

13. The Rise of the Antichrist

Revelation 13:1-10

The Book of Revelation

<https://youtu.be/6fpLI-zWiRA>

This chapter of the book of Revelation is perhaps the most intriguing, for we read about a person who is described as the "Anti-Christ." So much has been written about this topic and this personality. In fact, you may have heard some people speculate about personalities alive today and whether they "fit the mold" to be considered a possible "anti-Christ." We should remember that even in the days of the early Church, speculation about this person circulated, and the number of the Beast was calculated (666) by many different cultures as well as other languages and symbols. We are no closer to knowing for sure, although theories about this man and the number of his name still abound centuries later. We will not know for sure until we are in the time when this man of sin is revealed. The fact that we are told these things in the book of Revelation means that at some point, the Church will need this information for warning, instruction, solace, and reassurance. The reassurance is that God already knew that this would happen, and so even at a time when things look bleak, God is in control and tells us what will happen next. The thought that God knows the end from the beginning should give us peace, that He who has seen the future is still working all things together to the final day.

In our previous study in chapter twelve of the book of Revelation, we began looking at what essentially is a series of flashbacks like a movie drama. In Revelation chapters twelve through fifteen, the Lord wants to prepare His people for Satan's wrath against the saints by showing us in symbolic language some of the drama that will take place. This man, the Antichrist, shall "wear out the saints of the Most High" (Daniel 7:25) and make war on them: "The dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus" (12:17).

The saints mentioned in the above verse, Daniel 7:25, are believers in Christ who are on Earth during the second half of the Seventieth Week of Daniel (Daniel 9:24), the time also called the Great Tribulation (*Distress* NIV): "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall" (Matthew 24:21). God's desire is for His Church to be forewarned about the events of the second half of the seven-year period that will take place against believers in Christ. He gives us this warning so that His people are aware and spiritually prepared to endure the onslaught. Knowing these things before they take place will be an encouragement amid a dark time.

How do we know that this time is still ahead for all believers in Christ? After all, some believe that the Book of Revelation events happened in the first century A.D. and culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. The answer is that there has never been any person or time in history when one man has gained control of the whole Earth. This man, the Antichrist, will have authority over "every tribe, people, language and nation" (Revelation 13:7). The world system ruled by Satan ("the ruler of this world," John 14:30) is preparing for the time when one man will control the whole world through decades of manipulation of the resources of the world: its currency, energy, education, food, health and drug system, armed forces, political systems, etc. Let's read now about what happens after the devil and his angels are cast to the Earth:

The Beast Out of the Sea

¹The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. ²The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. ³One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. ⁴People worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, “Who is like the beast? Who can wage war against it?” (Revelation 13:1-4).

The general meaning is this. Satan is cast out of heaven, knows that his time is short, and is determined to do as much damage as he can. To cause this damage and to wage war on the saints, he delegates his power to two beasts who are the central figures in this chapter.

When Satan realizes he only has a short time (12:12) before his kingdom reign ends, he has already prepared a man and a political structure to use as the means for one last demonic defense of his kingdom of evil. Satan must try and stop the growth of God's kingdom throughout the world. In this final assault, he calls up his prepared vessels to exercise dominion over the Earth, becoming an unholy trinity of Satan, seen as the dragon, the Antichrist, and another whose focus is to use religion to manipulate humanity, one called the False Prophet (Revelation 13:11, 16:13). We shall look at him in our following study. We must not listen and obey all the voices that seek to coerce us into worship of anything false. John the Apostle warned us about how to distinguish false worship from true in his first letter:

Every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming and now is in the world (1 John 4:3).

If the spirit of the Antichrist was present when John the Apostle was alive, we know that it is present today. Do you think it is more prevalent in our society today? How do you see the spirit of the Antichrist affecting world culture today?

In verse one of chapter thirteen, we read of Satan (the dragon) standing beside the sea, and a beast comes up out of the sea. What does the sea mean in symbolic language? The political system of the beast, Mystery Babylon the Great, is typified as the sea of the Gentiles: “The **waters** you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages” (Revelation 17:15). It is our view that the Lord is showing us that the Antichrist will arise from the Gentiles during a time of great social upheaval. Speaking of the last days, Jesus said: “On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the **roaring and tossing of the sea**” (Luke 21:25). A leader will arise out of the storm-tossed sea of Gentile nations in turmoil to take advantage of the situation to grab power, such as Adolf Hitler did in Germany in 1933. The controlled media will release a climate of fear to allow this power to thrive so that this beast of a man will be allowed to control the political world system. Speaking of the Antichrist, one commentator notes:

His arguments will be subtle, convincing, and appealing. His oratory will be hypnotic, for he will be able to move the masses to tears or whip them into a frenzy. He will control the communication and media of the world and will skillfully organize mass publicity to promote his ends. He will be the master of every promotional device and public relations gimmick. He will manage the truth with guile beyond words, bending it, twisting it, and distorting it. Public opinion will be his to command. He will mold world thought and shape human opinion like so much potter's clay. His deadly appeal will lie in the fact that what he says will sound so right, so sensible, so exactly what people want to hear.¹

In verse two, the Antichrist is described as having the same characteristics as the three beasts, which Daniel spoke about in Daniel 7. This likely means that the Antichrist will be a composite of the preceding three kingdoms in history. Babylon was likened to a lion (Daniel 7:4), and this man, the Antichrist, will have the ability to speak great things and exert power over many nations, just as Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon did. The second beast is likened to a bear, which we know to be the Medes and Persians (Daniel 7:5), which symbolizes the Antichrist's ferocity and power. The third beast, represented by the leopard, is a picture of the Greek empire under Alexander the Great (Daniel 7:6). It may be indicative of the speed by which his army traveled to conquer the Middle East and Western Asia in just over three years. Similarly, the Antichrist and his kingdom will have the ability to react with speed to world events.

This beast has ten horns. In the Scriptures, horns are symbols of power, demonstrated in the animal kingdom by animals using their horns to fight. There have been many theories put forth to interpret the ten horns throughout church history. Some commentators see these ten horns as representing individual rulers in the Roman Empire. Others have suggested that these horns represent separate countries that arose out of the Roman Empire through time. The ten horns could even symbolize ten trading blocs being created with leaders over each of them, such as the three countries of North America, calling it the North American Free Trade Union (NAFTA). President Trump renegotiated this trade agreement, calling it the USMCA. There is also the ASEAN trading bloc (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), the European Union, the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and others, which this writer believes will become ten trading blocs covering the whole world.² We will know once we see this stage finally set. We have seen the spirit of the Antichrist at work throughout history, arising again and again during the last several centuries. Still, in this last and final battle, the Antichrist will be revealed for who he is: the incarnation of evil who violently opposes all that is good and even God Himself. Daniel, the prophet, also wrote of a powerful beast with ten horns:

A Little Horn Among Ten

7" After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns. ⁸" While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the

¹ John Phillips, *Exploring Revelation*, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1987) Page 171.

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trade_bloc

first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully (Daniel 7:7-8, Emphasis added).

This reference to a little horn speaks of the Antichrist. Let's read more of what Daniel tells us this man will do when he comes to power.

²⁰I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell—the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully. ²¹As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, ²²until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. ²³He gave me this explanation: 'The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on Earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole Earth, trampling it down and crushing it (Daniel 7:20-23).

This more imposing little horn (the Antichrist) will wage war against the saints and defeat them (v. 21). What do you perceive is happening here? What does defeat look like for the saints?

This writer's opinion is that this fourth beast is represented as a remnant of the Roman Empire, which arises in a similar political form, as a ten-region trading bloc structure whose ten leaders will give their authority to the one called the Little Horn (Daniel 7:8). These ten trading blocs are also symbolized as the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image in Daniel 2:44: **“in the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed.”** It is not clear in Daniel 2:44 what kings or leaders are mentioned, but the ten kings are symbolized by the ten toes of the image, i.e., the last stage of the fourth kingdom. The vision concludes with a Rock crashing on the image's feet and destroying the last vestiges of Satan's series of evil empires. These ten leaders of nations or trading blocs will be in power when the Antichrist comes on the scene. These ten kings are also spoken of in chapter seventeen of the Book of Revelation:

¹²“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. ¹³These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴These will make war with the Lamb (Revelation 17:12-14).

To further study the thought of a ten-nation theme, you can view a YouTube video. If the below link is taken down, do a Google search on the topic, *The New World Order – A 6000-Year History*. If you start it at 1:35:38, you can watch the presenter talk about the Ten Kingdoms, which is found in a 1973 Club of Rome document. Here's the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9x4BySWBwos>

The whole world will come under this fourth kingdom's power or the latter part (13:8). This writer believes that we already see the beginning phase of the plan to conquer the whole Earth and bring all nations under one man's control. Paul the Apostle wrote of this evil leader, calling him the *Man of Sin* (2 Thessalonians 2:3). Daniel called him *a Little Horn* (Daniel 7:8, 19). John the Apostle called him *The Beast* (Revelation 11:7) and *the Antichrist* (1 John 2:22). The word “Antichrist” can have two meanings: 1) It can signify one opposed to Christ, the antithesis of Christ. 2) It can

also mean *instead of Christ*, a pretender who will present himself as a Christ-like figure, i.e., one who will arise during dark times and set the raging sea of humanity back on its feet. When we studied the breaking of the seven seals and specifically [the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse](#), we looked at the Antichrist's rise as the first broken seal of the scroll.

The Worship of the Beast

The beast has one head that seems to have a fatal wound (13:3, 14), and many believe he will die; instead, his wound is miraculously healed. The whole world was *astonished* (v. 3) and followed the beast. The Greek word used here, *thoumazō*, means “to wonder, have in admiration and marvel.” The Emphasis in this verse seems to be that one of the ten leaders is killed but comes alive again, with *the whole world* admiring what this man can accomplish through his overcoming of death and his utilization of power. Passages such as verse 3 that talk of the whole world being under the Antichrist's control are why I believe this passage and associated passages are still in the future. Those who are Preterists have difficulty interpreting this passage at face value. (Preterists believe that this passage was fulfilled in the first century A.D.), but in our opinion, first-century Rome could not make the whole world astonished at any of the Caesars, which leads us to believe that these things are still future.

This deliverance from death will cause great wonderment and a growing belief by those not aware of the prophetic Scriptures that the Antichrist is a god and can bypass death's claims. This healing will likely be a powerful deception. It could be the lie for which many will fall: **“For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie” (2 Thessalonians 2:11)**. In the original Greek, the definite article is on the words *the lie*, indicating that the lie he tells is a big one. With the power of technology behind him, he will be able to listen in on conversations and track people's every move with the Internet of Things (IoT). With 5G technology being introduced, your T.V., phones, and many gadgets in the home listening to the words we say, the Beast will seem like a god and one to be greatly feared. Those outside of Christ will be coerced to worship Satan and the Antichrist (v. 4) because the dark forces of this world system will try their best to control all commerce and food. For many non-Christians, it will be easier to compromise and give in rather than stand against him. The enemy will likely use A.I. to exert military and financial power, which will be so powerful that people will conclude that no country can resist its might (13:4).

Satan will give this man his power and authority over the whole Earth (Revelation 13:2). The above passage from the Book of Daniel says (v. 21) that he will wage war against the saints, the Body of Christ, and perhaps many will die at his hand rather than bow their knees and acknowledge the Antichrist as God. Three of the horns, according to Daniel 7:20, will fall, which leads us to believe that three of the ten leaders will be deposed from their positions or perhaps killed as the Antichrist gains power. We can't be dogmatic about such things, though.

Let's now look at the second passage in chapter 13:

⁵The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for forty-two months. ⁶It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. ⁷It was given power to wage

war against God's holy people and to conquer them. And it was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. ⁸All inhabitants of the Earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world. ⁹Whoever has ears, let them hear. ¹⁰"If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity they will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword they will be killed." This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God's people Revelation 13:5-10).

Like Adolf Hitler was able to speak charismatically under the power of the evil one,³ this man will influence many people with blasphemous words and slanderous sentences against the Lord (v. 5). I would not be surprised if one can only access the Internet by using an icon on their phone or device with the user's face bowing down to the Antichrist on their phone or device. Only believers in the God of Israel will refuse to worship him, which will be why the Antichrist will wage war against them. To the Antichrist, there can only be one god: him. He will finally fulfill his dream of being worshiped (Isaiah 14:14):

He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

Daniel the prophet continued to speak of this man and the blasphemies that come out of his mouth.

²⁴The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. ²⁵He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. ²⁶"But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. ²⁷Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him' (Daniel 7:24-27. Emphasis added).

Along with the blasphemies, there will be oppression of believers in Christ (v. 25). This beast of a man will change the set times and laws (v. 25).

What do you think the Scripture means in saying he will try to change the set times and laws? What laws and set times do you think will be changed, and how are such things already leaning towards this time?

This change of the law will likely be a complete abandonment of all Judeo-Christian ethics and maybe even Christian holidays where the name of Christ could be mentioned. Laws that allow ungodly sins will be introduced, and the public pursuit of pleasure and evil practices will be allowed.

³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJ3N_2r6R-o

The saints being handed over to him refers to the persecution of those who hold to the Scriptures. This dark time will take place during the second half of the seven-year period, the time about which Jesus warned us, i.e., the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:29-30). Persecution has never defeated Christianity; it has only stimulated the Church to grow deeper roots in Christ and grow numerically. This writer believes the Church will go through persecution, but the defeat about which the passage is talking refers to the Church losing the culture war. In Scripture, the Church, or called out ones, are called to be salt and light to the world (Matthew 5:13-16). As the days get increasingly evil, the influence of the godly upon society gets weaker. When the movie *Gone with the Wind* came out in 1939, Clark Gable spoke his famous "d" word to Vivien Leigh in response to her tearful question: "Where shall I go"? ("*Frankly Scarlett, I don't give a damn.*") It shocked the USA so much that it was front-page news. Compare that to today, and you will see how far believers in Christ have been put to sleep and desensitized in our modern culture, which is growing increasingly darker and at an increasing rate.

Scripture also warns us of this spiritual sleep in the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). Even though five were wise (they took oil in their lamps) and five were foolish (and brought no oil), the Scriptures record that the Bridegroom was a long time coming, and they *ALL* fell asleep (v. 5). When the Antichrist comes to power, this battle for our culture will intensify. Many in the Church today are spiritually asleep and unaware that they are in a spiritual battle.

Scripture tells us that there is coming a time when many who have a form of godliness but lack the power of a holy life (2 Timothy 3:5-7) will fall away from the faith. They will fall away because they have never been part of the true Church. To many today, going to church is just a formal occasion for a Sunday morning. Jesus said, "**At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other**" (Matthew 24:10). Paul the Apostle also wrote about this event that will take place when many shall rebel against the faith of Christ: "**Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed**" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). This war against the saints will not overcome the true Church of Christ. They will stand for Christ even though they are being killed for their faith. The saints will be delivered before God pours out His wrath.

"...for God has not appointed us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

Believers in Christ should not fear that they will unwillingly or unknowingly take the mark of the Beast. We will discuss this more in the chapters of Revelation that follow this study. There will come a time when the Antichrist arises and requires sworn allegiance and servitude. You will have to make a conscious choice as to whom you will serve. Those who choose the Antichrist will be required to worship him as well as Satan.

The Lamb's Book of Life

God will give His people strength to face whatever they need to face at this time. If you have fears about the coming of the Lord, remind yourself of Jesus' words: "**Surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age**" (Matthew 24:20). Don't spend time worrying about that time and how you will provide for yourself and your family. When you go on a train journey, you get your ticket

before you board the train. God will give us the grace to help us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:16). Expect that God will show up in power to provide and keep us as He did the Israelites in Egypt during the ten plagues. The Lord has promised to be with us and will never leave us or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6). When Nebuchadnezzar threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the fiery furnace; there was a fourth One in the fire with them (Daniel 3:25). The enemy will not have everything his way; many are awakening to the reality of the cosmic war that we are in. This awakening will bring many to Christ in the last days.

All inhabitants of the Earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world (Revelation 13:8).

During the second half of the seven-year period, all of society's structure will revolve around the Beast and his mark. The whole world's commerce will have an identifying mark, which identifies each person as a worshiper of the Antichrist and a part of his system. At that time, those who belong to Christ must stand in obedience to the Lord. At no other time in history will the identity of Christians be so clear. Refusing the mark will demonstrate faith in Christ. Those whose names have not been written in the Lamb's Book of Life will worship the Beast.

God has never promised us that He will keep us from all harm (1 Peter 4:12-14). He has given us His word that whatever happens, He will use for our good (Romans 8:28) and that nothing can separate us from Him. Nothing! Not even death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, or things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:38-39).

How do you know for sure that your name is written in the Book of Life? Have you chosen Christ and trusted Him for salvation? If you are uncertain, you can make that choice today. I would encourage you to read the linked study, [How Can I Be Sure of My Faith?](#)

Here is a mystery. We choose Christ, but He also chooses us. Paul addresses the Christian believers in Ephesus, those who are faithful to Jesus Christ, in this way:

³Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will (Ephesians 1:3-5).

On that great day, may you be found in Him, and may we rejoice together in the goodness of our God.

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