

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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The Image that Speaks!

Many things written in the Bible are difficult to understand. Some things, for example, are sealed to everyone until it is time for them to be understood. Even the prophet Daniel wrote prophecies that he could not understand because they were sealed for a later time:

- 8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*?
9 And he said, Go your way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.
-Daniel 12

At the “time of the end” many things that were previously sealed will be opened to our understanding:

- 4 But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. -Daniel 12

Those words will be unsealed at a time much like today, when both travel and knowledge are increased. Widespread travel, whether by automobiles or by global jumbo jets, is common and routine for many. Vast amounts of information can now be readily accessed from almost anywhere in the world through a global system of interconnected computers. Satellites, cables, and wireless telecommunication systems make it possible to almost instantly transmit knowledge throughout the world.

Even as God’s words are unsealed, however, some things are likely to remain hidden and not understood by many people. For example, Yahshua (Jesus) made it clear to His disciples that there are things that cannot be received and understood by everyone. He told them that He spoke in parables so that some could understand what He was saying while others could not:

- 11 He answered and said to them, Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.
12 For whoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whoever has not, from him shall be taken away even that he has.
13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. -Matthew 13

Perhaps now is the time for many of us to understand some of the things that have been previously sealed. Our hearts may now be ready to receive that which has been hidden from us. It may be that now is the time that our eyes and ears will be opened to receive that which we previously could not see or hear.

One of the barriers to understanding the meaning of Scripture is that many of us simply accept it as it has been taught to us. However, it is possible that it was taught to us before it was unsealed and made accessible to our understanding. Consequently, we may already have a predetermined impression of what we *think* God’s word says and, therefore, avoid prayerfully studying it with fresh eyes.

With this background, it may be a good time to reconsider how the world will be convinced to worship the “beast” with the resurrected “head,” along side the “dragon.”

- 3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.
4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power to the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? -Revelation 13

Why would anyone worship a “beast?” We may say to ourselves that we would never do such a thing because we already have an impression of what a “beast” looks like. We may, for example, think of it as something which is ugly and ferocious.

However, when we study further, we learn that there is a “second beast” which causes people to worship the first one:

- 11 And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. -Revelation 13

This “second beast” is a master of deception. Even though he has two horns, he *looks* like a harmless lamb. He may even appear to *represent* the “Lamb of God,” which is Yahshua the Messiah. At first glance, we also think we would never listen to something, no matter how harmless it looks, which *speaks* as a dragon. Our preconceived notion of how a dragon speaks may be that it roars and breathes out fire from its mouth.

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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The dragon, however, is really the deceiving serpent, which is Satan:

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. -Revelation 12

He deceives the “whole world!” (The Greek word for “world” as used here is οικουμένη (oikoumene), which is the basis for the English word, “ecumenical.”) As the serpent, the dragon is the most subtle of all of God’s created beasts:

1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Yahweh God had made. And he said to the woman, Indeed, has God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? -Genesis 3

Therefore, the beast that looks like a lamb and speaks as a dragon is the master of deception. Using the power of Satan to accomplish supernatural miracles, the subtle “second beast” will be a false prophet that convinces the ecumenical world to worship the “first beast” as God:

12 And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him, and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13 And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, -Revelation 13

As people all over the world see the miraculous apparitions brought about by Satan, they are overwhelmed with a desire to worship something that they believe can only be from God:

14 And deceives them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. -Revelation 13

Under the persuasive deception of the “second beast,” many will be convinced to dedicate an image to the “first beast.” They will completely ignore Yahweh’s clear commandment against making *any kind* of image to which to bow:

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4 You shall not make to you any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

5 You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I Yahweh your God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; -Exodus 20

No matter how beautiful and loving the image may appear, we cannot bow before it. Yahshua told Satan:

8 And Yahshua answered and said to him, Get you behind me, Satan: for it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve. -Luke 4

Like Aaron, when he caused Israel to sin by worshipping an image, some may argue that the image is only used as a tool to worship Yahweh:

4 And he received *them* at their hand, and fashioned it with an engraving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

5 And when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to Yahweh. -Exodus 32

When we use idols as a pretext for worshipping Yahweh, He says we pollute His holy name:

39 As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord Yahweh; Go you, serve you every one his idols, and hereafter *also*, if you will not listen unto me: but pollute you my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols. -Ezekiel 20

Many may argue that the “Image of the Beast” is different from other images. It appears to be alive, perhaps even showing emotions of love and compassion. It also speaks. The “second beast” has used the power of Satan to put into it the spirit of life and to cause it to speak!

15 And he had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. -Revelation 13

The image will speak the words of the false prophet that caused it to be created. Those words may include appealing promises, such as those of peace and prosperity, to those who worship the image. There will also be threats against those who refuse. Peter explains about false prophets:

18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. -2 Peter 2

When we hear the voice of the image, will we be lured into Satan’s trap and join the world in worshipping the “Image that Speaks?” Or will we still remember the Word of God?