

Before we get started, I want to let you know that in conjunction with this study, I have published a book entitled "**Liberating the Book of Revelation, Returning to the Source of the Message.**" This book gives a great introduction to the **Code**, and conveys the entire book of **Revelation** utilizing the actual verb tenses, voices, moods, case, and so on.

**Liberating the Book of Revelation** is intended to help us all know what the Spirit said and how He said it. This book is focused not so much on interpreting the book of **Revelation**, that is what this podcast is for, but it is about accurately representing the book of **Revelation** in the manner in which the Spirit originally spoke it to John.

In addition, I received the help of an amazing artist, Howard David Johnson who allowed me to use his illustrations on the book of **Revelation**. I encourage you to go to amazon.com and you can find the book either under the title "**Liberating the Book of Revelation, Returning to the Source of the Message**" or by my name as the author: **Stephen Villanueva**. It is available in hardback, paperback, and e-book format. I am also currently working on the audible version. So more to come.

## EP114 Revelation 13 verses 14-15 P3

In our last podcast we addressed the scary reality that the second beast, the False Prophet, has been responsible for an image of the Beast being created and standing where it ought not to be, in and amongst the holy ones of God. The Beast has been very busy throughout the centuries and his image has been speaking distortions of the Word of God, perversions of grace.

This image is very careful to bring forth truth, as much of it as we need, but this image always, always, always finds a way to add some measure of the "**work of our hands**," some measure of what we must do for God, some measure of law by which we can determine if we, or others, are being "good" Christians, good witnesses for God.

Yet, the work which God requires of us is simply to now be believing.<sup>1</sup> But this image has convinced us of so much more. As a result, to some extent, we have all listened to the voice of this image.

And those "men of God" who tell us so sincerely what we must do for God and what we must NOT do, are antichrist. Every time someone has told us that sin is our problem and we need to stop doing this or that, they are emphatically declaring: "**Jesus did not come in the flesh**," and they are antichrist. Every time someone talks about what we must do to be a good witness to the world, they are declaring: "**Jesus did not come in the flesh**," and they are antichrist.

Let's pick back up with our study examining the passage in **Matthew 24:15-23** which addresses "**the**" Abomination of Desolation and what should be our response when we not just see but know that we have heard its voice.

## Do You Have Eyes to See?

**Matthew 24:15-16**, "... when you **may see** the Abomination of Desolation ... then those who are in Judea are commanded to **now** flee to the mountains." Have you seen his work? Have you seen his presence in the gathering place of the priests of God? Do you identify his words and his claim to being God? Do you

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<sup>1</sup> John 6:29

see his perversions of grace in what is expected of you in Christianity? Do you see “**the**” *Abomination of Desolation*? Or have you believed his claims to be God?

Historically, those who endured the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD, depended upon this passage. Even though they did not see the image standing in the holy place, many of those in Judea fled from the Roman invasion to various places of safety.

But this verse is addressing so much more. Those in Judea is a picture of those in the community of believers—what we would consider to be orthodox Christianity (as opposed to those in apostate Israel—those so called “Christian” sects that have long since wandered far away from the faith). And according to the **Code**, mountains represent systems of belief.

## Are You Willing to Flee

Perhaps what Jesus was communicating is that when the Spirit gives us eyes to see “**the**” *Abomination of Desolation*, the image, positioned where it ought not to be, when we recognize the perversions of grace that stem forth from the mouth of the image, that we are to no longer turn a blind eye to the lies, no matter how small and subtle, because they are the words of the Beast, the words of the false Jesus, words of division and destruction.

Just consider everything we studied in the book of *Jude*.

Perhaps the Spirit is communicating that we are to no longer excuse things away because someone who seems so godly preaches Christ and just adds to their message a little bit of legalism or just a bit of the “**work of our hands.**” Instead, we are to **now** flee to the mountains; we are to get away from the false Jesus. We are to flee!

### 2 Peter 2:1-2

But false prophets also chose to arise among the people, just as there will also in the *future* choose to be false teachers among you, who will secretly in the *future* introduce destructive heresies, even choosing to **now** be denying the Master who was buying {or redeeming} them, now bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

### Jude 3-4

Beloved, while I am choosing to now be making every effort to now write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you **now** appealing that you **now** choose to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all caused to being handed down to the saints. For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand caused to having been marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who are **now** turning the grace of our God into licentiousness and **now** choosing to be denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

### Galatians 1:6-9

I am amazed that you so quickly choose to **now** desert Him who was calling you by the grace of Christ,

for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there **now** are some who are **now** disturbing you and are **now** wanting to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should choose to **now** preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have chosen to have preached to you, he is commanded to **now** be accursed! As we have said before, so I now say again now, if any man **now** chooses to preach to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is commanded to **now** be accursed!

## 2 John 4-11

I was caused to be very glad to find some of your children **now** walking in truth, just as we have received commandment to do from the Father. Now I ask you, lady, not as though I were now writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we **now** love {*agape*} one another. And this **now** is {*agape*} love, that we should **now** walk according to His commandments. This **now** is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should **now** walk in it.

For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who are **not now** confessing Jesus Christ as **now** choosing to be coming in the flesh. This **now** is the deceiver and the antichrist. You are commanded to **now** watch yourselves, that you may not lose what we have chosen to have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.

Anyone who is now going too far and is not **now** abiding in the teaching of Christ, does **not now** have God; the one who is **now** abiding in the teaching, he **now** has both the Father and the Son. If anyone chooses to **now** come to you and does not **now** bring this teaching, you are commanded to **not now** receive him into your house, and you are commanded to **not now** give him a greeting; for the one who **now** gives him a greeting **now** participates in his evil deeds.

Clearly this is serious. The gospel of the antichrist is all around us and it is found right smack dab center in the religion of Christianity where “**the**” *Abomination of Desolation* sits. If you have been given eyes to see, not just to know about this truth, but to see, then it might be wise to ask the Spirit to give you understanding of what it means for you to obey the command to flee to the mountains for safety and security.

## The Image: A Summary

Let’s see if we can pull all this together in a short summary. The second beast has been telling each generation of those who are now dwelling on the earth to make this image or to bring it forth.

This image is of a false Christ, a false Jesus, that is even now standing or better said, positioned where it now ought not to be—amid the Chosen priests of God, in the center of Christianity. Though many may not have eyes to “see” it, make no mistake, it is there.

This image of the Beast looks very much like the real Jesus, as much like the real Jesus as a person might need to be convinced that they worship the true God, the true Jesus. But for those who may see the image, they can identify its deception by the attributes of its core message, which is fundamental to its brand.

In one-way-shape-or-form, no matter how small or subtle, the words which the image speaks compromise the grace of God by introducing some element of legalism and the “**works of our hands**” – which is a euphemism for what we can do for God, what we must do for God, and what we must **NOT** do. Those who follow the words spoken by the Image simply ignore the fact that the Spirit has clearly said that the “**work of our hands**” is demonic and flat-out idolatry.<sup>2</sup>

The second beast and the image play the long game. They have counted on the principle that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, it is all just a matter of time. This is why Jesus compared the kingdom of God to dough that becomes thoroughly saturated with leaven, which is a Biblical symbol of corruption.<sup>3</sup> It is all just a matter of time. Truth be told, we have all become corrupted, to some extent, by their perversions of grace. We all seem to have our own law by which we judge ourselves and our worthiness.

We see the results of this work across Christianity. By way of example, our various translations of the Bible simply do not represent how the Spirit spoke to those who first penned the text. The translators seem to pick and choose when they will apply the **Code** and when they won't, as if **how** the Spirit said His words are a matter of private interpretation.

The perversions of grace are also reflected in the various religious texts, commentaries, teachings, and instructions that Christians rely upon to learn the “truth” and to live godly lives. And much like the oral law to which the Jews held and taught, and of which Jesus said were the doctrines of men not of God, so too has much of our Christian belief system been built upon the doctrines of men (doctrines spoken by this image) and not the truth as the Spirit spoke it.<sup>4</sup>

As a result of the words spoken by this image of the false Christ, there are now over 45,000 different Christian denominations or sects, each believing something different about God, about Christ, about the Spirit, about grace, and so on. Each of these denominations have their own set of fictions, and each with some level of obsession with sin – not truly believing that the Lamb of God took away our sins and the sins of the world.

**The image may not be the statue of Jupiter that has been transfigured into Peter, but nonetheless, this image is even now standing where it ought not to be, and he speaks.**

## The Abomination of Desolation: The Ultimate Fulfillment

There will be a day when the son of destruction is revealed—the man we call the Antichrist. There will be a day when this man, who will become possessed by the Beast, will proclaim to the nations that He is God. No longer will the mystery of lawlessness spread through an image of the False Messiah from the unseen realms amid Christianity. Rather, he will profess to the world that he is God, that he is the one they have all been waiting for, that he alone will save them all from the wrath of the Lamb. Therefore, he alone must be worshiped.

When the Beast, through this man, declares that he is God, He will declare world-wide war on the two-witnesses, in a futile attempt to crush those who follow only Jesus, and who will not worship the Beast.

This is the one “*whose is **now** coming in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and*

<sup>2</sup> *Revelation 9:20; Haggai 2:10-14*

<sup>3</sup> *1 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:9; Luke 13:20*

<sup>4</sup> *Matthew 15:9; Galatians 1:6-9*

*false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who are now choosing to be perishing, because they did not choose to receive the love of the truth so as to be caused to be saved.”<sup>5</sup>*

This is the one who already rules over the **Vessels of Wrath** (the **Accursed**), those who are now making their dwelling on the earth, but his primary target for deception is those who did not choose to receive the love of the truth so as to be caused to be saved. They had the opportunity to receive the love of the truth, but they dug down deep in their soul and made a choice to reject it; therefore, they are choosing to now be perishing. This is what he, the Beast, believes to be his ultimate coup, the ransacking of the Household of God.

In this manner, God will use the Beast as a threshing instrument to separate to Himself those who stand only on the goodness of God and who let God live in-and-through their lives from those who are trying very hard to be good for God and who are living for God.

It is tragic. So many people in this world have taken **Step-1** and have been brought into God’s household, but because they do not love the idea of **grace** (at least not as God defines it), and instead want to contribute something, want to earn something, want to do it better than the next person, and so on, they never choose to take **Step-2**, they never choose to become that little child dependent upon God for all things all the time. They fall prey to the deceptions of the Beast and, as a result, are now choosing to be perishing.

## Time of Reflection

Before we move on, we should take a moment to reflect as this is heavy hard-hitting stuff that you simply will not hear from the sources of mainstream Christianity. It is important to understand that if you personally have been listening to the perversions of grace spoken by this image, well, join the club. We all have to some extent; it is practically unavoidable.

It seems that no matter where our spiritual background comes from, the perversions of grace and some element of law always eventually invades our belief system. Even if these perversions are found in how we judge ourselves for our sin and those who have disappointed us with their sin.

This voice of the image is everywhere, and it is loud because it has been adopted by the masses and “stamped” approved as the incontestable Word of God.

## My Story

For the longest time I was blind to the extent to which I listened to this voice of the image and to its perversions of grace. Sure, I could identify many of the big perversions, but I was bound by law far more than I could have ever understood. The law, my law, others law, it all invaded my belief system and corrupted me and kept me in bondage. Of all the chains that bound me, probably the strongest was my law, my judgment and shame oriented religious system that kept me trying so hard to be a good Christian while still failing in far too many ways.

As a result, the *agape* love of God, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, self-control, were constantly being stifled in my life. His love did not flow from me in the amount I wanted or as I had expected. In fact, me and my law were blocking the way, so much so that Jesus had a very hard time freely

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<sup>5</sup> See **2 Thessalonians 2:9-10**

expressing Himself through me in a way that did not ultimately get corrupted by my self-interest and my self-protection.

I did what most people do when they sense that something is not right. I applied more law and worked harder trying even more diligently to produce and display love, all of which amounted to the **work of my hands** – what the Spirit calls idolatry.

My efforts appeased me for a while because in so doing I helped people, I served them, I “loved” on them, I taught them, and so on. And it seemed that God used me to bless others, care for them, and I saw real change in their lives as a result of “my” good efforts. In addition to my being extraordinarily deceived as to the value of “my” efforts, my law still ruled my life.

Then through a series of unpredictable events that only God can arrange, He led me to a place where I prayed what is known as “the prayer of Jabez.” Honestly, I did not really know what I was asking for, or better said, what God heard when I prayed those words. To me, it just sounded like an awesome prayer that would help me and draw me closer to God and result in my being blessed. After all, that is what we all want, isn’t it?

Still, when I lifted up the words of that prayer, my heart was yearning and I was craving for God to meet me, help me, protect me, and rescue me from myself.

#### **1 Chronicles 4:10**

Now Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep me from harm that it may not pain me!" And God granted him what he requested.

I’m pretty sure I prayed it in the New Living Translation which says,

#### **1 Chronicles 4:10**

He {Jabez} was the one who prayed to the God of Israel, "Oh, that you would bless me and expand my territory! Please be with me in all that I do, and keep me from all trouble and pain!" And God granted him his request.

What God heard when I mouthed those words was a request from me for Him to invade my life and tear away and destroy all that was in me that loved myself, that loved and worshipped the Me, that listened to the voice of the Me, that was trained, educated, and mentored by the words which the image had spoken into my life, words which perverted the grace of God. These were the enemies and obstacles in the way of this prayer being fulfilled in my life.

God heard my prayer and told me in turn that He was going to show me how much He loves me. That was quite a response.

What this meant, however, was not what I had hoped. To show me how much He loved me, God had

to go to war. He had to go after everything within me that did not want Him to be my **I AM**. And let's just say, I was more than surprised to find how much of me did not want to be that vulnerable, that dependent, that weak, and that exposed. Letting God kill off the strangle hold that the Me had on my life was terrorizing. It is one thing to say that we need to take **Step-2** and make that choice to become that little child dependent upon God for all things all the time, and for God to say Ok, I heard your desire, let's get you there.

To expose to my mind and my soul the perversions of grace that coursed through my body, to expose the enemy of self that did not want to let go of control, to peel away the layers and layers of shame, God took me through many dramatic episodes of tearing, dismantling, and destruction. This journey has taken many years, and I know that He still is not done.

In the midst of some of the hardest times, He once said to me that He was sorry for what He had to take me through, but it was necessary if I was ever going to be free of the religion and the law that wrapped itself around my life and which formed my beliefs.

Perversions of grace are a cancer that will, given enough time, kill a person such that their light becomes darkness. We saw that with the church at Ephesus and the church at Sardis. Simply said, it all had to go.

"Oh, that you would bless me and expand my territory! Please be with me in all that I do, and keep me from all trouble and pain!"

**To expand my territory**, He had to show me that His desire for me is to live in unrestrained freedom, with no limitation or barriers on my terrain that are created by law and religion. My territory is to be limitless.

**To bless me**, He started knocking on door after door of the rooms of my heart and asking if He could come inside and dine with me and get to know me intimately in each room. Through the journey, He introduced Himself by various names, with the first being **Yahweh Tsidkenu** and then **Yahweh Yasha** – the one who is to be my righteousness and who will save me from myself.

Because of the depth of my religion, the name **Yahweh Tsidkenu** became very important to my mental and emotional stability. Betting my life on that name, despite my sin and blatant idolatry of the Me, was the pathway He chose to free me from the internal shame that bound me and so often crushed me. He used that name to help me realize that I am free, for real, and He does not expect me to be perfect and good, for only He is perfect and good. He just expects me to let Him be Himself in me and through me.

Overtime, I was introduced to each of His other names, and He asked me to believe in and bet my life on each name. We are still working on this depth of believing, because as soon as I think I have got it down and "I Believe" – He pushes a little deeper, a little harder and exposes another layer that needs to be undone so that His name can penetrate my being even further.

This is what it means to be blessed by God, coming to the point where one realizes that everything good, everything that matters, and quite frankly just that everything comes from Him; therefore, I had to learn that He just wants me to receive it all as an expression of His great love for me. Given what I had been through, the scars that I bear, the emotional trauma that I cannot even identify, this was a big ask. But day-by-day, moment-by-moment, inch-by-inch, He helped me trust more fully in His love for me.

**To be with me in all I do**, He had to show me that I must be an instrument, a pass-through vehicle of

His work, much in the same way that He was the vehicle through which the Father did His work in-and-through Jesus. In fact, He wants to continue to do the Father's will and the Father's work as He lives-and-moves through me.

Therefore, to be with me in all I do, He asked me to declare a Sabbath, a permanent Sabbath, so I will rest from all my attempts to do it right and to do what God "wants" of me, and simply let Him have access to me: all of my heart, mind, body, and soul.

**To keep me from all trouble and pain**, He had to show me that the place of safety was His place of rest, for that was how I would be found to abide "*in Christ*" – to be finished with all my work, to let it go, and to simply rest in His work. I found that in this place of rest, there is no condemnation and therefore there is no shame.

He had to teach me that I am always safe, and I am always protected, even when it seems that He is not protecting me. For in those situations, He is using others, including the enemy, like a surgical scalpel to carefully and precisely remove the remnants of the Me that are and have been the true source of my pain.

In this process, as God began to answer my prayer, I came to be able to see the image, to hear its voice, to recognize its perversions of grace and to begin to reject lie after lie after lie, and in so doing repent for all the time I spent worshipping the false Messiah.

Clearly this has put me in direct opposition with those who love Christianity and who love their law. Still, despite the opposition, I am thankful that God led me to that prayer and led me through that prayer. But my heart aches for all those who remain bound to the false Messiah and have taken His words and perversions of grace to be the truth upon which they have built their lives. And the irony of it all is that they have all done it in "Jesus' Name."

Sadly, they fight tooth and nail for their "truth." I have been there, I get it. The journey of dismantling the "Me" and our idolatry is no easy path, but it is the right path, it is the best path, and it leads to life. But far too many wont choose the love of the truth.

The simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ is amazing. He just wants us to be *willing* to believe and even ask Him to help us be *willing* to be *willing*. The rest is up to Him. He is the Creator, and He is the only one with the power to transform our lives into His. This is why Jesus could say with a straight face that His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

Willingness, however, is scary; but that is our burden to carry, our choice to make. We have learned that God will never violate our free will. We get to choose if we want to know the love of the truth so as to be caused to be saved, or to reject it and freely choose to continue to worship our false Messiah and build our lives on the words of the image. It is our choice.

Those who do *not choose to receive the love of the truth so as to be caused to be saved* will one day hear, "*I never knew you, depart from Me you who choose to now be working lawlessness, **who choose to now be working lawlessness.***"<sup>6</sup> Yes, it is a parsed verb rendered in both the *nominative* and *vocative case*. They will find themselves cast out of the household of God into outer darkness, in the furnace of fire, and

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<sup>6</sup> *Matthew 7:21-23*



assigned a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.<sup>7</sup>

By now, you should be able to recognize the image and know the sound of its voice and its words which pervert the grace of God. Are you willing to flee to the mountains? Are you willing to not look back and whole heartedly run from the lie – run from the gospel of Christianity that has been preached to us?

I beg of you to choose to receive the love of the truth that you be caused to be saved. Who knows, maybe after listening to this podcast or reading the transcript, you might get a bit gutsy and be willing to venture to pray the prayer of Jabez. If you do, I am fairly confident that it will be a prayer which the Father hears and a prayer upon which He will act. If so, buckle up, for it will be a crazy, wild, difficult, awful, and simply amazing ride that you will NEVER EVER regret. And you will come to know Him by His name, and you will come to know His rest, and find that you now abide “*in Christ.*”

Let’s stop here, and we will pick up in our next podcast as we venture to understand the mysterious number that is probably the most famous number in all of history: **666**, the number of the name of the Beast.

I am glad you “tuned in” and have been “ready to listen.”

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<sup>7</sup> *Matthew 8:12, 13:42, 50, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30*