

INTRODUCTION

1. Is it possible to separate religion from politics? Man is " homo religiosus."
2. Rv 13 Dragon authorizes 2Bsts to persecute the woman.
3. 2ndBst: v11-12 - wld seduce to apostasy: v13-15

1st: Deceptive Signs - v13-14a

1. Mt 24:24; 2 Thes 2:9. Why are false miracles so enticing? B/c there are true miracles! Satan mimics power to raise the dead [wh/ is the signif of miracles]
 - i. Pharaoh's magicians cld replicate 1st 3 plagues [Ex 4,7] - hardened heart.
2. *fire from heaven* - Elijah [1Kg 18; 2Kg 1; Lk9:54]. 2Wits - Rv11:5
3. *in the presence of* [before face; in sight of] *men* [ESV, NIV: *the people*]
 - i. Who? *those who dwell on the earth* [2x in v14].
 - ii. Where? *in presence of - men & the Bst.* 2ndB = mediator: why? Rv12:17
 - iii. Church in context of theocratic pagan idolatry [Rm 12:2]. Getting earth-dwellers to worship idols is strategy to persecute Church: apostatize.

2nd: Deceptive Sayings - v14b

1. In redemptive history, God couples miracles w/ new words of revelation. Are we living in such a time? 2ndB deceives men into thinking that is the case.
2. This is all very oppressive. Where is God in all this? *It was given.* Satan is the proximate giver, but all transpires according to what is given by God [Jn 19:11]. Our Father is directing all, even when Satan does his worst.

3rd: An Idol of the Resurrected Anti-Christ - v14c

1. Recall Sanhedrin's idolatrous devotion to status & wealth. Recall Nebuchadnezzar's statue in Dan 3; the Emperor cult in John's day.
2. Rv 9:20-21 describes what is promoted by the 2ndBst.

3. The idol taught that 1stB had res'd from dead: 13:4, v12 now 3rd time w/ more detail: *wound of the sword*.
 - i. *sword* - ref'd 4x in Rv, [literal 13:10] & Word of God from Jesus' mouth [2:16; 19:21]. So, what of 13:14's *the sword*?
 - ii. My thots: *sword* is Word of God & res of 1stB is a revitalized Roman-like emperor worship. Seen on occasion in history but now global.
 - a. Essential to the deception is the commandeering of Christianity's central truth: the resurrection of Christ.
 - b. Whatever this *life* is in v14 - it is a trick.

4th: A Living, Speaking Idol - v15a

1. *it was given* - God works thru Dragon. 2ndB acts like the Holy Spirit & *gives breath to the image of the Bst.* Mimics Creator [Gn2:7]; Jesus [Jn 10:22].
2. Ancient world was replete w/ demonic activity: Jesus' exorcisms; Acts 13:6; 16:16; 19:13. Occult today. In Hunterdon. Expect demonic activity to increase & stay away from it!
3. Here is an image made deceptively to *breathe* - move & *speak* telling people to worship the 1stB [v14], while lightening flashes in sky above [v13].

5th: The Killing of the Saints - v15b

1. Neb's fiery furnace; Roman Emperors demanded worship: pain of death.
2. *cause to be killed* = end physical life: Antipas [2:13]; Rv 20:4; Lk 12:4; Rv 11:7,11-12.

OBSERVATION: the pressure to direct you, as a church, into the political arena is compelling.

Our stewardship is the gospel of the resurrected Lord Jesus - not a fake resurrection of a fake Jesus. Rv 13:18a: *Here is wisdom.*