

**Revelation 13: 15; "To Give Breath to the Image", Sermon # 96 in the series - The Faithful and True Witness, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on February 8th, 2009, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

I am moving slowly through this chapter of the book of Revelation because I believe that it is very important to establish the identity of these two beasts and because it is important for all Christians in our generation to know what has been hindering the forward progress of the Church's witness more than anything else for the last 1200 years or more. It is always good for us to remember that the generation that we live in is only one of the many generations of the Church of Jesus Christ. Each generation has its particular challenges with regard to the advancement of the truth of the gospel. If there has been a new generation, say, every 25 years, then over the last 1200 years there have probably been about 50 generations of people since this problem with Antichrist began. There have been that many generations of Christians that have had to struggle against the false doctrine of the Papal system. It is this system of Popes who over the generations, attempting to claim infallibility in saying how God was to be worshiped, and how people were to come to know the Lord, which developed into the Antichrist which is spoken of here in Revelation 13. This system, which is the greatest of all of Satan's strategies to thwart Christ's kingdom's advance has not changed much at all in its doctrinally deceptive nature over this whole time period of its existence. What has changed and has been modified in the last 100 years has been that there is no longer the open persecution, threats and punishments being given to those who are Protestants. Rather it has been a change in the image of the Pope and the church itself that has taken place. There has been a change in the image of the beast. But it should be noted that since the spiritual deception is still the same, that vast numbers of people all over the world are still perishing in their sins. In this respect the image of the beast is consistent.

Now, in our days, the Roman Catholic Church is putting forth the image of being benign caregivers instead of being the persecutors of the heretics who believe in the truth of the Bible. They put themselves forth as, and in some cases really are, attempting to meet the needs of people who are hungry, poor, and politically oppressed. You remember that before the last one hundred years or so, it was the 10 kingdoms that made up the former Roman Empire, giving their allegiance to the Popes, that allowed so many people to be deceived and a strangle-hold placed upon the true Christian witness of those who would preach and hold fast Biblical truth. Several millions of people, over many generations, taking their stand for the truth of the Bible were put to death by either Papal edict or by leaders in the 10 kingdoms who gave orders to men and soldiers under their authority to wage war against the true believers in Jesus Christ. These were persons sent by the political governments of the 10 kingdoms who had given their allegiance to the Pope. These were given the go-ahead to exterminate the Protestants in many places in the 10 kingdoms; before,

during, and after the Reformation. Persecution and inquisition continued to take place in various places of these countries, in various times, even after the Reformation down to about the year 1900. Not all these generations of Christians have had to face the kind of persecution that that the true Protestant church had to face in the hundreds of years before the Reformation when, spiritually speaking, things became very dark. The truth of the Bible was suppressed to such a degree that the vast majority of the people in those days did not have the opportunity to regularly hear good preaching or to read the Bible for themselves. There was no such thing as separation of Church and State as we have in our country now, and because of it, many people who would not comply with edicts of the Popes were put to death for their faith. I could give you countless numbers of instances of this from the various written histories of those time periods. But that is not my intention this afternoon. This afternoon I would like us to focus on this phrase, "He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast." It is the image of the beast that I would like to examine and I would like to ask three questions which will, I believe make clearer that this Papal system is indeed the Antichrist of the book of Revelation. First, who is the image of the beast and who grants him power?" Second, How does this image come to life? And third, How is it that the image of the beast speaks and kills those who do not worship the image?

### **First - Who is the image of the beast and who grants him his power?**

As I have preached down through this passage I have assumed that this beast coming out of the earth is the Pope and his clergy. This beast, it says, "had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon." I have mentioned before that the two horns represent the secular and regular clergy of the church, so that the "he" mentioned in verses 11-16 is not just the Pope alone but also the two horns which are on his head. Indeed it was "those who dwell on the earth" and the corrupt clergy that were deceived to put the Pope into the position that he holds. They are the ones who it says in verse 1 "made an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived." The masses of religious people wanted someone in the Church who would rule as Christ's representative on the earth. They wanted a visible head of the church, not someone who was in heaven that they could not see. They wanted a king or an Emperor in the Church itself who would be the very image of the first beast to rule over them. The beast who was wounded by the sword and lived is the position of Emperor whose image is re-created in the Pope, in this second beast. Verse 12 says that the Pope exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. The whole thing reminds me very much of the children of Israel desiring for themselves a king in 1 Samuel 8: 5. When the people saw that Samuel's son were not following in his ways of righteousness, the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel and they said, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways." "Now make us a king to judge us." "And the Lord said to Samuel, 'Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.'" Instead of wanting God to rule over them in accordance with the preached word of the prophet Samuel, they wanted a king to

rule over them like the nations around them. And in the visible Church, at the beginning of the 1260 days and all the way down through them, it is not God, in the form of Jesus Christ, that those who are in that false church want to rule over them. It is a man who is very much like a king. It is not God who has called and appointed the Pope and the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. They raise each other up to their spiritual work of deception. They have appointed themselves to offer up their own sacrifices to the Lord. They have appointed themselves as the judges of the Lord's true people, to excommunicate them and put them to death because they will not submit themselves to false worship and doctrine. They make themselves an image of their whole false way of worship with a false leader at their head. The Pope is the image of the whole false system, just as in truth, our Lord Jesus Christ is the very image of the invisible God and the exact representation of His nature in the true Church. Satan's strategy has always been to substitute the false for the true in trying to provide a visible image of the unseen Christ.

### **Secondly - How does this image come to life?**

The image of the beast, that is, the authority of the Pope, comes to life by the cardinals giving him breath to breathe. They give him the ability to go ahead and exercise this authority which brings in false doctrine and false worship. This giving breath to the image reminds me very much of Genesis Chapter 1, verse 26 where it says, "Then God said, Let us make man in Our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over tall the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." "So God created man in His own image...." In the case of Antichrist it is just as if these verses that I just read to you would read, "Then the conclave of the Bishops said, 'Let us make a Pope in the image of what we falsely imagine to be Christ, and let him have dominion over all the people, not only in the 10 kingdoms, but also in all the earth.'" "So they created a Vicar of Christ, from the image in their own minds." Now, let us be mindful of this one fact. That when the Roman Catholic bishops do this, they are performing a blasphemous act which Christ never commanded His disciples to do. Christ chose and called the Apostles Himself, but He never appointed Apostolic succession; never ordained the office of the Papacy. This creating a man to be the Apostolic successor of the Apostle Peter is a very peculiar form of blasphemy which is forbidden in the law of the 10 commandments itself. Turn with me to Exodus chapter 20, verse 4. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image - any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them." "For I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments." This is the second of the 10 commandments and it is conveniently not listed to be the second in their organization of the Decalogue in the Roman Catholic Church. Instead it is listed under the 1st commandment as a part of it. But it is pretty obvious from Church history that it has not been observed by them. Their worship of the images

of the saints is a direct violation of this commandment, but also their bringing into existence and giving authority to the Pope, giving Him this representative authority of Christ is also a direct violation of the 2nd commandment. They are giving breath to the image of the beast. "You shall not bow down to any likeness of anything that is in heaven. Christ is in heaven. It is claimed that the Pope is His vicar, His representative on earth, and men in electing him give him their worship. It is even called adoration.

This image of the former beast of Rome that was slain was also given breath by the formation, under the Papal authority and the councils of the Church, to draw up courts of inquisition. The image of the beast is not only idolatrous, but it is cruel and tyrannical, even as the Emperors of old were. In William Reed's commentary on the book of Revelation he says, "It was a peculiarity of these general councils that they were summoned through the instrumentality of the clergy; that their delegates were elected through the instrumentality of the clergy; that in them none but the clergy had a right to vote, and that their decisions were carried into execution by the clergy." "These things are well known." "Since these things are so, there is an obvious propriety in saying that the clergy gave life to the general councils to speak, and that the clergy caused those to be killed who would not worship the image of the beast; that is, who would not acknowledge the authority and obey the decrees of the general councils." "All this is shadowed forth by the fact that the second beast had power to give life to the image of the first beast." John Marsh in his history of the time period of the establishment of the inquisition says, "But a still more terrible scourge by which the saints were worn out, and the dominion of the Pope was maintained, was the inquisition." "This was established in the 13th century and has continued a tremendous engine of power to this day." (1824) "It was occasioned by the increase of heretics as they were called, i.e. of men who dared to think for themselves, call in question the power of the pope, and view him as the Antichrist predicted by John." "These were numerous in Gaul, and Innocent III sent some legates in 1204 A.D. to extirpate them root and branch." "These bloodhounds having Dominic at their head, were called inquisitors; and so serviceable were they found to the Papal cause, that the pontiffs established inquisitors in every city." "A tremendous court was erected by them, first at Thoulouse, and afterwards in the various cities, embracing three inquisitors or judges, a fiscal proctor, two secretaries, a magistrate, a messenger, a reviewer, a goaler, an agent of confiscated possessions, several assessors, counselors, executioners, physicians, surgeons, doorkeepers, familiars, and visitors, all of whom were sworn to secrecy." "By this court men were tried not only for heresy, or opposition to the court of Rome, but for magic, sorcery, Judaism and witchcraft, and either imprisoned for life, or put to the most lingering and tormenting death." "To give it authority, the Emperor of Germany and the king of France were induced to grant it protection and maintenance, and to commit to the flames such as were pronounced by the inquisitors worthy of death." "Thus was the inquisition established, the guardian of superstition, a most horrible tribunal, an engine of death, indescribably terrific, which has done more than anything else to

keep whole nations in subjection to the Papal dominion, and has shed an ocean of innocent blood." This, I say, is how the councils gave breath to the image of the beast.

**Now 3rdly - How is it that the image of the beast should both speak and kill those who do not worship it?**

I have just touched on this in the councils giving the authority to other wicked men to set up the inquisition for the trial of true Christians and others who would not acknowledge Papal doctrine and authority. The councils were also convened to speak to all the doctrinal issues of every generation during this time period. Moses Lowman in his commentary on this verse says, "This image whereby the pope was deified, is not to be understood of a lifeless and dumb idol; but, like those statues of the heathen gods, which gave forth oracles, as if animated by an indwelling spirit : so the orders and constitutions of the pope were published to the world by the subordinate clergy, as oracles, obliging all nations to a religious obedience, and supporting their authority with all their power, treating all men as worthy of death, who should refuse an entire submission to them in any particular. " I would like to assert to you as we draw to the close of this sermon that the Council of Trent has been drawn up and set forth by the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church as the way that the image of the beast would speak. It has been that Council which was written down so that the Roman church could speak authoritatively about those who denied the doctrines and practices set forth by that Church. I would like to read to you, in closing, an excerpt from a book entitled, "The Beast and his Image" by Frederic Fysh. He says, "The Image appears to be some general Council which countenances Idolatry--which has 'breath' or 'spirit' put into it, i.e. whose decrees are considered as dictates of the Spirit of God--which sanctions persecution--whose decrees the Jesuits have had no inconsiderable share in forming--and lastly, to which the Pope expects all Roman Catholics to pay obedience." "The council which corresponds to this definition, is the Council of Trent." "Particular mention is made of this Council in the creed of Pius IV., in which every Roman Catholic is made to say, 'I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared by the holy Council of Trent, concerning Original Sin and Justification.'" And again--"I likewise undoubtedly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy council of Trent; and I condemn, reject and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected and anathematized." You can see that this is indeed the image of the beast being made to speak. It is because many of the points of doctrine which are delineated in this document carry along with them anathemas upon those who do not receive them and do not believe them. I will try to expand on this truth more in the next sermon that I give to you. Let us treasure the great work of God in shining His light upon His glorious Word at the Reformation. Let us thank God for those men and women of courage and conviction who took their stand for the truth of the Bible and did not worship the beast or his image and who in many cases suffered for the truth. Let us resolve not

to forget what it cost our forefathers in suffering and blood to give to us the truth of the Scriptures and a pure worship.