

HOPE FOR HUMANITY

REVELATION TODAY

PRESENTATION 14 • REVEALING THE END-TIME ANTICHRIST

SLIDE • RUSHMORE. It's easy to forget this country hasn't been around for very long. Although Native Americans were here already, we look at 1620 as the year things really began for this (**SLIDE • MAYFLOWER**) nation, when the Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock in Massachusetts, 30 or so miles in a straight line from Boston.

SLIDE • INDEPENDENCE. It would be 150 years before a collection of 13 colonies declared independence from Great Britain, 10 more years until the Declaration of Independence, and at that time, the United States was only a quarter of the size it is today.

SLIDE • JEFFERSON. In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson sign off on the Louisiana Purchase, which cost the US \$27m, and doubled the size of the nation.

SLIDE • US WES. 45 years later, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed between the United States and Mexico. The Mexican-American War ended, and the US gained all or some of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.

SLIDE • PACIFIC NORTHWEST. Washington and Oregon were secured by the United States, then Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867. "Seward's Folly" as Alaska was called, grew the nation, then before the 19th Century was over, Hawaii had become the Hawaii Territory.

It's a fascinating story, this country that grew, that began small, that arose slowly and became ultimately a global superpower.

To ignore history and pretend that every day was the good old days would be wrong. Inappropriate. A mistake. It took an impossibly long time for this (**SLIDE • SLAVERY**) country to extricate itself from the shackles of slavery, and even when it did, we had slavery by another name with convict leasing, and terrible injustice with Jim Crow. I don't know what it feels like to be refused service and have my civil rights curtailed and to be pushed down or out owing simply to the color of my skin, and I hope I never do. I hope no one does. We remember readily people like Rosa Parks and Dr. MLK Jr, and shouldn't forget that civil rights were advanced by a host of others.

SLIDE • WEB DUBOIS.

SLIDE • BAYARD RUSTIN.

SLIDE • CLAUDETTE COLVIN.

SLIDE • DOROTHY HEIGHT.

Who strove for change in a time when they weren't able to try on clothes in a department store, would take an outline of their foot to a store and (**SLIDE • SIGNS**) compare it to shoes to see if they were likely to fit. Of course, this isn't the only country to have wrestled with historic problems on a

grand scale, as societies learned they needed to break with the archaic and often inhuman practices of the past. And in spite of these challenges, the United States ascended to a position of greatness in the world.

SLIDE • FLAG. And the United States has been an experiment.

Here in this land, for the first time, it was decided that man is born with certain God-given rights. Here it was believed that the government should be “by the people, for the people.” After the Constitution had been hammered out in Independence Hall in Philadelphia, (**SLIDE • BEN FRANKLIN**) Benjamin Franklin told one person who asked that the gathering had produced, “A republic, madam, if you can keep it.”

SLIDE • CONSTITUTION. And that’s what the United States is, in actuality. A constitutional federal republic. “Constitutional” means the government is based on a Constitution which is the supreme law of the United States. The Constitution not only provides the framework for how the federal and state governments are structured, but also places significant limits on their powers. “Federal” means that there is both a national government and governments of the 50 states. A “republic” is a form of government in which the people hold power, but elect representatives to exercise that power.

We have a government that was not based on privileged classes, and without either hereditary or self-appointed rulers.

In the founding of the nation, it

- recognized individual rights are derived from a Creator.
- recognized human imperfection and the ever-present tendency to abuse power.
- restrained those in power through a written Constitution which carefully divided, balanced, and separated the powers of government. Then it brought them back together again through a system of checks and balances.
- left all powers with the people, except those they delegated to the government, but even then made provision for withdrawing that power, if it was abused.

SLIDE • FRANKLIN QUOTE. When he was 81, Benjamin Franklin said in a speech that “...when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men, all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views” (*Benjamin Franklin, speech to Constitutional Convention, September 1787*). He knew no system was perfect, because it was governed by people who were not perfect.

Franklin felt the Constitution wasn’t perfect. He referred to it “with all its faults.” We can’t be sure of everything he was thinking about when he said that, but the Constitution did not resolve slavery. There were concerns a federal government would overpower state governments and the liberties they had enshrined in their own laws. And of course, the Constitution has since been amended 27 times.

SLIDE • OLD USA. But to consider that in 1776, 13 colonies with a combined population of around 2.5 million declared independence from the most powerful nation in the world, and then fought to defend that freedom... There was no railroad at the time, no television, no air travel, no refrigeration, no electricity. There was no running water.

SLIDE • OLD WHITE HOUSE. The White House didn't get running water until 1833. And yet, less than 200 years after the Constitution had been signed, the United States (**SLIDE • MOON**) put a man on the moon. July 20, 1969. Just 12 years later, the (**SLIDE • SPACE**) Shuttle space shuttle Columbia made its maiden flight when it took off from the Kennedy Space Center and landed two days later at Edwards Air Force Base in the desert northeast of Los Angeles.

SLIDE • OLD COMPUTER. The United States has spearheaded breathtaking industrial and technological advancement, while at the same time defending religious liberty.

But can we expect a government to get it right all the time? No, we cannot. And this country has not. And for a variety of reasons. Ben Franklin mentioned prejudices, their passions, errors of opinion, local interests, and selfish views.

I thought it was interesting that Gallup recently stated that Americans' trust and confidence in themselves to make judgments under the democratic system is low. That trust measure was up over 80% in the 1970s, but has since plummeted, and what one Gallup analyst said was that this could (**SLIDE • QUOTE**) possibly create a "crisis for overall confidence in the U.S. democratic system."

SLIDE • BIBLE. Let's look into the book of Revelation and see how the Bible introduces us to the United States of America. The Bible speaks of many nations, and for several reasons. We read about Mesopotamia, where Abraham came from. Israel, obviously, because that's where God's covenant people were located. The nations around them: Egypt, Syria, Lebanon. In the New Testament, Asia Minor–Turkey. Greece. Italy.

When we go back to Daniel 2, we see the rise and fall of major kingdoms. We'll see that Daniel 7 paints much the same picture.

SLIDE • BABYLON. Babylon. Why? Because that's where God's people were taken captive. Babylon had a profound influence on God's covenant people.

SLIDE • MEDO-PERSIA. Then after Babylon was Medo-Persia, the nation that conquered Babylon and also permitted the re-establishment of Jewish society back in the city of Jerusalem.

SLIDE • GREECE. Then was Greece.

SLIDE • ROME. And then Rome, who ruled when Jesus died on what was a Roman cross.

SLIDES (4) • REVELATION 13:1–4. Let's read Revelation 13:1–4.

And then along comes another nation.

SLIDE • REVELATION 13:11. "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon."

Who is this next nation? Where does it come from?

Notice it comes up out of the earth. Sparsely populated area.

Let me share with you some symbols you might want to remember. keep in mind: John wrote Revelation, but didn't leave it up to us to guess what it means. Instead, he tied what he wrote in the New Testament book of Revelation back to what was in the Old Testament Scriptures.

For example, he used the term Babylon to describe the power in the last days that would cause spiritual ruin. His readers back in the first century AD would see that and say, "Of course, Babylon.

It was pagan, and it was based on false worship. They believed the dead lived on after death. We know what you're talking about when you call this power Babylon." That's how John designed Revelation, to be understood through the lens of the Old Testament.

SLIDE • SEAS. So in Revelation, seas represent multitudes of people.

SLIDE • WIND. Wind represents strife or warfare.

SLIDE • WOMAN. A woman represents a church.

SLIDE • BEAST. And a beast represents a kingdom or a nation.

How do we know that? Because in Daniel 7, we read this.

SLIDE • DANIEL 7:17. "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth."

SLIDE • DANIEL 7:23. And then verse 23. "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth."

SLIDE • LOGOS. We do the same thing today. Sports teams are the Bears and the Lions and the Tigers.

SLIDE • EAGLE. The United States is symbolized by an eagle.

SLIDE • LION. Great Britain is symbolized by a lion.

SLIDE • BEAR. Russia is represented by a bear.

SLIDE • KIWI. NZ is represented by a kiwi.

When does it arise?

It had to have come up recently. After 4 kingdoms, after divided kingdoms, after the arrival of little horn power (if you look into Daniel 7).

SLIDE • NEW NATION. This is a new nation being depicted in the Bible.

How does it come up?

SLIDE • REVELATION 13:11. "Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon."

Two horns like a lamb. In NT, lamb always represents Jesus, except for here. This is a Lamb-like nation. Christ like, in some way.

SLIDE • MONARCH'S CROWN. And notice, no crowns. A crown shows there is a monarchy—kingly authority. But there are no crowns here. What we're seeing here is something that stands for freedom.

So here's what we know.

SLIDE • BUILDS IN FOUR POINTS

- It arises in a sparsely populated area.
- It is a young nation.
- There is no monarchy.
- It would assume a position of worldwide power and influence.

The only nation in the world that fits that description is (**SLIDE • DC FLAGS**) The United States of America.

When it arose, it was known as the New World. It was a haven for people escaping religious persecution, and was founded on the freedom of religion and government.

But according to what we read in the Bible, there will come a time when a change comes over the heart of this nation. How do we know that?

SLIDE • REVELATION 13:11. “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.”

He speaks as a dragon. And in Book Revelation, the dragon represents Satan.

SLIDE • SUPREME COURT. How does a nation speak? Through its laws.

Notice what verse 12 says.

SLIDE • REVELATION 13:12. “And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”

According to what we read in the Bible, the second nation mentioned in Revelation 13 is going to use its power and influence to cause the earth to follow after that first nation—the beast of Bible prophecy.

Let’s try to understand how this might happen.

SLIDE • PEOPLE. With freedom comes responsibility. With freedom there is risk involved, the risk that people might use that freedom in a negative way. Has that happened here in the US?

SLIDE • BIBLE. Many people see that the only solution for America—even this planet—is to return to the One who made it great.

SLIDE • PROVERBS 14:34 NKJV. The Bible says, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”

When a nation is down, when an individual is down, the best, the only hope, is to turn to Jesus Christ and embrace Him.

Can you imagine a nation choosing to turn to God as the solution to its problems?

SLIDE • UNREST. In recent times we’ve had civil unrest, (**SLIDE • WILDFIRES**) devastating fires which burned out of control for months, an economy that no one thinks is in good shape, supply chain issues, a massive labor problem, increasing inflation, soaring fuel prices, we’ve struggled with various social issues, (**SLIDE • CRIME SCENE**) we have mass killings, we’ve clearly become polarized socially and religiously, and, oh yeah, (**SLIDE • PANDEMIC**) there’s a pandemic that’s still killing a lot of people. Imagine if things got really bad. After 9/11, churches were packed. It didn’t last long, but the nation did what it does and turns to God. I’m not making a prediction about what will happen, but pointing out that we can easily imagine how this country might turn to God in a time of desperate need.

But here’s the problem. People are faulty. And we typically do what the majority wants to see done. If Americans don’t trust the ability of Americans to make good decisions for the country, what sort of decisions do you think would be made if there was a call to return to God and embrace His principles?

Remember what Paul said about the last days of this Earth’s history?

SLIDE • 2 TIMOTHY 3:1–2. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy...”

SLIDE • 2 TIMOTHY 3:5. He went on to say, “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”

SLIDE • CHURCH. In an attempt to return to God’s ways, there will be a movement at the end of time which instead will lead people away from God. A good deception always closely mirrors the genuine article, and people in the end of time are going to be encouraged to receive the mark of the beast, thinking it is a good thing that will help them.

The Bible says the US will use its power to elevate the first beast in Revelation 13 to a position of global supremacy.

SLIDE • REVELATION. The Bible says an act of worship will be enforced. What act of worship?

SLIDES (2) • REVELATION 13:16–17. He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Notice it says that he “causes.” You could say “forces” or “coerces.” According to the Bible, laws will be passed legislating an un-Biblical act of worship.

And in that verse it said that people who didn’t receive the Mark of the Beast will not be able to buy and sell.

SLIDE • CARD.

For a long time people have been saying that the Mark of the Beast is going to be something that governs buying and selling, such as a smart card or a silicon chip implanted in the skin.

Let’s try to separate a couple of different things here. One is the Mark of the Beast. The second is How that mark is going to be enforced. Whatever the Mark of the Beast is, there will be some people who do not want to go along with it. So, in order to force people to accept it, it will be said that if you don’t take the Mark of the Beast, you won’t be able to buy and sell.

VIDEO • ELECTRONICS. What will the mechanism be that prevents people from buying and selling? We do not know. (**SLIDE • EYE**) But we know that we live in a society now that is edging closer and closer to being able to control people’s spending, or their buying and selling.

SLIDE • PHONE. Your paycheck—you don’t see cash anymore. It is either direct deposited, or you have to bank a check. But that’s old hat. Now people are paying with their smart phone. Do you think that is a process that could be manipulated? Sure it is.

How do most people get cash these days? With a card, out of a machine. Do you think it would be hard to control that process? No.

A huge amount of trading is done with cards—credit or debit cards. Have you ever been told, Sorry, but your card is being denied? What can you do then? You sure can’t buy or sell.

Now, I’m not suggesting that any of these methods is how people are going to be prevented from buying and selling. And I am telling you for certain that none of these are the Mark of the Beast. But

what we see is that we're already living in a time when buying and selling can be controlled. Any new developments just make it easier to do what is largely already being done.

But hear me carefully. Whatever the mechanism to prevent people from buying and selling, that is not the Mark of the Beast. It is just a way to enforce the Mark of the Beast. A person's behavior can surely be influenced when they can't pay their rent or buy their food.

It is a very old practice, there is nothing new about it. Sanctions and boycotts have been around for a long time. We've seen them against South Africa, Iraq, Cuba, and other places. Many here today have lived in a time when money wasn't the answer to all one's needs. During wartime there was rationing, and people couldn't simply buy and sell like they were used to.

SLIDE • BIBLE. The Bible is clear. We all see how the world is rapidly declining morally and spiritually. We can all agree that the only thing that will save the world is a return to God's principles. The problem is, the Beast power will confuse the world into believing they are honoring God when in fact they are dishonoring Him and His holy law. There is a time coming when the might of the planet's most powerful nation will be misused to enforce this mark. Most people will think it has the blessing of God.

SLIDE • REVELATION 13:15. He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

Bible says that people without the mark will be threatened with death. Can you imagine people actually going that far? Sadly, we can imagine people acting like fanatics in defense of their religious beliefs.

It is a subtle argument, as any good counterfeit always runs very closely to the genuine thing.

An image to the beast will be formed. Worship will be the main issue. Either we'll worship God in spirit and truth, or we'll follow the traditions of man.

SLIDE • BOOK OF DANIEL. We've seen it before in Bible. Daniel 3...

SLIDE • BOWING DOWN. In the book of Daniel... (story of boys cast into the fire)

SLIDE • FIERY FURNACE. But when they went into the fire, Jesus stood with them in the midst of the heat, and they were delivered from out of there.

Friend, we're assured today that as we stand for Jesus, Jesus will stand with us.

SLIDE • CHRIST AND PEOPLE. Are you willing today to say, Lord, I'll stand for you. Lord, I'll let you save me. Lord, I want to honor you with my life... If you are, I invite you to stand with me as we pray and ask God's blessing...

SLIDE • SECOND COMING.



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