

## Message #3 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

### *"TV And The Image of the Beast"*

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Hello, thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about television, movies, and other forms of moving and speaking images. Today, just about everyone has a television, and just about everyone watches movies, either at the movie theater or on the TV. And sometimes the computer is used for this purpose also, but to a lesser extent maybe than television.

And what I'd like you to see today is that the image of the beast, which we read about in the Bible, is with us today, and is not just a futuristic principle. The image of the beast is a current experience which takes place in your own house, at least for most of you. If you have a TV, then you are experiencing the image of the beast, and probably, you don't even realize it.

Just for the record, I don't have a television, and I don't go to movies. And the reason I don't is because God has shown me that television displays the image of the beast, and I don't want the image of the beast to destroy my relationship with God.

The other day I was talking to a person who revealed that they had given up the television completely. I was quite surprised, to say the least. This very seldom happens. Television has a very strong hold on people, whether they realize it or not. Of course, many Christians say that they don't watch that much TV. Well, hopefully, that's true, but generally, most people watch more television than they think they do.

And this is fairly normal. Most people watch a significant amount of television, and because television is considered the normal thing to do in this day and age, they watch it, and their family watches it, and they are brainwashed by it, and their kids are brainwashed by it. Then, when their lives get turned upside down, and their kids turn out to be more conditioned by the television

than by the Bible, they can't seem to understand why. But then, you've probably heard all of this kind of stuff before.

Well, anyway, let me give you some basic information here that might help you understand how the image of the beast is being presented in your living room right now, today, every day, and how it has such great power over you that it conditions you, it brainwashes you, and causes you to become more and more conformed to the world social view each and every day.

And first of all, let me say something right up front here. I am not expecting you to turn off your television, nor to stop watching movies. There might be a few people who can do this, but tossing out the television and movies is pretty much as hard as trying to stop drinking, smoking, or controlling your appetite for food. In short, if you stop watching TV, then you can probably stop drinking, stop smoking, and also stop pigging out. But I don't really expect you to do that, because it's too hard. If you do, great, but if you don't, don't think I'm condemning you. I'm not condemning you, but I am hoping to show you what is taking place in these last days, even in the Christian community.

So, the most important thing you can understand in order to understand the concept of the image of the beast is to realize that the beast principle is a basic concept of scripture. Notice if you will that during the creation of the earth, God created animals and man on the same day. This doesn't mean that man is an animal, but then, some men are animals, but not all. But generally, what separates men from animals is their actions. If you're a real man, or a real lady, then you act like one. Or, in other words, if you are a decent human being you demonstrate principles of love, compassion, understanding, and general all around goodness.

However, God judges us to be either human or animal by those principles, but he also requires his children to use good reason when it comes to believing and trusting in him. To God, the difference between man and animal is that man will make good choices of Godliness, and he will do this based on the intelligence of reason. And this is from the perspective that to reject God is to make an unreasonable choice. It is animalistic, because it lacks good common sense. On the other hand, an animal is unable to use reason at all. Animals are guided by their instincts, whereas men are guided by thought processes which include good reasoning abilities.

Now, acting like an animal is considered to be brutish. A brute beast is not using good common sense. In fact, the word 'brute', like "you big brute", refers to someone who acts like a dumb animal. Think of Popeye and Brutus. Popeye is supposed to be the smart one, and Brutus is supposed to be the stupid one. And the reason that Brutus is stupid is because he doesn't make good decisions based on the knowledge available to him. In short, Brutus does stupid things because he cannot or will not recognize what is right and good. His name, Brutus, is an apt comparison because he is a big dumb brute. He acts like a big dumb animal.

So, think of this. To God, the most stupid thing you can do is to reject the authority of God. Think about it. If you reject God, you would, in God's eyes, be acting like an animal. Animals are stupid in comparison with man, but if a man rejects God, then man can be said to be acting like an animal. Now, in the Bible, God could have called Satan, Brutus, but then, Popeye had not yet been created and therefore no one would understand what God meant. So God instead uses

the animal concept all through scripture to describe those who refuse to recognize the complete authority of God. God referred to Satan in this way many times, and we see this first in Genesis chapter 3, verse 1. It says in this verse that the serpent was more subtle than any other beast of the field. Did you catch the meaning here. God was referring to Satan as a serpent, and that the serpent was the most subtle of all the animals. Now, subtle, means deceptive. The serpent was more deceptive than all the other animals. But think about it. An animal cannot deceive. It can be sneaky, by sneaking up on you silently, but it can't be subtle. The only possible way that deception can take place is if someone knows truth and twists it intentionally. An animal cannot twist the truth, and therefore a serpent cannot twist the truth.

Of course, God was really talking about Satan, so God was really saying that Satan was more deceptive than all the other big brutes. God was saying that Satan was an animal because he was acting stupid. He was rejecting God, and was opposed to God, and therefore, God called Satan an animal. And not just any animal, but the lowest form of animal, which not only didn't stand up on two legs, but had no legs at all.

And by the way. Have you ever thought of why we refer to righteous people as being upright? It's because being upright is the opposite of going down on all fours like an animal. Someone with the beast mentality would be described as going on all fours, but a righteous person would always be described as being upright. Upright in heart, upright in deeds, upright in spirit. A righteous man is upright, and animal goes down on all fours, or worse.

Now, we have another example in the story of King Nebuchadnezzar. He was another one who failed to recognize that God was the complete authority and the complete power in all the earth. King Nebuchadnezzar actually believed that he himself was responsible for establishing his kingdom. So, what did God do? He turned King Nebuchadnezzar into an animal for a while. The Bible says that Nebuchadnezzar ate grass with the other animals of the field, and that after seven times had passed over him, God once again brought the king back to awareness. Here, let me read Dan 4:33-37. This set of verses is priceless. Listen to this. It says, "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and ate grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. 34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up my eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that lives for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: 35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What are you doing? 36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and brightness returned unto me; and my counselors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. 37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

You see, King Nebuchadnezzar had the actual experience of being an animal. Not just acting like one, but after acting like one, God turned him into a real one. When God restored his understanding, then the king realized that it was God who was the complete power and authority

of all things. What King Nebuchadnezzar experienced is the animal existence which permeates the earth. Nebuchadnezzar wasn't the first person in the world to think he himself was powerful, and he certainly wasn't the last one. The world's society is full of people who act like brute beasts. Even in the church there are those who act like animals. They pretend to be Christians, but they act like beasts. They care more for the things of this world than they do for the things of God. They lust after things that will stimulate their flesh, and trinkets that will stimulate their eyes, and their pride rivals that of King Nebuchadnezzar himself.

However, notice that King Nebuchadnezzar woke up. He didn't stay stupid. Of course it did take a fantastic personal experience, but at least he repented of his stupidity and confessed that God himself was the ultimate power. King Nebuchadnezzar, instead of acting like an animal, confessed, exalted, glorified and gave honor to God. He no longer was acting like a brute beast, but had finally begun to act like a man who stood upright upon his feet.

Now, another example of Satan and his beast nature is found in Revelation 13, verse 4. In this verse it tells us that Satan used his tail to draw a third of the angels away from God. What this means is that the evil angels were drawn away by the animalistic nature of Satan. It is this beast nature which rejects that almighty power of God in exchange for the physical powers of the world. A third of the angels, along with Satan, acted like brute beasts and chose to exalt themselves by their own strength instead of remaining under God's sole authority. They chose to trust in their own might, in their own power, instead of trusting in God.

In this present day the animalistic nature is still in the process of tempting humans, and the destruction is increasing like never before. The Bible says that in the last days there will be a great falling away. Now, think for just a moment. If there is to be a great falling away, what would have to happen in order for people to fall away to such great magnitude? What would have to take place that would be so destructive? Actually, it's quite simple. If the beast nature caused a third of the angels to turn away from God, then this same temptation would have to be aimed at humans in even greater force than in the previous history of the world. There would have to be a great increase in the temptation to succumb to the nature of the beast, and to act like animals instead of standing upright like righteous men.

The beast nature is extremely strong in the earth today. And the reason it is so strong, more than ever in the history of the world, is because of the great power of Satan to deceive people into choosing to act selfishly instead of acting humbly before God. And the way he does it is to brainwash people by overwhelming them with sight and sounds, subtly deceiving them into believing that they are serving God when in actuality they are serving Satan. You see, human nature is not Godly nature. Human nature is the nature of the beast because it always looks to self, and how self can be gratified. The beast nature is the nature of selfishness. It is the nature of self satisfaction. It is the nature of self seeking. It is the nature of lusting after the things of this world.

Now, if you're still with me, consider this. In order to accomplish the great falling away, the people of earth must be tempted to act like animals instead of glorifying God. In order for people to turn away from God, they must be given as much encouragement as possible to stray from the pathway of God's righteousness, and this can only happen if they are successfully deceived into

thinking that the ways of the world are right and good instead of realizing that it is only God's ways that are right and good.

Today, all over the world, in every race of people, in every nation on earth, whether that nation is poor or rich, the television exists. It is in every rich man's house as well in most every poor man's house. It is in kings houses as well as in servant's quarters. The television exists in every place throughout the world, and it steadily, hour by hour, day by day, week by week, month by month, and year by year continues to present images and sounds of the world's form of society. Every minute the television presents graphical images which not only demonstrate the ways of the world, but also speak the words of the world. Just turn on the TV and you will see the ways of the beast nature described to a tee. No, most of it is only pretend, but nevertheless, it is presenting the ideas and interests of the world as opposed to the ideas and interests of God. God is not presented very well on television or in the movies. On TV and in the movies, God takes a back seat.

When the images are projected and the sound is turned up, God is mocked, and he is slandered more than any earthly god has ever been mocked or slandered. The images that come on the TV or movie screens are all about the flesh. It presents to people what is proper dress, what is proper to eat, and presents the most improper things and suggests that everyone everywhere should do these same things.

The image of the beast is being shown on television and in the movies, and it causes people to be brainwashed from the time they are little kids until the time they die of old age. Satan knows that all he has to do is let people see the ways of the world every moment of every day, and soon these same people will begin to act in the same fashion. It is the TV and movies which have the greatest ability to inspire people in how to dress, how to eat, what kind of houses they should live in and what kind of cars they should drive. The TV and movies are an extremely subtle persuasion, telling the people who watch what is expected of them. Just as children are susceptible to peer pressure at school, all people are subject to peer pressure. The television and movies present the status quo, and subconsciously pressure us into conforming to the world standard of social acceptance. Because we humans want so much to be accepted by others, we soon conform to the standards of behavior that are presented to us. No, as Christians we might try to stand our ground, but the truly deceptive quality of television so deceives us that soon we don't even realize how important God is.

Now, if you think I'm just flapping my lips, and that you, yourself, are not affected by TV, then ask yourself just one simple question. And here it is. The question is, "Do you watch TV and ignore the times that God's name is used as a swearword?" You see, when you do this, you have been persuaded, you have been brainwashed, you have been deceived into thinking that it doesn't mean anything. No, you might not like it, but you will sit and listen to it anyway. In this sense, whether you like to admit it or not, you have become a part of the world social system, and have come to believe that this is just the way the world is and you can't do anything about it.

However, let me point out one thing. As you sit and watch Jesus Christ be ridiculed, and God's name taken in vain as a regular occurrence, it is not the world that brought this into your home. It is you, yourself, who have brought this into your home. You have been convinced by Satan

that a little bit of taking God's name in vain, and a little bit of seductive clothing, and a little bit of filthy talk is just normal, and that you can take it into your house because God doesn't really care.

But you see, God does care. God does not like his name to be used as a swear word, and he doesn't like us to be part of sexual immorality, even a little bit. God does care, and he cares very much. But the image of the beast nature is still there on the screens of television and movies, still making it's pitch, and still trying to get you to conform to the world, until it finally does.

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In Revelation 13, the Bible tells us that it is the people of earth who make the image to the beast. This is nothing more and nothing less than images which present the animal nature of man. In addition, Revelation 13 tells us that the image speaks. Since the inception of the talkies, the images on the silver screen have become much more sophisticated. Now we can hardly tell the difference between truth and reality. The images, even though many are just pretend, are still very destructive. Nudity and taking the Lord's name in vain are just as evil when they are acted out on the silver screen as they are in real life. There is no difference.

The TV and the movies are almost exclusively worldly in nature, and that nature is decidedly against Christ. As the world gets more and more opposed to Christ, the television presents greater and greater beastly nature. Instead of seeing righteousness presented on the screen, we see murder, immorality, and selfishness. Then, to add greater danger to us, the television presents us with all sorts of things which stimulate the flesh, from designer clothes to flashy cars and every electronic gadget in between. The beast nature is rampant in the world today, and the TV and movies demonstrate this image of the beast, and as it says in Revelation 13, the image not only is shown to the eye, but it also speaks.

The image of the beast is here, and it is destroying people left and right. It is also destroying many Christians, and this is why the Bible uses the term, "The great falling away." The great falling away is taking place right before our eyes, but it seems that our eyes can't see what is causing it because our eyes are focused on the TV. The images deceive us, and we are slowly but surely brainwashed into thinking that God is good, but the things of this world are better. Even Christianity is conforming to the world standard instead of the Bible standard. The images that the television and movies present to us are the greatest tool in Satan's end time arsenal, and Christians are largely ignorant of these devices.

No, you probably can't quit watching TV. It's probably too hard to do. But hopefully, you can at least come to realize what it is that is trying to steal your life away from you. And if you can at least recognize the evil of it, then maybe God can help you take the next step.