

THE ANTICHRIST IN REVELATION (Part #3)

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There have always been bad men in history who have made mockery of the true God of the Bible. For example, 1) Julius Caesar took to himself divine titles and accepted divine honors while he lived. In fact, he had temples erected to his own worship after he was dead. 2) Augustus Caesar erected temples for the worship of his uncle and then constructed temples for the worship of himself; 3) Nero was so bizarre that he came to believe he was deity in stylish human form; 4) Domitian believed he was “god” in fact lamps have been found with an inscription to Domitian which reads, “our God and Lord.”

Every now and then some cult leader rises who claims he is some special divine agent of God who can present the real way to salvation. Sun Myung Moon, Joseph Smith, Jim Jones and David Koresh, just to name a few. But of all of the bad and evil heretics who have ever lived, there is one predicted in the Bible who will outshine them all. He will be the most evil, most ruthless and most Satanic man to ever surface in the history of the world. He will be Satan’s superstar—he is **the Antichrist**.

We have spent the past two weeks carefully unlocking key data about him. First in the Old Testament and then in the New Testament. From the Old Testament we examined six key passages and from the New Testament we examined five. However, of all of the places in the Bible where the Antichrist is discussed, one book, and one chapter gives us the most riveting and revealing glimpse of all. The book of the Bible is Revelation and the chapter is Revelation 13, specifically Revelation 13:1-10.

The primary point of Revelation 13:1-10 is this:

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TRIBULATION THE GREATEST AGENT OF SATAN, THE ANTICHRIST, WILL SURFACE AND ATTEMPT TO EXTERMINATE ISRAEL AND ANYTHING CONNECTED TO GOD.

In Revelation 13, there are two beasts who are emphasized: 1) **The beast of the Sea**(13:1-10); 2) **The beast of the Earth**(13:11-18). **The first beast is the Antichrist** and from this text and a couple of others in Revelation, we see at least twenty facts about him:

FACT #1- The Antichrist is a beast. 13:1a

When it comes to data on the Antichrist, he is never viewed as a normal human created in the wonderful image of God. He is viewed as a beastly monster who is directly under the control of Satan. As someone observed, the Antichrist is “a demon with a body.” This point is stressed in both the O.T.(i.e. Dan.7:7) and the N.T.. God wants us to realize that the Antichrist will be a wild, untamable, uncontrollable, vicious, ruthless, ferocious beast. He will initially look so

innocent, but his nature is diabolical and his goal is to devour and rip to shreds anything connected to God. History has proven that if the political climate is just right, a power crazed madman can surface in a very short period of time who can initially appear to be some sort of “savior.” For example, in 1917 in Russia, the Bolshevik revolution brought Vladimir Lenin and the Communists to power, who eventually took over the whole country. In the 1930’s, economic unrest and depression made Adolph Hitler initially look like a good solution. But it didn’t long for the world to learn these were power crazed mad men, who were more beastly than human. The Antichrist will rise in a troubled political climate and will initially look so caring and kind. But make no mistake about it, he will be a ruthless, savage beast.

FACT #2- The Antichrist is a Gentile. 13:1b

Notice that the beast came up “out of the sea.” This prepositional phrase is one that would seem to suggest that the Antichrist will be a Gentile, not a Jew. As David Levy of Friends of Israel said “he will come from the sea of Gentile humanity”...(Revelation, p.146). Isaiah used this very imagery of the “sea” in the context of describing the wicked Gentile powers- “the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud.”(Is.57:20) In Revelation 17:13-15, the seas are also referred to as being godless Gentile powers(Rev.17:15). The Antichrist will be a Gentile, who will arise as a leader out of Europe. For hundreds of years, Europe has been divided into several sovereign nations, who have fought with each other to maintain their independence or to conquer the neighbors. The Antichrist will surface out of this political climate and will unite Gentile political powers. This sets the stage for him turning against Israel.

FACT #3- The Antichrist will be a dominate political leader of ten world leaders. 13:1c

This is a very important point that God wants us to know because this point is stressed many times- Dan.2:31-35, 40-45; 7:7-8, 19-24; Rev.13:1-2; 17:3,7,12-16. The Antichrist has ten horns. He will surface as one of the ten, but ultimately he will be in charge of all ten. We know from Revelation 17:12 that this means he will have dominate control of ten kings, ten world leaders and their power. He will “do as he pleases” with this power(Dan.11:3) and he will re-divide the world and re-distribute political boundaries(Dan.11:4). **It is no coincidence that these leaders are called kings, for politics during the Tribulation will be a dictatorship, with kings ruling in total sovereign power.** He is the greatest political and military leader the world has ever seen and these ten leaders will willingly given their allegiance to him(Rev.17:12-13).

FACT #4- The Antichrist will have complete political control of the world. 13:1d

By virtue of the fact that the Antichrist is connected to the number “seven”, the implication is that he will have complete political control of the entire world(Is.14:17; Dan.11:36). There is some discussion among scholars as to what the “seven heads” actually mean. Dr. Walvoord suggests it may refer to the fact that the Antichrist surfaces, according to Daniel, by taking control of three of the powers, which leaves seven other powers(Dan.7:8,20,24). It is also possible that this means the Antichrist will be controlling the seven continents of the world- Africa, Europe, Asia, North American, South America, Australia and Antarctica.

In Revelation 17:9 there is an allusion to the fact that the woman sits on seven mountains. In John's day, many believe this was a reference to the seven hills of Rome. Rome literally controlled the known world in the days of John and clearly the Antichrist will do the same thing in the days of the Tribulation. **Regardless of how you interpret this, the number seven indicates the Antichrist will rule the world.**

FACT #5- The Antichrist will hold the highest position of Satanic kingly royalty. 13:1e

Notice on his horns are ten diadems(διαδηματα). In Greek there were two kinds of crowns- the crown of victory, the strophanos(στεφανος) and the crown of royalty, the diadem(διαδημα). The Antichrist will have complete, worldwide royalty. He will have royalty above and beyond all other world leaders who have ever existed in history. He will hold the highest position of royalty ever held in this world. As E.W. Bullinger said it will be a "satanic royalty." William R. Newell observed, the Antichrist will have a royalty above all others and his royalty will be, "by their own united will."

FACT #6- The Antichrist will have blasphemous names. 13:1f

When most people think in terms of naming a child, they want a fitting name that typically relates to something or someone special. The Antichrist wants names associated with him that are blasphemous. **The world "blasphemous" literally means "speak against God."** Every name or title given to the Antichrist speaks that he is against God. The title "anti-christ" means against Christ. Think of titles we know about him- false Christ, son of destruction, abomination of desolation, man of sin, lawless one, liar, deceiver, all testify of his blasphemous nature. By virtue of the fact that his heads all have blasphemous names, we learn that all political powers will unite against God.

FACT #7- The Antichrist will be a vicious political leader. 13:2a

The Antichrist will be a beast who is like a leopard, a bear and a lion. This very imagery comes from Daniel 7:4-6. In Daniel, Greece was the leopard, Medo-Persia was the bear and Babylon was the lion. The Antichrist will be a combination of all of them. He will be the most cruel and vicious leader to have ever existed. He will be the worst political figure to ever live- he will quickly attack and tear people to shreds and totally devour them. Dr. Walvoord makes a good observation when he writes, "The point in having these three animals represented in the beast of the sea is that the final world ruler gathers into his power all the power of the preceding rulers and their territory, and...eventually becomes ruler over the entire globe."...(Prophecy Knowledge Handbook, p.582) He will be a vicious ruler of the world murdering any who get in his way or cross him the wrong way.

FACT #8- The Antichrist will be Satanic. 13:2b

The Antichrist will be the "zenith" of Satanic power. Satan is directly giving his power to the Antichrist. He will be the finest Satanic agent who has ever walked on this earth. He will be smart, shrewd, polished, and political. He will be Satan's best.

FACT #9- The Antichrist will be miraculously healed. 13:3

Something is going to happen to the Antichrist that will amaze the entire world. It will be broadcast all over the world and will further cement the desire for people to worship him. Apparently there will be some sort of assassination attempt that will leave the Antichrist in either a death state or near death state and he is brought back to life. Either the Antichrist or one of his major world leaders will receive a deadly wound to the head and then will be miraculously healed. There have been five views as to what this means:

- 1) A miraculous healing and reviving of the Roman Empire.
- 2) A miraculous healing of one of the Antichrist's key leaders of the world.
- 3) A miraculous healing of a severely wounded Antichrist.
- 4) A miraculous healing of a dead historical Antichrist- Satan brings back to life a leader of the past(Judas Iscariot, Nero, Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, John F. Kennedy)
- 5) A miraculous healing of a dead contemporary Antichrist- Satan raises him from a mortal wound(Antichrist surfaces after Rapture and he is targeted for assassination)

The first view makes the healing that of a nation and the last four views make the healing that of a human.

The first interpretation is based on the fact that just one of the heads is wounded, yet the beast does not die. In other words, even though the Roman Empire was seemingly dissolved, it has continued to live and will be brought back to life. However, one big problem with this interpretation is that when Christ returns He judges a person, not a political power(Rev.20:10). Furthermore, it may be doubted that too many in the world would stand in awe of a revived Roman Empire, because, frankly, not too many even have a clue as to its history, but verse 3 makes it clear that the entire world stands in awe of this amazing event.

The second through fifth interpretations are based on the following facts:

- 1) The context is discussing a specific world leader.
- 2) Other passages clearly discuss a powerful human Satanic leader(i.e.II Thess.2:8-10).
- 3) Revelation 13:12 indicates that the beast is worshipped and whenever someone is worshipped it requires a particular leader. In the Roman world, certain emperors were worshipped, not the Roman Empire. Furthermore it is said that the beast had a fatal wound healed.
- 4) The same word "slain" is used in Revelation 5:6 and it does refer to a literal Person(Jesus), who was literally killed.

More than likely, the Antichrist will suffer a mortal wound in one of his military actions.

This would not be too far fetched to think in terms of the fact that since he begins by making a peace treaty with Israel and takes some of the treasuries of the Arab world(Dan.11:43) there would be many who would want to assassinate him and apparently **someone will assassinate him and Satan will bring him back to life and the world will stand in awe of this.** Just as God brought His son back to life, so Satan will bring his son back to life too.

One of the issues that is difficult to ascertain is whether or not the Antichrist will be a contemporary figure, or an historical figure who is brought back to life. The perfect passive participle "as if it had been slain"(Rev.13:3) indicates that this wounding did take place

sometime prior to John seeing him. The text does not indicate how long prior to John seeing him that the fatal wound took place- possibly sometime after the Tribulation began or possibly before the Tribulation began. **For what it is worth, my opinion is that it will be a contemporary Antichrist, simply because the Bible says there has never been any who compare to him in all of history which would rule out all others.** In the chronology of Revelation, God will have raised up the two prophets in Jerusalem who were killed and Satan is going to do something similar with the Antichrist. One big difference is that the prophets ascend to heaven(Rev.11:11-12), whereas the Antichrist will remain on earth and then be cast into ever lasting fire.

FACT #10- The Antichrist will promote Satan worship. 13:4a

This is something Satan has always wanted- to be worshipped in the world as God(Is.14:12-14). The Antichrist will promote Satan worship and see that he is worshipped. He will demand that Satan be worshipped and testify of his amazing power coming from him.

FACT #11- The Antichrist will promote self worship. 13:4b

Dr. David Jeremiah said the Antichrist "...will command cultic worship of himself that will make Joseph Smith and Jim Jones look like boy scout leaders."(**Escape the Coming Night**, p.177). We know that this Antichrist will sit in the Temple in Jerusalem and demand to be worshipped as God(II Thess.2:4). He will have been brought back to life and the whole world will worship him. In fact, one of the testimonies is that no one is able to wage war with him because if you kill him, Satan brings him back to life. The Antichrist will seem to be invincible, like some alien invader who is impossible to kill.

FACT #12- The Antichrist will have a blasphemous mouth. 13:5-6

When most political leaders hold press conferences, they do so to promote their political ideology and their agenda. Most politicians know how to dance around certain questions and the know how to mesmerize an audience by their words. In fact, we have a phrase that alludes to this when we say "he speaks like a politician." This Antichrist will be totally different in that he will give press conferences and worldwide broadcasts to actually speak against God. He will arrogantly speak out against God and anything connected to Him.

Apparently, this is a key moment in the Tribulation. When the Antichrist has been brought back to life and sits in the Temple, he will start speaking against God at a new level. He will speak out against God's name, against God's temple, against God's people, against God's word and even against those who are in heaven. Anything that is sacred will be something he will speak against. **Satan does some of his most diabolical work through words but this will be his ultimate use of words.** As J. Vernon McGee observed, the Antichrist will be a big mouthed fellow, a big talker against God.

FACT #13- The Antichrist will be limited in time. 13:5b

God controls the length of time the Antichrist can exist and God limits his peak Satanic, destructive work to forty-two months, which is three and one half years. **It will be during the final 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation that the Antichrist will do his destructive things.** A good thing for God's people to always remember is that **all satanic activity and attacks are time controlled by God.**

FACT #14- The Antichrist will wage a war with believers. 13:7a

Most political wars are against other countries, this war will be against certain people- God's people. Notice carefully verse 7 which says "it was given to him." What this means is that God is the One who permits the Antichrist to make war against His people and God is the One who permits him to overcome them. Amos the prophet predicted this- "Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; Nevertheless I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob, declares the LORD, for behold **I am commanding and I will shake the house of Israel** among all the nations as grain in a sieve, but not a kernel will fall to the ground."(Amos 9:8-9). **Even in the worst times of Satanic setback and attack, God is still sovereign.** God calls the shots, Satan doesn't.

FACT #15- The Antichrist will have authority over the whole world. 13:7b

The Antichrist will dominate the world, by permission of God. This is God's way of saying to the world, "you wanted a world without Me, I'll let you have it." God is the One who gives authority to the Antichrist to do his evil all over the world- every tribe, every people, every language and every nation. It must break the heart of God now when he sees a world that tries to take Him out of everything. When the world says we don't want His word in our schools taught to our children or we don't want any prayer to God for our children when they graduate or we don't want our children to know that God created the heavens and the earth, we'd rather have them taught a pack of foolish make believe lies, that is taking God out of the world. When a nation defends the killing of a life God ordains in a mother or promotes evil homosexual activity, that is taking God out of the world. When political leaders say there is no connection between Church and State, that is taking God out of the world. During the Tribulation, God says to the world, okay, I'll give you what you want- a world without Me. It will be an evil, scary, lawless, vicious world and millions will die by the hands of the world dictator- the Antichrist.

FACT #16- The Antichrist will be worshipped by all unbelievers. 13:8-9

The Antichrist will demand you worship him and most will. The "book of life of the Lamb" is God's sovereign book of salvation, which has been written by God from "before" the foundation of the world and it contains the name of every person who will spend eternity with God(Eph.1:4). The plan to allow Christ to die for those written in the Lamb's book of life was designed before the world began. The doctrine of our election necessitated the cross work of Jesus Christ. **During the Tribulation, every person on earth who is not a believer will worship the Antichrist.**

Those of us who know the Lord can be so thankful that our name was put in the book before the world was formed because if God would have waited until we got into the world, He wouldn't have wanted any of us.

Notice verse 9 says if any has an ear, let him hear. What this contextually means is if one is on earth and worshipping the Antichrist, he is not in the Lamb's book of life. **But there is application of this verse to all people because all need to know that the only way to be right with God is to be in the Lamb's book of life and the only way to get into this book is to believe in the Lamb and His sacrificial work to take you to heaven.** If a person trusts in anything other than the Lamb, he trusts the wrong thing. If any one, at any time, in any dispensation, has an ear, let him hear this important truth and respond to it.

FACT #17- The Antichrist will be executed. 13:10

What goes around will come around for any one, including the Antichrist. God's people who are alive at this time can be comforted, knowing that the Antichrist, who butchered so many people, will himself be butchered. This ultimately will happen in Revelation 19:20. He will be thrown alive into the "Lake of Fire." Most have to die first to go there. He will be cast body and all.

We must observe that the worst Satanic agent of Satan is not punished until 3 ½ years of his evil work has been permitted. Don't be surprised if God permits evil people to operate for a time, He has it all in His time frame and in His sovereign plan.

FACT #18- The Antichrist will be associated with a specific mark and a specific number.
13:16-18

This identification mark which connects one to the Antichrist's name will be needed to buy or sell anything during the Tribulation. The mark is either on the right hand or forehead and it is either his name or his number which the number 6 6 6. We will discuss this next week. Just a few years ago, this concept was scoffed at by skeptics who could not see how it would be possible for this to control buying and selling all over the world. However, in recent years with computer technology and micro chips a tracking system like this could operate right now. The Antichrist will control the world and demand that his name or number be involved in everything people buy or sell.

FACT #19- The Antichrist will be closely connected to a harlot religious system. 17:3

The system is identified as a Babylonian harlot, which certainly would lend itself of Islamic religion. If we consider that the Antichrist initially begins as a friend to Israel and then speculate that he unites with the Islamic religion, we may easily see the support he would get to go on a world wide rampage against Israel.

FACT #20- The Antichrist will have allegiances willingly 17:13

In the course of history, there have been many who have tried to put the Roman Empire back together and rule it- Napoleon; Kaiser Wilhelm; Hitler, Mussolini, but there was always some

political snag. There will be no such snag with the Antichrist. People and powers will willingly give their allegiance to the Antichrist. They will not initially be forced to do so, but will willingly do so.

Over the years, there have been many speculations as to the identity of the Antichrist. Some names that have been suggested from past people in history are: Nero, Judas, Catholic Pope, John F. Kennedy, Henry Kissinger, Moshe Dyan(during 6 day war he led Israel and while looking through binoculars was shot in the head and as a result lost an eye, but did not die). Many have suggested Hitler could be brought back to life to fulfill the role of the Antichrist: 1) His hatred for Jews was the worst in history; 2) He died by shooting himself in the head; 3) His body was never recovered; 4) He is closely connected to the number 6(he killed six million Jews in six years-1939-45; he became chancellor in 1933; his swastika has six lines; his last name has six letters. William Barclay showed that if you take the English alphabet and give it numerical value- "A"=100; "B"=101; "C"=102 and apply it to the name Hitler, total is 666; Based on this many came to believe Satan would resurrect Hitler and he will be the Antichrist.

We think not to any of these speculations. We believe the Antichrist is now alive and is a relatively small time political player who will surface after the Rapture of the Church, which we believe to be very near.

It has been a privilege to have taken you through this series on the Antichrist. Let me leave you with six parting thoughts:

Parting Thought #1- There is a spirit of Antichrist at work right now, seeking to draw people away from the truth about faith in Jesus Christ.

Parting Thought #2- We base what we believe about the future on objective revealed truth, not subjective feelings or experiences or opinions.

Parting Thought #3- Satan can disguise himself in religious and political settings to influence people away from God and he will do the miraculous to do it.

Parting Thought #4- When people reject God's word and want to believe a lie and live a lie, God may give them up and let them have their deception all the way to Hell.

Parting Thought #5- God's people are never challenged to fear Satan or the Antichrist but are challenged to fear God and live our lives for Him.

Parting Thought #6- The only way into the Lamb's book of life, is to believe in the Lamb and His sacrificial work to give you eternal life. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you never need worry about God's wrath or the Antichrist.