- Barbara Moore was a lady who did not live a life of quiet desperation. She lived life to the full always willing to try some new adventure. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1947 with a degree in art. She then got married and moved with her husband to the Philippines. While there she took up scuba diving and searched for sunken ships as well as searching out the jungle areas. She returned to the US and started her own business selling materials to the military. She took up a new hobby—skiing. After she retired she moved to California and taught a history class at the local college, where there was standing room only for her class, “Settling the Eastern Sierra.” In 2000 she suffered from a neurological disease and moved closer to her family in Nevada. Her daughter, Tracy Day, was and is a follower of Christ and invited her mom to attend her Bible study class. Barbara Moore was not a Christian. She had not attended church since she was a child. Her parents were atheists. The ladies in her daughter’s Bible study class showered Mrs. Moore with genuine love and compassion. In the twilight of her life she accepted Jesus Christ as her personal Savior and Lord. The Bible study group she attended was studying the book of Revelation. But she did not allow her lack of biblical knowledge to hold her back. She jumped right into the study with much zeal. About two months into the study the ladies got very intense in their individual interpretations. The ladies voiced their strong and diverse opinions and just before things got out of hand Barbara quietly interrupted the group and raised her hand. She asked the question, “Who is the Lamb?” Her quiet, yet very focused question had a powerful effect upon the 170 ladies in the Bible study. Her question, which really was a statement, redirected the ladies back to Jesus Christ and off of their various interpretations. The question became the motto for the ladies’ Bible study for the rest of the year, and whenever they got off track the question, “Who is the Lamb?” brought them back into focusing on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Tracy Day said, “Mom spent a lifetime digging for answers and doing things her way, but in the end she found God’s way, the ultimate answer to every question. She found true peace in the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.” (See attached article for bibliographic information.)

- Today’s text is a very challenging one and it could be easy for us to get into various interpretations to the point where we lose our focus of the study of Revelation and that focus is Jesus Christ.

- The beast in our text is the Antichrist who will reign on the earth during the Great Tribulation. He is the same person spoken of in Daniel’s prophecy.
and called the little horn and the beast in Daniel 7:7-8. The Apostle Paul speaks of the same person in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8, and calls him the man of sin, son of perdition, and the lawless one. He will be a powerful, Satan-filled individual who will ascend to being the leader of every tribe, tongue, and nation according to verse 7 of our text.

But his defeat is most certain, because he is an imposter. The real Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, will defeat and destroy him. Revelation 19:20 says that when Jesus comes the beast will be captured and cast alive into the lake of fire. Also, 2 Thessalonians 2:8 says, 

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. Daniel 2:34, 45 speak of God breaking him in pieces; 8:25 foretells of this destruction. 25 “Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means.

Read the text. Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. 2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 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 the faith of the saints.

I. THE ANCESTRY OF THE BEAST (VS. 1-3)

Vs. 1 the one standing on the sand of the sea is the dragon from chapter 12. And out of the sea comes the beast. It is best to see the sea here as not a literal sea, but as the abyss, or the bottomless pit. See 11:7 and 17:8.
- The beast is a person who will rule as the leader of an empire. The dragon gives him his power and he is a most evil, malevolent individual. (Thomas, p. 152)

- The beast is described as having 7 head, 10 horns, and 10 crowns *diadema* on his horns. The dragon is described in a similar way in 12:3: perhaps there is a transfer of power to the beast from the dragon as demonstrated by the 10 crowns. John is writing pictorially or symbolically, not literally. I will share the interpretation that many conservative evangelicals hold. The 7 heads represent seven successive empires—Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the current reign of the beast as represented by the 10 horns. Some argue that the old Roman Empire continues on today especially in the West. The 10 horns are 10 rulers serving under the Antichrist at this time. Some believe that at this time in the future there will be a revived Roman Empire with the Antichrist at the head. Some also believe that the current European Union is this revived Roman Empire.

- So the heads represent successive reigns and the horns represent simultaneous reigns.

- Notice that each head has a blasphemous name. In verses 1-6 the word or a form of the word blasphemy is used 4 times. The Antichrist will curse and blaspheme the Lord God and convince many that he should be worshipped as God. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:4. "who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

- Vs. 2 further describes the beast and uses the language of Daniel 7:3-7. In Daniel's prophecy, as he looked forward, the lion represents Babylon, the bear the Medo-Persians, and the leopard represents Greece. But Daniel's 4th beast is even more terrible and it combines the strength of all the preceding three. And this beast is the antichrist of Revelation 13 who heads up the revived Roman Empire. Read Daniel 7:7. "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns."

- Dr. Robert Thomas, p. 156 states, "The combined strength and brutality of historical Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece is what will comprise the total character of this beast. Rome had and in its restored form will have the agility, the catlike vigilance and craft, and fierce cruelty of a leopard, the feet of a bear to crush her enemies, and the roar of a lion. This is what the saints will face in the last days."

- Notice also that verse 2 says the dragon or Satan gives the beast or Antichrist his power, throne, and authority. Again you see the counterfeit activity of Satan. As God gives Jesus His kingdom, Satan gives his kingdom to this false Christ.

- But the pinnacle of the devil's counterfeit is in verse 3. Here is a mock resurrection. This evil ruler will die and come back to life and in so doing
will cause the earth-dweller to worship him more. Revelation 17:8 describes “the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” The same Greek word, sphazo, used to describe the Lamb who was slain (5:6), is used to describe the beast's death.

II. THE ADORATION OF THE BEAST (VS. 3-4)

- Notice the last sentence in verse 3. One writer states, (Thomas, p. 159), “Whether the beast performs this marvelous feat through deception or through power permitted by God, it still brings him into the limelight as never before.”
- Vs. 4 Satan receives what he always longs for and that is the worship of people. And the deceived people worship him though they should be worshipping the real Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The obvious answer in their minds to the question they pose is no one. But praise God there is One who can and will destroy him!
- A couple of things I want to address here. Notice that the devil and his ambassador vent their blasphemy and rage and imitation toward whom? One of the many gods prevalent in our day? One of the Hindu gods? Mohammed? Buddha? No, they pour out their fury upon the one true God and His people. The hatred we are seeing toward Christ and His people today is a sign of what will come in the GT. I spoke to a pastor friend of mine in TN (Tony Buchanan on 3-17-15) this week that predicted in 10-15 years in the USA we will have to worship in homes. He may be right.
- Just think about the catalytic event that causes the people of the world to worship the Antichrist. I read where some believed JFK was the Antichrist and some expected him to rise from the dead after he received his mortal wound to the head. But just think of the impact that would have had on people all over the world had JFK come back to life after many saw his murder. The number of his worshippers will increase significantly after his mock resurrection.

III. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BEAST (VS. 5-8)

- In verses 5-7 the Bible states four times how the beast is given or granted his powers. This tells me that God allows him to have what he has, and as Martin Luther said, “The devil is still God’s devil.” God controls him. God has him on a leash, and for a while will allow him to rule and deceive, but will in the end destroy him.
- Vs. 5 gives the timeframe of his authority and it is 42 months. This is significant. It is the same time frame we have noticed before—three and one-half years, 1,260 days, the time, and the times, and half the time. This is the last three and half years of the Great Tribulation.
- Vs. 6 says the beast blasphemes God’s name. The Bible tells us of the importance of God’s name. His name reveals His nature and character
and should be revered. One of the 10 Commandments is, “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain” (Exodus 20:7). The Antichrist also blasphemes God’s tabernacle which is heaven, and those who live in heaven that includes the saints and the angels. He clearly marks out who His enemies are.

- He vents his hatred for God on the people of God, the saints. And he overcomes them, not spiritually, but physically. Many Tribulation saints will become Tribulation martyrs. Read Daniel 7:21, 25. 

  21 I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them. 

  25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.

- The word persecute in verse 25 can be translated wear out. (See MacArthur, p. 48-49.)

- Vs. 8 says the earth-dwellers, those not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb, will worship the Antichrist. Later in chapter 13 we read where these people also receive the mark of the beast.

- A good question is to what does “from the foundation of the world refer.” Is it the Book of Life or the Lamb slain? Revelation 17:8 clearly says the Book of Life. This leads me to conclude the latter—the Book of Life of the Lamb. There are a few ways of looking at this. We addressed this when studying Revelation 3:5 in our Lord’s message to the church at Sardis. Some will see here a reference to election and predestination and interpret this as an example where God predetermines who will go to heaven and who will go to hell. Some are elected unto salvation and eternal life while others are elected to damnation unto eternal death in hell. This is double predestination or reprobation. I see it as election and predestination with God’s foreknowledge. God knows who will accept him or reject him and based on His knowledge He elects those who believe unto eternal life.

IV. THE ADMONITION OF GOD (VS. 9-10)

- Vs. 9 God gives the tribulation saints a direct word. Notice in verse 9 that the phrase, “what the Spirit says to the churches” is omitted. This was the wording in chapters 2-3. Why? The answer is the churches have been raptured in keeping with the promise in 3:10 to the church at Philadelphia that He would keep them from “the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world.”

- Vs. 10 is a tough passage to interpret. I have been greatly helped by Dr. Robert Thomas, who translates the verse this way (p. 150), “if anyone is for captivity, into captivity he departs; if anyone is to be killed by the sword, [it is necessary for] him to be killed by the sword. Here is the endurance and the faithfulness of the saints.”
- According to this interpretation, God is encouraging the saints to accept the inevitable with patience and faithfulness. They will be martyred for Him. Thomas writes, (p. 168), “The suggestion of inevitability implies the supremacy of God’s will which always promotes the ultimate good and blessing of the redeemed community, though it may include times of temporary hardship.”
- Another view sees the verses as encouraging the saints that those who take them into captivity will themselves be taken into captivity and those who kill them with the sword will themselves be killed with the sword. See Revelation 19:21.
- Patience and faithfulness—these are hallmarks of the Christian faith. **If the Tribulation martyrs can persevere and be faithful in the midst of their unprecedented hardships, then you and I can do the same in our current day under much better conditions.**

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION

- I want to close the message today with a word of encouragement to those of you who have committed your lives to Jesus Christ. Be patient; persevere; and be faithful in the midst of your trials and hardships. God can use your difficult circumstances to draw you closer to Him and point a hurting world to the Savior.
- You may ask but isn’t there another way for me to grow closer to God? Yes, there are other ways, but God uses the trials in our lives to shape us for eternity and to point others to Jesus Christ.
- This past Monday my oldest brother called me from Alabama. Jerry loves the Lord and he loves his family. He lives out in the country and owns a pit bull dog named Tugger. Perhaps you are thinking redneck in the woods fighting his pit bull. Tugger is fierce looking, but he is very gentle. Jerry told me that Tugger had been missing for a few days. He placed pictures out in the surrounding area in hopes that someone might recognize him. Jerry feared someone had stolen him and would fight him. A lady called my brother and told him that she had seen his dog chained up at this trailer. Jerry was happy, but he was also very angry at who stole his dog. He knew that the person who took his dog was known as a troublemaker in the area, a young man about 18 years old. So instead of going by himself he did the right thing and called the sheriff’s office and the sheriff followed him to the place where the dog was. When they arrived they noticed that Tugger had been placed inside. Jerry told the young man that this was his dog and he was there to get him. The 18 year-old denied any wrongdoing, but my brother told him he knew he was missing; surely he had seen the pictures in the area. Jerry told him if you want a dog I would get you a dog. As he left Jerry noticed what he had not seen when he first arrived—this family lived in poverty. Jerry’s heart went out to the young man. Later that day he and his wife, Gina, went and bought a $250 pit bull puppy and they went together to the house and the
single mother was there. About that time the 18 year-old drove up and saw that Jerry had gotten him a dog and Jerry said he was so excited. Then my brother told him, “The Bible says that when you give someone a cup of water in Jesus’ name God blesses you. I am not giving you water, but I am giving you a puppy.”

- Let me encourage you today—persevere and be faithful during the difficult, trying days. Child of God be strong and during the trials look for an opportunity to point others to Jesus Christ.

- Perhaps you are here today and you do not know Jesus Christ. Please give your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, the one and only Messiah. Repent of your sins and believe on Him to save you. Please do not delay. You are not promised another opportunity.