

Ethic of the Beast

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MAIN VERSES

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Welcome to Founded in Truth

Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love? A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God? Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family, so welcome home.

Alright, so this is a message I've been working on for a little while, and we'll just jump into it. I've called it The Ethic of the Beast, and isn't that a cool graphic with the snake? I worked hard on that.

If you find anything in the message you want to go study for yourself, here are a few resources that helped me put this together. For some really dense biblical reading, there's an essay by Dr. James Hamilton, Jr. with The Clouds of Heaven, the Book of Daniel, and Biblical Theology. A very, very neat book by Professor Richard Bauckham called Living with Other Animals. I've got a quote in here from him, and then the whole Son of Man series from Professor Tim Mackey that I think is available via podcast.

So let's jump in. Mark, chapter 1, verse 12.

Mark's Account of the Wilderness

So this is the first chapter. Yeshua, Jesus, about to go, and he's been baptized, and he's sent out to the wilderness, and here we go. That's not really that exciting, but Mark is written in a very intentional way. Mark is the shortest of all gospel accounts, and therefore, he uses fewer words

to describe really big events. The entire wilderness event is summed up in one verse here—Verse 13.

I know we're always used to hearing Matthew's account of the wilderness event or the Lucan account of the wilderness event. And Yeshua goes and he's traveling and then there's this face-off with Satan and they have this dialogue and there's temptations and there's a rock and now I'm not going to turn it into bread. All of this conversation, right? And this is what we're used to reading. Mark is like, he went out, there was Satan, some wild animals, angels were there too. The end. That's how he phrases it.

Now, remember, in a message we did a few weeks ago about what the Bible is not, hopefully that was edifying to you guys. But we established some basic biblical hermeneutics on how to read the Bible. And remember, we spoke about the need to ask this question when you're reading the text, just to ponder: What is the intention of the author of the text I'm reading, and what did he want his original audience to see? It's always a question because that helps us stay focused on the themes of the Bible, the bigger pictures. It helps prevent us from taking verses out and misusing them. And hopefully it helps us find the joy in exploring the wonders of the Bible that we may have missed otherwise.

The Significance of Omission

So Mark does not expound on this incident. He's not even making much of an effort to describe the details of the event. He doesn't even care for you to know the conversations between Yeshua or Satan, or even if they took place in his story. He doesn't care about those details. There's some wild animals, there's some angels, and that's it. And to us, this is not the most riveting set of verses or part of the Jesus story, is it? It's not very exciting at all. We would just as soon get on to the next verse, right? Which was what? Verse 14. So now we're getting somewhere. This is getting exciting. John is put into prison. Yeshua is proclaiming the good news of God. The kingdom of God has finally come near.

So Yeshua gets baptized, he goes into the wilderness, and then emerges from the wilderness—the non-human world, a place where Satan resides, the demons, if you will, wild animals, they reside out there, and where angels are tending to him. Then he preaches the gospel to the human world within the cities. You see it? Are you intrigued just a little bit about where Mark might be going with this?

Something happened in the wilderness that needed to happen as a precedent for Yeshua going into the human world to preach the gospel. Something took place in Mark's detailing of the

story. It's not random. If it was meaningless, he wouldn't have put it in there. He needed to go to the place that's non-human, the non-human world, first—before he went into the cities, before he went to the humans.

Bauckham on the Wilderness

Dr. Richard Bauckham in his book, there's a great little quote here—it's awesome—he just explains it and I couldn't sum it up. The wilderness carries its most fundamental biblical and natural significance. It is the non-human sphere. In contrast to the cultivated land where humans live with their domesticated animals, the wilderness was the world outside of human control, uninhabited by humans, feared as it threatened to encroach. Hence, Jesus goes into the wilderness precisely to encounter the beings of the non-human world. He must establish his messianic relationship to these before he can preach and practice the kingdom of God in the human world.

Significantly—and this is the part I geeked out about—none of these three non-human beings he encounters in the wilderness, Satan, the wild animals, or angels, subsequently appear in Mark's narrative of Jesus' activity in the human world. In other words, this is the last time you hear about Satan appearing, or the wild animals coming about, or angels appearing in Mark's story. Mark sets them up as something big happening in this little short section, and then it's done.

The First Century Audience Connection

So back to the question of the author's intention: If I haven't lost you yet, what would a first century Jewish audience reading Mark's testimony have noticed here? They would have noticed the Holy Spirit first took Jesus to this place without humans—the wilderness, the place where the demonic and wild animals reside.

Question: Where is the first time in the Bible where we see a satanic figure, angels and wild animals? Where's the first time we see those three figures? Oh, okay. This is why I get excited about reading the New Testament, because the authors are intentional. They're telling a story on purpose. It's meant for you to say, wait a second, these elements are familiar.

Humanity's Original Authority

So here we go—Genesis chapter 3, the fall of mankind. And it was through this demonic influence, if you will, that creation itself was disrupted. Man was exiled from God, and mankind

suffered losing their authority over creation and over animals, if you will. In other words, wild, dangerous animals that lurk in the wilderness, ready to get you. That was not part of God's peace through his creation in the beginning. It was a result of the disruption of it.

Remember in [Genesis 1](#), mankind was made to rule over the animals, right? To have dominion over the animals. Your vocation was always to rule over the beasts. That was the intention. In [Genesis 1](#), mankind was the very last thing created. The vast world, the valleys, the stars, the mountains, the fish, the birds, the beasts were all created before mankind for mankind to rule over with God's power and God's wisdom.

The Catastrophe of Our Rebellion

But we chose to rule the world our way instead of God's way. We chose to say, "I can do this better without God. I can take of the fruit of knowing good and evil apart from God." And as a result, we've unleashed chaos and sin and death into God's good creation.

Now, we all know the end of the book. We all know that one day that's going to change. The prophets talk about a new creation that's going to emerge. And Isaiah very poetically displays this by speaking about the animals, especially in [Isaiah 11](#). You may be familiar with the verse, The wolf will dwell with thee. It's often misquoted as the lion will lie down with the lamb. The wolf will dwell. I have it right here. Hold on. The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat, and the calf and the young lion and the fatted calf will be together. And what's that last part? And the child will lead them.

The Restoration of Creation

So this is Isaiah. The whole chapter is about the Son of Man coming, this Davidic king coming, ushering in this new creation, this new kingdom where God's peace overflows all of creation. And this is a section of it, taking us back to the original plan of God where there is ultimate peace. No creatures in the world are living at the expense of one another. That's why the garden always talks about the animals eating green stuff—salads for dinner. And to us it's weird imagery. We think, "Oh, we were meant to be vegans." But that's not the point. The point is, none of them are living at the expense of one another.

But this is a prophecy of what's going to come. Something's going to happen where all of these wild animals are going to be living in peace with each other. And in this very last verse—I read this yesterday. It's the first time in my life I've ever seen this. I don't know how I've missed it all. A child will lead them. A child will have dominion over the lion and the wolf and these

ferocious, wicked creatures out there. A child. The world will be at such a level of peace through God's reign and wisdom that a child will be able to take over the vocation that God gave mankind and reign over the beast. I love this! This is neat.

Yeshua's Messianic Work

So according to Mark, Yeshua goes into the world outside of the walls of the cities, the world with the wild animals, the world where Satan is residing, and the angels meet him there and wait on him and serve him. Yeshua is proclaiming that this ends now. Just like in [Genesis 1](#), a new creation is happening. And it's proclaimed first to the beasts, then to the humans, following the same pattern in [Genesis 1](#). I want you guys to get an image in your head now because Mark doesn't give us a whole lot of details.

Envisioning the Wilderness Scene

Let's read this verse right here. The angels were serving him, and Yeshua is going out into the wilderness where there are wild animals and Satan is there, and the angels are serving him. I would love for you to tell me what you see in your mind. Real quick, can someone just tell me what do you see? Are the animals getting them? Did they get him? Did the bear rip Yeshua? What do you see in your mental image that Mark's given you? Are the animals at peace? Do you kind of picture Yeshua sitting around with all the lions and bears sitting around him, and the angels are around him too—they have something to do with serving him and maybe keeping the animals at bay? And then there's this evil force off to the side, kind of irritated: "This is my domain. What is happening here?" You kind of see that?

What other story has that same imagery where you have wild beasts surrounding a man of God and the angels are there serving him? I love that. It's Daniel. It's [Daniel 6](#). It's the image of this idyllic Adam figure where he has reign over creation. He's submitted to God in faith and obedience, and now he has reign over the animals just like Adam does. And here we see a similar passage. Yeshua's going out into the wilderness, the place of disrupted creation, the place that was never supposed to be, the uninhabited world, the place that man was supposed to till, and he first establishes his authority there. Then he enters into the cities. Then he brings it to mankind. I don't know, that's just a geek out thing. This is a fulfillment of prophecy. I love it.

Daniel's Idyllic Adam Image

So then we have Daniel. Now Daniel embodies this idyllic Adam image. And why is Daniel so special? Well, Daniel's special not only because we know the lion story, or hopefully we know the lion story, but the very next chapter in Daniel is a chapter that we should be familiar with as believers and followers of Yeshua. It's Daniel chapter 7. And in this chapter, he has a vision, a dream, if you will. And it's a vision about beasts. Here we go. We've got these animals popping up again. And it's a vision about these beasts running to and fro over the earth. Fantastic, gnarly-looking, non-kosher, weird-looking beasts. And all these beasts do is crush, kill, destroy, and trample the saints of God. That's all they do. And then later in the chapter, the saints—represented as Israel—become synonymous with this figure called the Son of Man. And the Son of Man gets overtaken by these beasts, especially one big one, and he's killed. But after this, God unleashes his justice, and this monster is destroyed. He's defeated. And then all of the other little beasts in creation, even though they're still there prowling around, they lose all of their power because of what happened to the Son of Man.

After this in the chapter, the Son of Man is raised to the throne room of God, vindicated. The Son of Man, who was killed by the beast, somehow causes the beast to be defeated through God's wrath. He's vindicated. He's placed on a cloud. He's coming in the clouds of heaven to sit on the throne of God, and he's been vested with all power and all authority in all of heaven and all of earth. He's been given all power and authority over all of creation. And the chapter concludes with the vision saying that all of the people of God will rule and reign through his creation forever. That's Daniel chapter 7. Some of us should be excited about that because we know what that's talking about. That's the gospel message. I get excited about it. This is geeking me out.

The Son of Man and the Beasts of Humanity

When Yeshua refers to himself as the Son of Man, that's the picture he's wanting you to envision. The Son of Man. So he's talking, yeah, I'm going to be lifted up. I'm going to be crucified. I'm going to be overtaken. I have to die. And everyone's like, no, that's not the kind of king Isaiah predicted. That's not the son of David. A son of David is going to be like Solomon and rule and reign. And yeah, see what happened with Solomon. It didn't work. This son of David is going to be different. And Yeshua is saying, no, I'm going to be like the Son of Man. And the beast is going to take me out and kill me. But as such, new creation and the kingdom of God will be birthed through how the beast is stripped of its power and destroyed. I love that. I love that. Yeah.

But the dream's interesting because the beasts that are roaming around in the dream, they're not actual beasts. They represent the kingdoms of the world. They represent people just like you. They represent people who choose to act like a beast instead of a human being. They're self-seeking. They're prideful. They're arrogant. They've given in to sin. They've said, "We don't need God. We'll take of this fruit and reign and rule with our knowledge of what is good and what is evil, apart from God's wisdom." And they're the ones who have given in to the voice of the serpent. They've become beasts, and this is how [Daniel 7](#) portrays them.

Was mankind made to become beasts? It's an easy answer. No. Mankind was created to become God's image in his creation, to rule over creation through God's authority, reign, and spirit. Mankind was meant to rule over creation. It makes us uncomfortable sometimes. We're like, no, God rules over creation. No, God wants to rule through you. And this is what [Genesis 1](#) says: Then God said, "Mankind was meant to have dominion over everything that's in heaven, the birds in the air, everything that's in the earth, the creeping things, the fish in the sea, everything." Mankind was meant to connect heaven to earth in such a way that God's reign was manifest. Man was meant to rule over the beasts. Beasts were created to be ruled over. That's how you could define a beast in [Genesis 1](#) by this definition. It's something that was ruled over. Man was responsible for taking care of the beasts, being accountable for them and ruling over them.

God's Mission Through Created Beings

What are the biblical authors trying to portray here? Humans are the beings that rule, and God sets up a principle here that we see throughout the rest of Scripture, especially in the New Testament—God is constantly seeking to impact his creation through his created beings. That's what an image bearer is. We hit on that topic a lot, I know, but it's so vitally important to understand that. That's your vocation as an image bearer. Here and now, as a believer, you should not be waiting on God to do something to fix this broken world. Something that we tend to get in the habit of doing. We tend to turn on the news because that's just our go-to for any type of fear-mongering and sensation. And we turn on the news and we're like, wow, this world is so messed up. Wow, oh, Yeshua come. Wow, when is God going to come? When is his peace going to be manifest? Oh, when are people actually going to find mercy in God's justice? Oh, when is this going to happen? I guess I'll just sit here and wait. No, you are always meant to do something. You were meant to rule and reign and be God's image throughout all of creation.

This is what Yeshua said. If we're supposed to be his hands and feet, does that mean just sitting at home waiting? No, the world is supposed to still feel the hands and feet of Yeshua today as if

he was here. And it's funny because he gave us something to instill and empower us to do that, and that was his own spirit that raised him from the dead. That Paul speaks of raising us to life, empowering us to truly be the image bearer that is modeled off of the last Adam, Yeshua.

Extending the Garden

It's fascinating because we talk about mankind was meant, and I say this a lot because I love it. It trips me up because I love it so much, but it talks about so they were in the garden and they're meant to take care of the Garden of Eden. But then it says they need to go and fill the earth and subdue it. They need to go outside the garden. And the question that I always love to ask, even though I know the answer to it, is were they meant to leave the garden? Was that God's plan for them, is that they would leave the garden? No, I think that God's plan for them was that they would take the garden with them, that they would extend the garden, that they would extend the place where heaven and earth truly manifest. That walk with God would overtake all of creation. That's why [Zechariah 2](#) talks about the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven and it has no walls in Zechariah's prophecy. It has no walls because it's engulfing all nations and all cattle and all of creation. It just can't hold it all. There are no walls in it. So I love that.

Humans were given the mission of God, the vocation to be God's emissaries on behalf of his kingdom. The beasts, on the other hand, were not. They were not to be rulers. They were to be ruled over. So what happens in the story? After I've reviewed that, hammered that out, what happens next in the garden story? We know that who enters the garden in chapter 3? The serpent. The sacred space where humans walk with God, the serpent. And the biblical authors, they don't really set up the snake. It just comes in, he's crafty. We've already talked about it before. He's crafty, and he's a bit deceptive. Did God actually say for you not to eat of the tree of the garden? Are you sure? You could really do what you want. You could define good and evil. If you take this place of determining what the knowing of good and evil is, then you'll become like God, which the irony is they were already like God being his image, but regardless.

You can obey your own impulses if you give in. You can live apart from God. You can determine good and evil for yourself. Take the fruit. That's the story in [Genesis 3](#). And we know what happens. Mankind does what? Takes the fruit. He's exiled from the intimate presence of God. Heaven has now been pushed away, if you will, and mankind is driven out to the fields to get their food from the dirt. Not from the fruit trees in the garden, but from the ground now. The same place that the beasts are going to get their food. Did you ever notice that?

So in the garden, in [Genesis 1](#), the food for mankind were the fruit trees, the seed-bearing fruit. The animals ate the herbs from the ground. When mankind sinned, it was as if God said, you know what? If you're going to allow yourself to be ruled over by the words of the snake, if you're going to succumb to them, if you're going to yield to the beast, then you're going to become a beast. So you know what? Here you go. Here's some skins because this is what you look like to me. You might as well wear the skin of a beast—a fur coat—and get out in the fields and eat the same food of the beast. This is how chapter 3 concludes. Mankind is beastly. They've taken on that vocation.

The Curse Upon the Serpent

And as God's telling this and describing the curses that are going to come upon all of creation because of what Adam and Eve did, he looks at the snake. And here's what he says to the snake. You remember this little poetic stanza here in [Genesis 3](#). This is a curse that God places on the serpent. We're familiar with this, right? We're good? This is the thing. And so if we're reading this as a narrative, as a story—which is how it should be read—there's a storyline, there's going to be a seed of this beast, a seed of the serpent, a seed that, like the beast, is selfish and self-seeking, has a personal agenda to profit oneself, even at the expense of others. And then there's going to be another seed, a seed of the woman. And the seed of the woman is going to one day crush the serpent's head, crush the ethic of the beast.

So we're all reading this story together, and we're at this very climactic part, and we're waiting to see who this seed of the woman is going to be, right? Let's act like we haven't read the rest of the story, right? Okay, so this woman's going to have a seed. Oh, look, the very next chapter starts out like this. Now Adam knew Eve, his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord. Okay, Eve gives birth. Based on the curse of the snake, this is great timing in the story, isn't it? Like the woman just has seed. Is this going to be the seed that crushes the head of the snake? Yeah, not so much. She conceived and bore Cain. The narrative tells us immediately that Cain was swayed by the beast. He was selfish. He was prideful. He was jealous of someone else's favor. And God accepted his younger brother's offering, not his. So he got angry. And God even speaks to him. He says, Cain, stop it. Stop your anger. Just because your offering was rejected doesn't mean you were rejected. That's the message here.

Sin Crouching at the Door

The Lord said to Cain, Why are you angry? Why is your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it, Cain. I think this is very telling because this is God defining sin. Sin is what? What's it doing? Crouching at the door. It's watching you, Cain. It has a desire to be against you, Cain. Crouching, snarling, ready to pounce. I saw some commentaries where that word contrary has like a slight sexual connotation. Not literally, but it has to do with yielding and forcing yourself upon someone. Sin, it's crouching, ready to own you, ready to make you its own. What is sin described as here? It's described as a beast. The beast. You must rule over the beast, Cain. Just like in [Genesis 1](#), Cain, you must rule over the beast. Does Cain rule over the beast? He gives in to the beast. Cain becomes the beast. Cain allows himself to be ruled over by the beast and he murders his brother. This is how the entire biblical story starts. This is it. A place where heaven and earth are one. A time when man has dominion over creation by God's authority and then is overtaken by the beast.

And the biblical story, especially in Genesis, continues with this strong pattern, this strong motif. Noah, a man viewed as righteous in a world ruled by the beast. The world was filled with what? Violence in the time of Noah. People that are self-seeking. People that take what they want at the expense of others. Violence. A world ruled by people that are willing to get what they want by force. And then Noah stands out and makes an ark. And what's inside the ark? Beasts. And are they wild and ferocious beasts that are trying to tear him apart? Or does Noah have dominion over the beasts in the ark?

Another Eden Story

This place that's between the waters, right? It's another Eden story—like the one with Adam. Noah gets off the boat, ready to start anew. Maybe Noah will be the human that crushes the head of the snake. Maybe. Things are looking good. There's a covenant. A new creation is starting here through one man, right? We talked about that in the Bible code message a few weeks back. Noah gets off the boat. Rainbow. It's all great. Maybe Noah's going to be the one that crushes the head of the snake.

Noah plants a garden. He gets hammered, causing a whole different scenario. We do learn that from the story of Noah, we learn that divine violence will not work to take out the beast, which is something that we will see come to its full fruition later in the New Testament. But anyway, Abraham, Father Abraham, thank you. Many sons had father Abraham. So maybe it'll be Abraham. Well, Sarah really didn't appreciate that thing he did in Egypt, right? And then he did

that whole thing with Hagar, and that just wasn't good at all. Maybe Isaac, right? Maybe it'll be the next one.

The Hint of the Beast

The biblical authors are amazing because they all tell a story in a way that leaves hints that the story is going to keep going. Take Esau and Jacob, for example. Esau is described as having what appearance? You guys know, right? He's described as hairy. The first one was very red at birth and covered with a thick hair like a fur coat. They named him Esau. Furry. So I read that and I'm like, "a fur coat like they had back in the '50s." No, this was hair like a dog's or a bear's.

Esau is described as a literal beast with fur. He's a hunter. He acts violently towards other animals. Right? He lives at their expense, not the Edenic ideal. Scripture says that he's a man of the field, like a beast. You see the hints it's dropping. He has primal urges. So Esau, do you want a bowl of soup or your birthright? We shouldn't be surprised because the story has already set him up to be a primal animal. Of course he's going to. I mean, my dog at home, listen, you want a Tempur-Pedic dog bed or a steak? The dog's going to go for the steak. Esau went for exactly what we would think he would go for the way he's been set up.

Esau is described as hairy, but Jacob, what's Jacob described as? Jacob answered Rebekah, his mother, look at my brother Esau. He's a hairy man, but I am a man with smooth or slippery skin. So he had to get the fur and trick his dad. What's going on in the story right now? Why is he telling his mom that? Because Jacob is about to deceive his father. He's going to be a little deceptive, kind of like another figure in the story that we read about in [Genesis 3](#). He's going to be crafty, like a snake, so he can steal his brother's birthright. We know the story.

Yielding to the Beast

All of these humans are ruled by the beast at some point or another in their life. When we give into the self-seeking and primal things in our lives, when we give into the desires of our flesh, when we give into sin, we give into the beast. We yield to the beast. We're no longer human, according to [Genesis 1](#). We've forfeited that status for something that's sub, something that's ruled over, not something that rules with God's wisdom and his reign. We become the beast. Whether it's something as severe as, jeez, murder or adultery, allowing your heart to succumb to addictions. I'm not ignorant. I know what the statistics of alcoholism or pornography abuse or divorce are in the churches. I mean, I know. For both men and women, it's shocking.

We all tend to struggle with this on a large scale. For some reason, even after we commit our lives to God, we still struggle with the urges of the beast. When we live selfishly in our marriages, when we're unwilling to honor the vow we made to our spouse to be their servant for life, when we so easily decide to minimize that vow, when we speak with such disrespect, when we think that our spouse should serve us, we become the beast. We yield. When we choose to gossip, when we choose to spread rumors at the expense of others just to taste a false companionship with others in our own deceit, we become the beast. It's subhuman. It's being ruled by the serpent, living at the expense of others.

When we cheat to get our way. Jeez, this message hit home real quick, didn't it? Why do you think Nimrod is defined both as a warrior and a hunter? It's a setup. He's the killer of both animals and humans. Like, opposite of Eden squared. The Bible's trying to tell us the ideal—the atmosphere and the culture of God's ethic for mankind: that we would not live at the expense of each other, but that we would be servants of God's good creation.

When we choose to lord over others in our household, in our spouses, in our kids, at work with employees under us, we give in to the beast. When we choose to judge others publicly in order to somehow highlight how righteous we are, we live at the expense of others. We become the beast. We forfeit our status as human beings created by God to represent him.

Remember, a beast is not something that rules. It's something that is ruled over by something else. [Daniel 7](#) and Revelation speak of beasts. We're familiar with the apocalyptic literature and all these gnarly beasts that go. And they both speak of this ever-growing beast that continues to grow and grow and grow and it becomes unconquerable. It consumes and it rules the earth. It grows. It's unstoppable. The immense power of self-seeking, arrogant selfishness, power-hungry, flesh-feeding, just the prideful beast of Daniel and Revelation.

The Beast and Babylon

And remember when I spoke on Nebuchadnezzar in the Empathy for the Wicked series? We discussed who and what mystery Babylon is in Revelation. And Babylon the Great. And it's not some subversive government that wants to stick a computer chip in your hand. Oh, Babylon represents the people that rebelled against God. Remember the tower? Like, that's it. It's the people that rebel against God, that want to rule their way, that want to lift themselves up. Babylon is simply a kingdom made up of beasts, people that I'm sure many times we see in the mirror every day. You ever think about that? It's always fun to think we're ambassadors of heaven, but sometimes we're rooting for the beasts.

How God Defeats the Beast

How will God take care of this beast in Revelation? How does God take care of the beast in Daniel chapter 7? In the most inverted, upside-down way you can imagine. God takes care of the beast in [Daniel 7](#) by doing exactly the opposite of the beast. The beast conquers by ruling over. The beast conquers by violence. The beast conquers by slander. The beast conquers by destroying others. The beast fights by way of demeaning and tearing down others. The beast fights in a way that is utterly self-seeking.

But in [Daniel 7](#), God defeats the beast, destroys the beast. He conquers the beast. He strips the beast of all of its power. How? By doing exactly the opposite of the beast. By allowing the beast to flex its muscle and its power to do its worst and pour it out on this figure known as the Son of Man. Do your worst. And guess what? It wasn't enough. At the end of the chapter, the Son of Man ends up ruling over the beast by way of subversion of the way of the beast. You tracking with me? We're good? Okay.

Yeshua was the most radical climax of God's plan. And that's the thing. As believers, we love to hoot and hurrah, and we love to, yeah, that's my king. And we love to say, yes, I'm a Christian, I'm a believer, and I follow the Bible. But we don't like this. We don't like to be reminded of just how radical Yeshua said the way of God is. We like to somehow justify entertaining violence against people we don't like or we think deserve it. We like somehow entertaining the idea of lording over others because I'm more righteous. I have a right to lord over and demean other people in the world. And maybe one day some of us secretly hope that we can be on one of the thrones in the kingdom of God to reign and rule over all these people that deserve it.

Yeah. It's difficult to be reminded that just because you proclaim something with your mouth doesn't mean that your heart lives it out. Because it's hard. Following the way of Yeshua is hard. Now would be an appropriate time to agree and say amen. Following the way of Yeshua is hard sometimes. It's difficult in this world. We want to live. There's a beast. I can be a beast too. We love the slogan: I'm going to go in beast mode. No, it's not biblical. You don't want to go in beast mode. Don't do that. No, you want to go in image-bearer mode.

James and John's Request

Man, even Yeshua's own disciples had trouble with this. In [Mark 10](#), verse 35 through 45. Right? His mom was involved in all this. So Yeshua says, "What do you want me to do for you?"

One thing I've learned about the Bible is that if you feel an emotion when you read it, it's likely intended. When you read hard stuff, it's likely intended. So here these two tell him, "You should do whatever we ask." And he says, "What do you want me to do for you?" So I'm reading this.

They replied: "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." "You don't know what you're asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink of the cup that I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" "We sure can," they answered. Then Jesus said to them, "Actually, you know what? You will drink the cup that I drink and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with. But to sit at my right and my left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those in whom they have been prepared."

But then, when the other ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them all together and said, "You know..." Actually, I don't like this so much. I don't even want to read it. But here it is: "And whoever wants to be first must be a slave of all." Upside-down kingdom. Doesn't make sense in this world.

The Son of Man's Self-Sacrificial Love

For even the Son of Man—here we go, here we go!—"did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many." Going back to [Daniel 7](#). So Yeshua is stating that self-sacrificial love is how God's kingdom rules. Self-sacrificial love, selfless acts of mercy, grace, love. And these are the embodiment of God. This is what Yeshua tells his followers to image. This is how you embody the status of a fully human being in Eden. This is how Yeshua will be crowned, announced and inaugurated as king over creation.

So we have this take place. Mark goes on to tell us a few chapters later about when this happens. And we're familiar with this. It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. The written note of the charges against him read: "The King of the Jews." They crucified two rebels with him, one at his right and one at his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him: "So you are going to destroy the temple and build it up in three days? Come down from that cross and save yourself!" In the same way, the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves: "He saved others," they said, "but he can't even save himself. Let this Messiah, the King of Israel, come down now from that cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults onto him.

The Defeated Beast

This is the scene out of Daniel chapter 7 where the Son of Man is overtaken by everything the beast has, being exalted up at the same time. The crown is placed on his head. He's exalted. He's lifted up. He's even proclaimed king on a sign. And this is the example of how the beast is ruled over, defeated. This is how the ethic of the beast is stripped of its power. That's incredible.

And when Yeshua talks to Caiaphas... And Caiaphas asks, "Tell me if you're the Mashiach or not." What does Yeshua say? He combines the two aspects of [Daniel 7](#) and he tells Caiaphas, "You will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, exalted in his glory." So the two are going to happen. When he's exalted up and when he's coming in the clouds of heaven, Yeshua makes this one synonymous event to Caiaphas, which really irritated him. He ripped his cloak, and so on and so forth. This is it. This is the moment where Yeshua was crowned king of both heaven and earth, as [Daniel 7](#) says he is, and he defeats the beast.

And even though—as [Daniel 7](#) says—even though there are little beasts still crawling the earth, they're stripped of their power. They have no power because of what the Son of Man does or has done. This is it. And our first instinct is completely human. Yeah, but that's not. No, he's still going to come back with a machine gun, right? That's what we want. That's what we want. But I know what Revelation talks about. In [Matthew 28](#), he tells his disciples, "I've already been granted all authority in heaven and earth." It had already happened before he sent his disciples out. He was already crowned with complete dominion over all of creation. This is the point where it happened. I love that.

Paul speaks about this. I preach nothing but Christ crucified. Why? Why? Because this is the moment that creation changed. And I love that. Where does Yeshua say the seats? When he was telling his disciples, he said the seats for those who are going to be there when I'm lifted up in my glory, they're not for me to choose. Where did he say those seats were? To his left and to his right, right? Yeah. Sorry, guys, you can't be up there. Those seats have already been set in stone. This is where Yeshua was lifted up in his glory.

And the people, not with the righteous, not even with his own disciples, but he found himself in the presence of the sinners. And in Mark's account, they were the ones slurring insults at him. This makes us so uncomfortable to show the reality of what it looks like to defeat the beast. But this is our king. This is the son of man out in [Daniel 7](#), the prophesied one.

The Inverted Kingdom

Mark plants this phrase here. No, James. No, John. You cannot be placed at my right and my left when I'm exalted up. Those spots are being prepared for two others. The thieves, the rebels of

Israel, the condemned men. That's the inverted kingdom of Yeshua. And Mark uses this to make a point: that the power of lording over others, living at the expense of others, taking the kingdom of God by force—that's not how he reigns.

And it's so not intuitive. It doesn't seem correct. It seems backwards. It seems messed up. That's not how he's supposed to rule. But when your king kneels to wash your feet, when you wouldn't even wash the feet of your brother walking in beside you, this is the example that he leaves us. Yeshua understood this message would be difficult. Many left him because it was just too hard. And so I think the question, the question that he even asked his own disciples is, will you? Will you? Because this is what you've signed up for, to be a servant to all, to humble yourself, to realize that you've lost humanity because of sin. And will you begin the process of rising above being a beast?

Do, Don't Explain

Yeshua left us a lot of examples of what we're supposed to look like as his followers. And you notice Yeshua never spent countless hours trying to explain stuff. He had the road to Emmaus a couple of times, but when engaging with the Pharisees, he didn't sit there and say, he didn't write a long blog or make some ministry website to get his point across. He didn't get on social media trying to convince people of what he stood for. No, he didn't waste time trying to explain it to people. He just did it. He just did it.

Is it too difficult for you, like it was for many of his own followers? Or will you follow him? That's the charge here. Will you love? Will you serve? Will you live self-sacrificially? Not for yourself, but for the creation that God intended for you to portray him in, to be his hands and feet.

Beast or Image Bearer

So yeah, I don't know where you guys are at today. Maybe you find yourself as a mostly human being. Maybe you have a little bit of beast reigning in you in some areas of your life. I don't know. But I do know that Yeshua won. That's the gospel message. That's what the whole book of Revelation is about. And so because we know that Yeshua has won, we live it out. And if there is a beast ruling inside you, then take dominion over it. Scripture says that you've been given the power to do so if you choose to. If there's a beast ruling inside you, stop feeding it. Call upon the one who sends the angels to serve and minister among the wild beasts. Become

the image bearer that God always intended for you to be and has given you the spirit to follow your king in.

We spend too much time attempting to convince the world of our beliefs sometimes, that we're right. We spend too much time attempting to lord over others and explaining how God rules and what we need to do. Guys, sometimes in our efforts to convince the world about our beliefs, we end up looking more like a beast than an image of God. I have. That's been my experience. You don't need a commentary to back up your actions. You were never meant to be known by your theology or religion. And your resume in the world was never meant to be known as only what you believed. It was what you did with that.

Known by Love

Yeshua gives us—we'll conclude with this—one verse, and I don't even think I have it on here. He gives us one thing that the world will know that we're his followers by. One thing, and it's not how good we preach, and it's not how well we use our words to speak the scriptures, and it's not how hard we can pray and give other people goosebumps—no, it's found in [John 13, 35](#), and it's very simple. He says, by this, everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another. That's it. That's it.

And that makes us uncomfortable because we like other things too. Sure, other things are great, but this is what, this is the resume the world needs to see. This is a resume that the beast cannot abide by. Your job is not to go around the world telling people what Jesus did. Your job is to go around the world doing what Jesus did. That's how you preach the gospel. People will ask you why. You can preach the gospel, but unless you're actually doing it, everything else is just a distortion of the people Yeshua was trying to raise up.

The Closing

So I'm sure we can conclude with that. Worship team, you guys can come up. Please stand. We always conclude the message the same way we entered through worship. And I've got to ask you today, have you yielded to something other than God's reign in life? Have you forfeited the command that God gave you to reign and rule over creation through His wisdom and love and justice? Have you forfeited that—to be ruled over by a beast?

And if that's you today, I want to let you know that the Bible is very clear that there is peace and there is a road through repentance and there is life. And so I don't know where you're at today. You may not be struggling with being a beast in your own life. You may be going through

something in your own life that you would like prayer for. Guys, we have a prayer team on both sides of the sanctuary. Take advantage of that. These are people who won't go before you into God's presence. They will stand beside you going into God's presence. And so I ask that you would take advantage of that.

Alvina Malcano, our Father, our King, we thank you for this time together today. We ask that your spirit of peace and joy would be within us. Father, I ask that your Holy Spirit would continue doing the job that it was sent to do—to convict us of the things in our lives that separate us from an intimate relationship with you. We ask, Father, that you would bring those things to mind and you would give us the wisdom and the courage to confront them, no matter how big or small. We thank you, Father, for this time together. In the name of Yeshua, we pray. Amen.

Shalom, I'm Matthew Vanderels and I hope you enjoyed this message. Founded in Truth exists to build a community that bears the image of God and lives the redeemed life only Yeshua gives.

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