

## SERMON REVELATION 13 'UNMASKING EVIL'

Series 'The future has already begun' #10

+ Questions for reflection

IBC Eindhoven, 8 March 2020

### INTRODUCTION

Two weeks ago chapter 12. Today 13 and 14, but focus on 13 'Unmasking of the evil'

### REVELATION 12

- \* The great failure of the dragon - he is in need of help (12:18) - in his stride against the offspring of the woman (12:17)
- \* Unmasking of the evil one (12:9 and 20:2) as the dragon (fear), serpent (temptation), devil (division) and satan (accuser)
- \* Dragon in his appearance fuelling fear. Does not seem to work. However when church reads Revelation as a book purely about the future, it seems somehow the dragon succeeds, encouraging fear among believers - what terrible evil is still to come - will we suffer the great tribulation?
- \* The message of this morning is sobering. Disappointment for those who love exiting endtime theories and spiritual mysteries about evil. But encouragement for those who open their eyes for reality today without playing down on the power of the evil one.

### TWO BEASTS

1. The beast out of the sea - 13:1-3
  1. Ludicrous description - patchwork job, assembled from left-over parts of leopard, bear and lion
  2. Only a deadly *wound* - as if slain - but only wound and is healed - very different from the Lamb in Revelation 5
  3. Who is like the beast? - where did we hear that before:)?
  4. How does he fight the offspring of the women, the followers of Jesus?
    - To be disobedient >> Revelation 13:7 // 12:11 and 17
2. The beast out of the earth - 13:11
  1. Fake lamb - a clumsy counterfeit of the magnificent true Lamb
  2. Fighting the followers of Jesus
    1. Through temptation and deceit

*Reflect on the strategies of the evil one fighting against Christians and the way we can overcome as in Revelation 12:11 and 17*

### THE MARK

1. The mark of the beast
  1. Revelation 13:16-18 >>> 666
2. The mark of God
  1. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 >>> 777 the number of God! The number 666 is falling short of the perfect number
  2. Compare in modern Judaism the tefillin and mesuza
3. Come and buy!
  1. Driven by commercial motives - that is the beast's strategy - Revelation 13:17
  2. But with God it is the opposite: Isaiah 55:1-2 - *Come, all you who are thirsty..., Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.. Why spend money on what is not bread...Listen, listen to me and eat what is good* - repeated in Revelation 22:17
  3. Mark of the Christian - John 13:35 *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another*

*Reflect on the mark on the head and the hands of the people of God. Read also Matthew 6:19-34. Please share some examples of the mark of God in modern day life of a Christian. Focus on little things important for God, not on big things to impress unbelievers.*

### HEAR

- Revelation 13:9-10 >> Same call 7x in Revelation 2 and 3
- Realistic about persecution as foretold by Jesus >> Smyrna in Revelation 2:10-11
- Call for patient endurance and faithfulness >> Matthew 10:28-30 and Proverbs 29:25