

– an uncluttered approach –

SIMPLIFYING

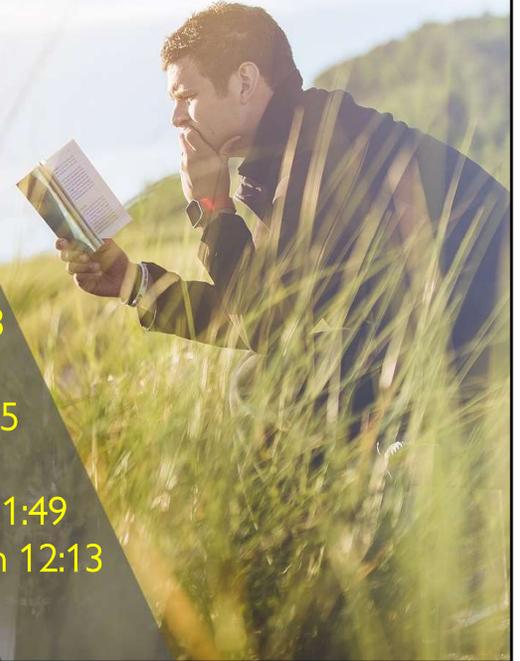
REVELATION

- A new series of signs begins now in ch. 12, picturing a spiritual war that takes place both in heaven and upon earth.
- Revelation 12-13 give special attention to the enemy of God and His people, and to the devices he will use...
 - “...lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor 2:11)
 - “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph 6:11)
- We face a powerful and influential enemy, but Christ is more powerful, and in Him, we are able to have victory.

EX MESSIANIC PECTATION

- ❖ The shepherds “made widely known” that the Christ had been born Lk 2:17
- ❖ Simon had been “waiting for the Consolation of Israel” Lk 2:25
- ❖ Anna “did not depart from the temple but served God with fasting & prayers” Lk 2:37
- ❖ Joseph “was waiting for the kingdom of God” Mk 15:43
- ❖ Andrew told Simon, “We have found the Messiah!” Jn 1:41
- ❖ Philip told Nathanael, “We have found Him of whom whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote” Jn 1:45
- ❖ Nathanael declared “You are the King of Israel” Jn 1:49
- ❖ A great crowd cried out, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! The King of Israel” Jn 12:13

A CHILD IS BORN



- In Revelation 12:1, the woman whom John saw is a representation of the faithful remnant of Israel (pictured with the 12 stars) from whom the Christ would come.
- She was ready to give birth, crying out with labour pains (v 2). That is, the faithful of God’s people anticipated the coming of the Messiah – they were ready for deliverance. **SEVERAL SCRIPTURES** attest to their readiness for a Saviour.
- The prophets foretold His coming, His glory, His authority. Isaiah spoke of a virgin who would bear a Child to whom authority would be given (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7).



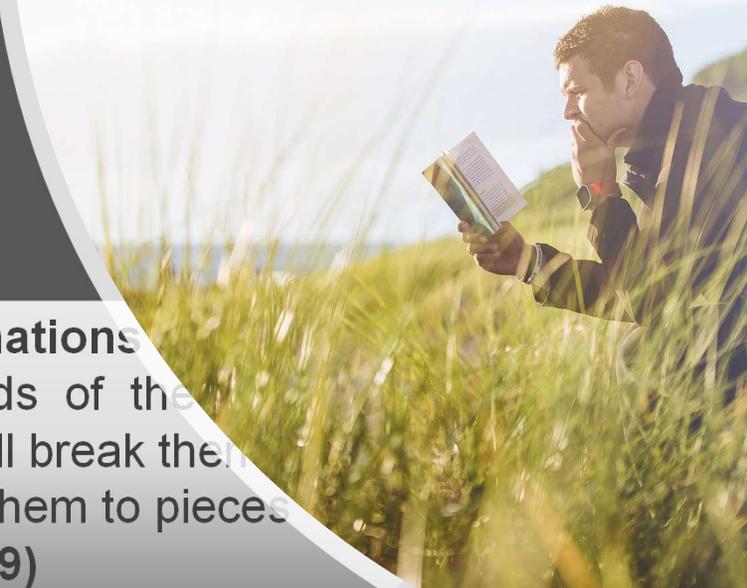
- A dragon appeared (v 3).
- The description of the dragon presents him as a formidable foe.
 - **7 HEADS** & 10 horns & 7 diadems (crowns).
 - These represent **INTELLIGENCE, POWER & AUTHORITY.**
 - The numbers used (7, 10, 7) convey perfection or completeness (not so far as character, but regarding the traits mentioned).
 - V 4 gives a display of his power – he drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.
 - Some assume this refers to angels drawn away from God.
 - Perhaps, or it may just be a figure to demonstrate his lack of concern for the earth & those upon it.

- V 9 tells us who this dragon is – the devil, Satan.
- V 4b – He knew about the Child to be born and sought to destroy him.
 - Recall king Herod's attempt on Jesus' life (Matthew 2:16).
 - Jesus came to destroy the devil & his power (Heb 2:14-15)

A CHILD IS BORN

She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. (12:5)

Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. (PSALM 2:8-9)



- v 5 – the Child is born.
 - **PSALM 2:8-9** is referenced, identifying Him as the ruler of all nations.
 - Jesus is given all authority (Mt 28:18). He has conquered sin and death, and has sat down on the throne of God (Ac 2:33-34; Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; etc.).
- V 5 is the shortest account of the life of Christ. In a single verse, He is born & then ascended to heaven!

WILDERNESS SAFETY

- ❖ Moses was in the wilderness
- ❖ Israel was in the wilderness
- ❖ David was in the wilderness
- ❖ Elijah was in the wilderness
- ❖ Jesus was in the wilderness
- ❖ Paul was in the wilderness

the woman
the wilderness &



1260 **DAYS** 42 **MONTHS** 3½ **DAYS**

- V 6 – after the Child is caught up into heaven, the woman fled into the wilderness. The wilderness is used to represent **A PLACE OF SAFETY:**
 - Moses fled to the wilderness from the presence of Pharaoh;
 - Israel was led into the wilderness from Egyptian bondage;
 - David found safety in the wilderness from king Saul;
 - Elijah fled to the wilderness from Ahab & Jezebel;
 - As a Child, Jesus was taken to the wilderness of Egypt to escape Herod;
 - Paul went into Arabia away from those who sought his life.
- This wilderness the woman fled to was a place prepared for her by God (v 6).

- She was there for **1260 DAYS**.
 - The same period of time the holy city (church) is trampled by the Gentiles (Rev 11:2).
 - The same period of time the witnesses would prophesy (Rev 11:3).
 - The same period of time until the time of the resurrection (Rev 11:9-11).
- As mighty as the dragon is, God is able to protect His people from his attacks.

Michael | “who is like God?”

- In Daniel 10:13, 21, he is identified as “one of the chief princes,” and in 12:1, “the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people.”
- Jude 1:9 speaks of “Michael the archangel” who contended with the devil about the body of Moses.



War Broke Out **In Heaven**

- In v 7-12, we are introduced to Michael. He is **MENTIONED ELSEWHERE** in the Bible.
- The war described in the text is not literal.
 - John was given a vision of the spiritual war that goes on, and shown the defeat of Satan.
 - The battle of good and evil has been waged from the beginning, but it climaxed with the victory of Christ (12:5, 10).
 - Now, no place was found for Satan in heaven (v 9); no longer could he be the accuser of God’s people as he once had been (Job 1-2; Zechariah 3:1).
 - Satan seeks to bind people in sin; Jesus provides release from the bondage of sin.
- V 11 – because Jesus has overcome, strength to overcome is available to His people (John 16:33; 1 John 5:4).

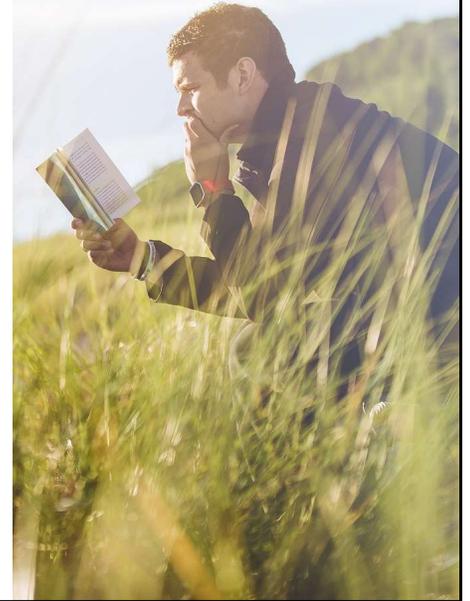
- Three things account for our ability to overcome:
 - The blood of the lamb (Heb 9:13-15, 23-24, 26-28)
 - The word of testimony (1 Tim 4:16; Heb 4:12)
 - Self-sacrifice (Mt 16:24)
- V 12-13 – with the devil cast out of heaven & no longer accusing God’s people, there is now joy in heaven and for those dwelling in the spirit realm.
 - Though we are still upon the earth, where Satan’s influence is still felt, we can be partakers of the joy that is described in heaven.
 - In Christ we learn to “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor 5:7)
 - In Christ we are “raised to sit in heavenly places” (Eph 2:6)
 - In Christ we have access to “every spiritual blessing” (Eph 1:3)
- However, there is a warning for those upon the earth – Satan is out to get you! Therefore we must endure as seeing the eternal (Ro 8:18; 2 Cor 4:17-18; 1 Pe 1:6-7; 4:13)

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I **bore you on eagles' wings** and brought you to Myself. **(EXODUS 19:4)**

The woman was the *faithful remnant of Israel.*

Now she represents *the church.*

PERSECUTED
but **PROTECTED**



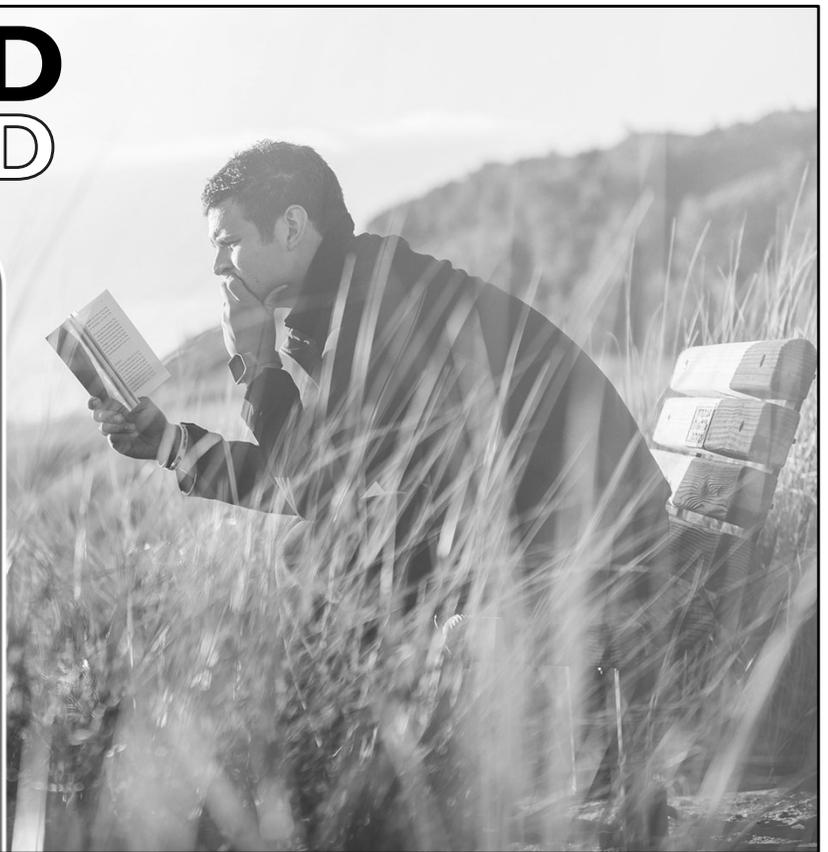
- v 13, unable to destroy the Child who now reigns in heaven, the dragon turns his attention to the woman, the remnant of God's people.
- However, God protects the woman, giving her wings (v 14; cf. **EXO 19:4**; Isa 40:31) to fly away to safety (again pictured as the wilderness).
 - This is not a literal physical place, but a representation of a relationship with Christ (Jn 17:14-16).
 - In this place of safety, the woman "is nourished for a time and times and half a time" (14b).
 - This is 3 ½ or 1260 days or 42 months.
 - It is the same time the church is persecuted,
 - It is the same time the church does God's work;
 - It is the same time we wait for the resurrection.
 - NOTE **THE WOMAN** has morphed in the text from the

remnant of God's people in Israel to now being the church.

PERSECUTED *but* PROTECTED

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

(REVELATION 12:17)



- V 15 – even after the woman is brought to safety, the serpent still attempts to destroy her, spewing water & causing a flood.
 - V 16 – the earth helped the woman.
 - The earth belongs to the Lord. It is under His control.
 - That was part of the lesson for Pharaoh & the Egyptians in the 10 plagues.
 - Once more, these images are not literal.
 - They represent Satan’s efforts to destroy God’s people through temptation and sin (he is relentless).
 - On the other side, God’s constant protection of His people so they might overcome the evil one.
 - Despite the temptations we face, God’s word is

given to enable us to escape & bear all of Satan's attacks (1 Cor 10:13).

- **V 17** – He does not stop.
 - He went after the Child.
 - Unable to destroy the Child, he went after the early church (exclusively Jewish believers – primarily persecuted by the Jews);
 - Unable to destroy the beginnings of the church, he went after the church as it stretched beyond the Jewish believers (Roman persecution).
 - And the persecution would continue – even to “the rest of her offspring,” subsequent generations of Christians.



- 13:1-4 – a beast rose up from the sea.
 - The description is similar to the dragon.
 - **7 HEADS**, 10 horns, 10 crowns (intelligence, power, authority)
 - The beast is blasphemous, even wearing a blasphemous name his heads.
 - Further details are given – the beast is intimidating.
 - He has...
 - The speed of a leopard;
 - The power of a bear;
 - The fierceness of a lion.
 - He is given power, a throne & authority from the dragon.
 - However, he is not invincible; he is not deity; he can be harmed.

- V 3 – he has a **MORTAL WOUND** which was healed.
- The effect of his wound being healed is that people marveled and followed the beast.
- 2 Thes 2:9-10, *“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie...”*
- V 4 – He is declared unbeatable, and through him, the people worship the dragon (the devil).
- V 5-6 – when he opens his mouth he **SPEAKS BLASPHEMY.**
 - He speaks great things to impress the world and draw them to himself.
 - He speaks blasphemy against God, seeking to turn people from the Lord.
 - The blasphemy continues 42 months.
 - The same period the church is persecuted

- (11:2).
- The same period God's people speak (11:3).
- The length of time until the final judgment (11:9-11).
- The time the woman fled in the wilderness (12:6, 14).
- V 7-8 – his power is evident.
 - He wars against God's people & overcomes them (ie. Kills them)
 - He is given authority over every tribe, tongue & nation (the people of the earth, who are not in the Book of life, v 8).
- We'll discuss who the beast from the sea is in just a bit, but let me caution you...
 - Don't be looking for a literal fulfillment of this.
 - Just as we're not looking for a 7 headed, 10 horned, leopard, bear, lion hybrid, we are also not looking for some one world government (as some make v 7 about).
- Everything to this point sounds very bleak. But **THERE IS HOPE...**

A BEAST RISING UP OUT OF THE SEA

“if anyone has an ear”
LISTEN UP!!!

He who leads into captivity **shall go into captivity**; he who kills with the sword **must be killed with the sword**. Here is the patience and faith of the saints. (13:10)



- V 9 – Hey, listen up!!
 - *“If anyone has an ear, let him hear.”*
 - Same kind of language used in ch. 2-3; each time John had a message of victory to share.
- **V 10** – the beast will not be victorious!
 - Though he may take the saints captive & kill them with the sword, the day will come when he himself will fall to the same fate.
 - For the present, God’s people must endure with patience and faith.
- So, who is this beast from the sea? The text reveals him as mortal (v 3), authoritative (v 4), and one who opposes God & His people (v 5-7).
- The prophet Daniel can help us.
 - There is an image of 4 beasts in Daniel 7, the fourth having ten horns and a mouth speaking pompous words.

- In Daniel, the context refers to the Roman Empire.
- Satan used the Romans to oppose & deceive God's people.
- Some will try to nail it down to a specific Roman ruler (Nero or Domitian). I don't think the intent is to get that detailed.
- The scope of this image is not limited to a period of a few years in the 1st century.
 - In every age, Satan employs political forces to accomplish his will and to oppose God's people.
 - Communist regimes & dictatorships have long been enemies of Christianity. True Christianity is illegal in places like China & North Korea.
 - A Muslim in the Middle East is subject to death if they obey the gospel.
 - Even in Canada, a stand on some moral issues (ie. Homosexuality, same-sex marriage) may bring persecution & prosecution.
- What is the beast from the sea?
 - Any political or social power that Satan can use to stand against the cause of Christ may be capsulized in the image of the beast from the sea.
 - When ungodly ideologies are given life by political or social support, they become a powerful opponent to the faith.

LOOKS LIKE A LAMB
speaks like a dragon

the beast
FROM THE EARTH

HERE IS
WISDOM 666

“...the number of a man...”

FALSEHOOD
however it presents itself

- V 11 – another beast comes into view, rising up from the earth.
 - He looks different from the dragon & the first beast.
 - In fact, if we are not careful when looking at him, we might think he is associated with the Lord – he is a lamb.
 - His **APPEARANCE IS A DECEPTION**. His role is to deceive.
 - It is not enough to consider his appearance – we must consider how he speaks (v 11b).
 - Mt 7:15, *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.”*
 - The text goes on to speak of a tree being known by its fruit.
 - Lk 6:45, *“...out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”*

- V 12 – the second beast works in conjunction with the first beast, and directs people to worship the first beast.
 - His role is to deceive & entice people, such that they will worship the first beast (which in turn, glorifies the dragon).
 - Notice the abilities granted to him.
 - Performs great signs to deceive (v 13-14a)
 - Mt 24:24, *“False christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”*
 - 2 Thes 2:9-10, *“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth that they might be saved.”*
 - Satan has often used counterfeit signs & wonders to distract & deceive the people...
 - Simon the Sorcerer VS Philip.
 - Magicians of Egypt VS Moses.

- His wonders are not comparable with God's – they are fake; but some are easily impressed (and his requirements for his followers are less than God expects of His).
- Establishes a process of false worship (v 14b-15)
 - Make an image of the beast – something to worship.
 - Not only that – but to give it life & power to the image.
 - Idolatry is bolstered by the temples & priests of false gods (which inspire awe & mystery).
 - False deities are made alive at times through national leaders (the Pharaoh, the Caesars, etc).
 - Catholicism, Mormonism, etc. produces intrigue through ornate buildings, religious icons, prestigious hierarchy & mystical claims.
 - Secrecy, cryptic & mystical elements in false religion prevail upon the hearts of some,

especially those who are not satisfied with the simplicity of the gospel.

- Unsubstantiated claims, conjecture & outright lies deceive those who do not love the truth.
- Speaking about “the image of the beast” being caused to speak – I recall a “talking Jesus” statute at the Hill Cumorah Visitor Center, the supposed site of Joseph Smith’s first vision, his visits with the angel Moroni, and the translation of the book of Mormon.
- Implements a mark on the worshipers (v 16)
 - This image has been widely interpreted.
 - RFID chip implanted under the skin;
 - Tattoo of a bar code or something similar;
 - The need to use a specific

- currency (ie. Bearing the image of the beast, v 17);
- Some have linked it with technology (computers, ATM machines, etc.).
- The mark of the beast is Satan's equivalent to the seal of the Spirit.
 - It is not something physical, not a literal mark.
 - It is about association, about possession, about allegiance.
- Persecution (v 17), even death (v 15) await those who do not worship the beast.
 - John's point is not that we will go to the grocery store & be refused service.
 - It is more generic than that – those who serve the Lord (and thus refuse to walk with the beast) will be persecuted in a variety of ways.
 - Recall the experience of Daniel – the wicked governors in Babylon passed a law which made prayer illegal!!
 - Recall the experience of Shadrach Meshach & Abed-Nego – they were thrown into a fire because they didn't bend the knee before an image.

- Eusebius & others write about Polycarp, who would not blaspheme Christ, and thus suffered death for his insolence.
- 14 years ago, we attempted to adopt through CAS & ran into religious discrimination.
- An employer may willingly give worldly employees Friday or Saturday night off, but refuse to give a Christian Sunday morning off (Shelly's experience at Walmart).
- Faith in God & service to God is not popular in a irreligious and wicked world.
- So, who is this second beast?
 - He supports the first, serving as a rallying force to garner attention.
 - In him is seen the power of a lie dressed as the truth (false religion).
 - Rome exercised control over people through exaltation of the emperor, even necessitating worship at times.
 - Hitler used nationalism to rally people around his cause.
 - Muhammad created Islam to rally people and oppress those who stood against him.

- The evolutionary theory has paved the way for many to become adherents of atheism.
- Perhaps the craftiest of all Satan's deceptions is those who are closest to the truth...
 - Religious division in the "Christian" world is rampant.
 - There are all kinds of isms & schisms that have turned people this way & that from the truth.
 - Several throughout church history: Gnosticism, Montanism, Monarchianism, Arianism, Macedonianism, etc.
 - Some recent ones: Calvinism, premillennialism, denominationalism, ecumenicalism, legalism, liberalism, relativism, universalism, etc.
- The statement in **V 18** is similar to v 10. Listen up!! There his hope!
 - John is going to reveal something about this beast – using the image of a number – **666**.
 - John is not asking us to do numeric contortionism (that is how people arrive at Nero, Bill Clinton, Bill

Gates, etc.). It is quite simple.

- The number of God is 7. The beast is not God.
- It is the **NUMBER OF A MAN**. Not a specific man; but deals with humanity.
- The Caesars, the Hitlers, the Muhammads of the world are not perfect and will not have victory.
- They are mortal (6), not divine (7).
- Why three 6s? Perhaps to convey the idea that they are “completely incomplete.” If it were three 7s, we’d understand that to speak of the perfect completeness of God. Is this the perfectly incompleteness of the beast?
- Both beasts, the one from the sea & the one from the land, are mortal & temporal in their nature.
- They will come to an end; they will be defeated.
- So who is the beast from the earth?
 - This beast represents **FALSEHOOD** & false religion, in whatever manner it presents itself. Whatever gives support & draws a following to false ideologies.
 - Paganism / nationalism / communism, atheism, etc.
 - Perhaps the most crafty deception at work today is denominationalism & more specifically, ecumenicalism.
 - It has masked the truth – so long as you love God, you’re OK. Satan wants people to believe that.
 - People are deceived into believing they are

serving and worshiping God, but Satan is glorified.

THE TRUTH	SATAN'S LIE	imitation AND MOCKERY 
The Godhead: Father, Son & Holy Spirit	Fake Godhead: Dragon, Sea Beast & Earth Beast	
Jesus was dead & rose to life again	1 st beast had a mortal wound & was healed	
Jesus directs people to worship the Father	1 st beast directs people to worship the dragon	
Holy Spirit works signs and miracles	2 nd beast works signs and miracles	
God's people are sealed with the Spirit	Devil's people have the mark of the beast	

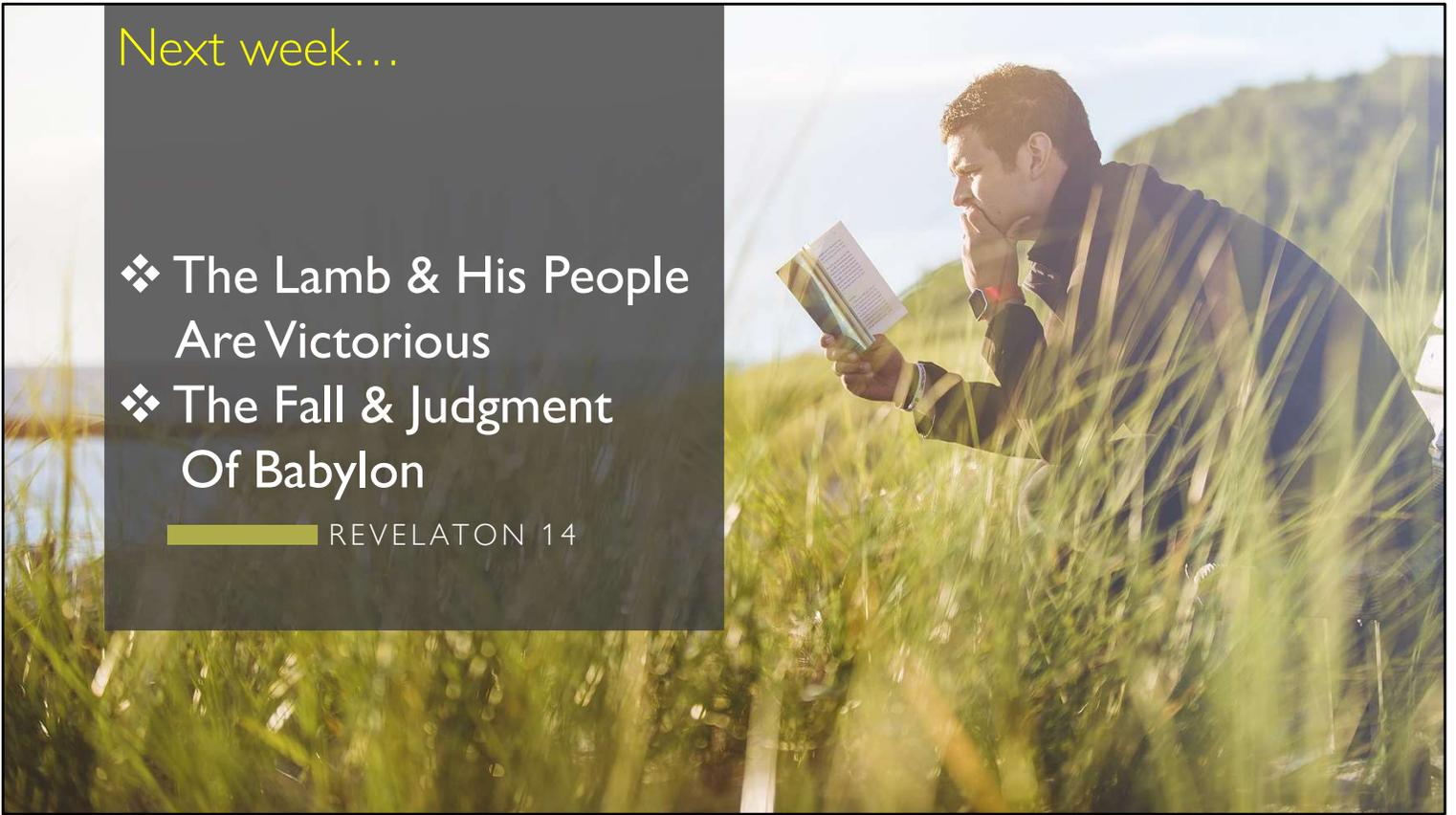
- Revelation 13 demonstrates how the devil likes to mimic & mock what God does.
- There are at least 5 different instances of mockery in the text:
 - **3 PERSONS** – Father, Son, Spirit /// dragon, sea beast, earth beast
 - **DEATH** – Jesus was dead & rose /// 1st beast mortal wound & healed
 - **WORSHIP** – Jesus directs people to God /// 1st beast directs people to Satan
 - **MIRACLES** – Holy Spirit works miracles /// 2nd beast works miracles
 - **MARK** – God's people sealed with Spirit /// devil's people marked by beast
- False religion will always mock & mimic the truth.

- Jeroboam made alterations (location, days, qualification for priesthood), but he kept things similar enough & made things convenient enough, that people followed.
- Satan is a master at mocking the plan of God & leading people astray by counterfeits.

Next week...

- ❖ The Lamb & His People Are Victorious
- ❖ The Fall & Judgment Of Babylon

REVELATION 14



New images in ch. 14