faith alone, but is by faith plus works; forgiveness before God is attained through acts of penance and indulgences; it is necessary for Christians to have their sins purged away in the excruciating pains of purgatory before entering into the

blessedness of heaven; in addition to Christ as Mediator, there are other mediators to whom we are to pray and to appeal (such as Mary and those saints canonized by the Papal Church of Rome); images of Christ and the saints are sacred and should be shown veneration by bowing to them and honoring them; in the mass, the wafer is miraculously transformed into the actual, physical body of Christ; and holy days and holy seasons (such as Christmas, Lent, Easter and a host of other holy days like them) are special days of worship (even though they were never appointed to be so in Scripture). Lie after lie after lie is built upon that foundational lie that Peter is the rock of the Church.

Let us continue our study of the False Prophet (who is revealed in Revelation 13:11ff as a Beast in sheep's clothing who speaks satanic lies). Let us consider the following two main points this Lord's Day: (1) The Satanic Authority of the Second Beast, i.e. the False Prophet of Papal Rome (Revelation 13:12); (2) The Lying Miracles of the Second Beast, i.e. the False Prophet of Papal Rome (Revelation 13:13-14a).

I. The Satanic Authority of the Second Beast, i.e. the False Prophet of Papal Rome (Revelation 13:12).

A. In what sense does the second Beast exercise all the authority of the first Beast?

1. It is clear that Satan gave to the first Beast (i.e. the Revived Roman Empire in Europe) its authority to rule (Revelation 13:2b). God has permitted Satan a limited authority to rule in the earthly realm for God's most holy and most wise purpose (as is clear from the case of Job [in Job 1-2] and from the case of Peter [in Luke 22:31-32]). Satan in turn grants to the first civil Beast a portion of that limited satanic authority to exercise civil rule in the Revived Roman Empire in Europe. Thus, since the second

religious Beast (the False Prophet of Papal Rome) exercises all of the authority of the first Beast (the Revived Roman Empire in Europe), and since all of the authority of the first Beast comes from Satan, so likewise all of the authority of the second Beast (or the False Prophet of Papal Rome) comes from Satan. Dear ones, it is not only clear that the lies of the False Prophet of Papal Rome proceed from the dragon (Satan), but also that the very authority uniquely claimed by Papal Rome comes not from Christ (via Peter the alleged rock), but to the contrary, all of the authority of the False Prophet of Papal Rome comes from Satan, the arch-enemy of Christ. The Papal Church of Rome is likewise the arch-deceiver and the arch-liar—it is a Beast in sheep’s clothing usurping the offices of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King.

2. All of the satanic authority exercised by the second religious Beast (False Prophet) is exercised “before” the first civil Beast according to Revelation 13:12 (i.e. in the interests of the Revived Western Roman Empire). In other words, the False Prophet of Papal Rome works in the interests of the Emperor of the Revived Western (or Latin) Roman Empire in Europe, calling the Roman earth and its inhabitants to give its worship (unconditional obedience and loyalty) to the Emperor and his civil government.

B. Why (one might ask) would the False Prophet of Papal Rome (who craves universal power and authority) call the inhabitants of Roman Europe to worship and passively submit to the imperial rule of the Emperor of the Revived Western Roman Empire?

1. First, because the inhabitants of the Revived Roman Empire of Europe wondered in worship and blind obedience after the Emperor of the Revived Roman Empire in Europe when Charlemagne (in 800) was crowned Augustus and Emperor of the Roman Empire (324 years had elapsed since the last Roman Emperor ruled over the Western

Roman Empire). For the reason why the Roman earth wondered in worship and blind obedience to the Emperor of the Revived Roman Empire was because the sixth head of the Beast was healed in the revived eighth head (note the connection between the worship of the first Beast and the healing of the deadly wound in Revelation 13:12 and in Revelation 13:3). Here was a wave of popular support for the first civil Beast that the second religious Beast was going to ride as well.

2. Second, the False Prophet of Papal Rome (who craves universal power and authority) calls the inhabitants of Roman Europe to worship and passively submit to the imperial rule of the Emperor of the Revived Western Roman Empire because in causing the Roman world of Europe to give a blind obedience to the Emperor of the Revived Western (or Latin) Empire, the False Prophet of Papal Rome would receive needed protection from the Emperor as the False Prophet grew and grew in power over Europe and over the various horns and kingdoms of Europe, until the kings of the various nations could not withstand the power of the False Prophet of Papal Rome. Thus, the False Prophet of Papal Rome was very willing to take (as it were) a subordinate place for the time being in exchange for the benefits of protection and of honor as the only established religion in Western Roman Empire of Europe.

3. That this was the case historically, I would have you note what occurred when Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the Roman Empire by Pope Leo III (in the words of Sir Isaac Newton, in *Observations Upon The Prophecies Of Daniel*, pp. 36,37, emphases added).

Soon after, upon Christmas-day, the people of Rome, who had hitherto elected their bishop [i.e. the Pope—GLP], and reckoned that they and their Senate inherited the rights of the ancient Senate and people of Rome, voted Charles [i.e. Charlemagne—GLP] their emperor, and subjected themselves to him in such manner as the old Roman empire and their Senate were subjected to the old Roman Emperors. The pope crowned him, and anointed him with holy oil, and **worshipped him on his knees after the manner of adoring the old Roman emperors. . . .**

The emperor, on the other hand, took the following oath to the pope: “I, Charles, the emperor, do, in the

name of Christ, engage and promise, in the presence of God and of the blessed apostle Peter [i.e. the Pope—GLP], *that I will be a protector and defender of this holy Roman Church, in all her interests*, according to my power and knowledge, and so far as I shall be upheld by divine assistance.”

4. Thus, we see the historical realization of this symbiotic relationship that is portrayed for us in Revelation 13:12-14a between the first civil Beast of the Revived Western Roman Empire and the second religious Beast of the Papal Church of Rome. Surely, this also confirms the identification of the second religious Beast as the Papal Church of Rome.

II. The Lying Miracles of the Second Beast, i.e. False Prophet of Rome (Revelation 13:13-14a).

A. The means by which the second religious Beast (i.e. the False Prophet of Papal Rome) causes the Roman earth in Europe to worship and to grant a blind obedience to the Emperor (over obedience to Christ as King of kings) is noted in these verses that are now before us.

1. The first means that the False Prophet of Papal Rome uses to bring the Roman European earth to its knees in blind obedience to the Emperor were the lying signs and wonders that it claimed to perform or in some cases actually did perform (and which the inhabitants and kings of the Roman earth ignorantly and blindly believed as confirmation that the authority of the False Prophet came from Christ). “And he doeth great wonders” (or literally “signs”).

a. Dear ones, there are the true and faithful signs that accompanied the apostles of Christ and that confirmed the Gospel and doctrine of Christ, which they proclaimed and penned (2 Corinthians 12:12).

b. But there are also lying signs and wonders that are intended to deceive and to mislead the blind and the ignorant, as are these signs of the False Prophet (Revelation 13:14a, and 2 Thessalonians

2:3-4,9-12—if that doesn't describe the masses today, who run from one Church to another, or from one teacher or minister to another simply to see and experience some alleged miracle, or some rhetorical wizard, or some great music). You have heard of storm chasers (those who chase tornadoes), well so many today are miracle chasers, men chasers, and music chasers (rather than Christ chasers and Bible chasers).

c. Remember, dear ones, that the sorcerers and magicians of Pharaoh duplicated the miracles wrought by the hand of God through Moses (at least up to a certain point as allowed by God). And don't forget the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:21-23, or the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.

d. So likewise, here in Revelation 13:13-14a, the False Prophet of Papal Rome deceives the masses by means of signs and wonders. In fact, the Papal Church of Rome considers its miracles to be one of the notes or signs confirming that it is the true Church of Christ. Dear ones, I submit to you that anyone who is led by the experience of signs and wonders is ready to be deceived and ensnared by the False Prophet of Papal Rome. What signs and wonders does the False Prophet of Papal Rome perform?

(1) The False Prophet of Papal Rome claims the alleged miraculous power to create the actual body of Christ every time the priest consecrates the wafer by holding it up above the head in the mass, and also claims the alleged miraculous power to forgive sins through confession to the priest, penance, and indulgences. Over a billion people in the world believe the Papal Church of Rome possesses miraculous power from Christ in such cases (and these are the primary reasons why those souls that follow this False Prophet keep going back—they have been deceived by these alleged miracles).

(2) However, the False Prophet of Papal Rome also points to many other alleged miraculous signs and wonders as well in

order to confirm its claims to alone be Christ's true Church upon earth. Whether it be the alleged prophecies of the Roman Catholic monk, Malachy (who lived from 1094 to 1148 and gave brief prophecies concerning the next 112 popes), or whether it be the multitudes of alleged apparitions of Mary (at which locations miracles and healings are regularly claimed to be performed), or whether it be a host of alleged exorcisms performed by priests in casting out demons, or whether it be at least two miracles that must be confirmed in the life of one before he/she can reach sainthood in the Papal Church of Rome. Alleged miracles are one of the confirming signs in the Papal Church of Rome that it has the authority of Christ through the Apostle Peter. I would suggest that it is certainly possible that some of these claims to miracles might even be true (in light of Christ's warning about false prophets in Matthew 7:21-23).

e. What then distinguishes a true sign and miracle of the apostles from lying signs and miracles of the False Prophet of Papal Rome?

(1) A true sign and miracle of the apostles confirmed the true doctrine of Christ that is revealed in Scripture (Deuteronomy 13:1-4; John 20:30-31), whereas lying signs and miracles confirm heresy, idolatry, and lies. In other words, it is the Gospel and doctrine of Christ (revealed in Scripture) that is that to which the miracle points as confirmation. It is not the miracle itself that is most important, but the Christ and His truth in Scripture that is most important (John 20:30-31).

(2) A true sign and miracle of the apostles was not a qualification to be a saint, for all Christians are called saints in Scripture (Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:2), and yet all Christians did not perform the signs and miracles of the apostles (otherwise "the signs of an apostle" in 2 Corinthians 12:12 would be meaningless).

2. The second means that the False Prophet of Papal Rome uses to bring the Roman European earth to its knees in blind obedience to the Emperor is the fire he makes to come down from heaven in the sight of men (Revelation 13:13).

a. This is in imitation of the prophet Elijah who called down fire from heaven upon the soldiers who sought to arrest him (in 2 Kings 1).

(1) This may refer to actual fire called down from heaven as a miraculous sign to deceive people (whether in the past or in the future), and if that is all that it take to deceive the world to follow the Beast, the False Prophet, and the Dragon, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that Satan use his power to perform such a sign through this False Prophet so as to deceive the masses, see Revelation 16:13-14).

(2) But I suggest that this fire from heaven may also refer to language that the False Prophet of Papal Rome himself has used to refer to Papal anathemas and excommunications against heretics. The False Prophet himself has referred to his anathemas, and his excommunications as lightnings and thunderbolts from heaven. For he declares that his curses and excommunications are as fire sent by God against heretics who are prepared for the fires of the stake and for the fires of hell.

(3) E.B. Elliot (in his commentary on the Book of Revelation, *Horae Apocalypticae*, 3:216) states that casting lighted candles was “a usual accompaniment of the solemn and great excommunication pronounced annually at the Feast *Coena Domini* by the Pope in person, his Cardinals, and his Priesthood, against all heretics, from the elevated Vestibule of the Lateran Church of Rome.” In fact, there was nothing more fearful to people, who lived in times past in the Roman Empire of Europe, than to fall under the dreaded lightning of fire of a papal anathema and excommunication. It was a sentence of death

and damnation. This was the power of the keys that the Papal Church of Rome claims that Christ gave to Peter and to his alleged successors. Thus, this lightning of fire from Papal anathemas and excommunications would demonstrate the connection between the apostle Peter and his alleged Papal successors.

b. Dear ones, it is indeed no coincidence that the very notes of confirmation that the False Prophet of Papal Rome uses to identify itself as the Church that alone has authority from Christ are characteristics that we see of the False Prophet here in the Book of Revelation: (1) a claim to miracles (Revelation 13:13); (2) a claim to be catholic and universal (Revelation 13:14); (3) a claim to unity (Revelation 13:12); (4) a claim to apostolic succession (Revelation 13:13); and (5) a claim to holiness (Revelation 13:11). The identity of this second religious Beast that has two horns like a lamb and speaks lies like Satan cannot be hidden. The very notes that the Papal Church of Rome claims for itself demonstrate that it is this second religious Beast in Revelation 13:11—a Beast in sheep’s clothing.

B. Dear ones, the chief means by which deception occurs in your life and mine is the temptation to walk by sight, feelings, impressions, and experience, rather than walking by faith in Christ and in His objective promises, commandments, and doctrine revealed in Holy Scripture (2 Corinthians 5:7). Just like with Peter, when we take the eye of faith off of Christ and His revealed truth in Scripture, we will sink into the abyss of deception and delusion. Dear ones, we are not to treat our impressions, feelings, and convictions as if we have Papal infallibility. To the contrary, we are warned not to trust our own impressions, feelings, and convictions (Proverbs 3:5-6; Proverbs 28:26). Dear ones, God gives us feelings, impressions (at times), and we are not simply to have an intellectual knowledge of God, but we are to enjoy God and to delight in

Him (in other words, we are to experience the God of our salvation). However, when feelings, impressions, and experience guide us (rather than Scripture), watch out for deception and delusion to entrap us. How we must be ever so careful that we are not deceived and misled by satanic delusions in following a church or a religious leader just because it/he claims a huge following, or just because it/he claims to work miracles, or just because it/he claims to be united under one earthly head, or just because it/he claims to be primitive. It is the Spirit of God speaking in Scripture that will not deceive us.

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