

Antichrist: Satan's Man

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Revelation Chapters 13-16
Scripture Reading: Revelation 13:1-18

Revelation chapters 6-19 deal with a seven year time period known as "The Great Tribulation" (Matthew 24:21-35; Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1). During this time, much of the world's population will die. Others will just wish they had. The seventh trumpet is blowing (Revelation 11:15-19). Seven bowls or vials of judgment are about to be poured out on the earth (Revelation 15-16). Revelation 12-15 are giving us heavenly insight to catastrophic events on earth.

There is an unholy trio revealed. Revelation 12 showed us a dragon (Satan) who was cast out of heaven and is now making war on the saints on earth. Revelation 13 unveils the other two persons in this evil trinity: **The Beast from the Sea (Revelation 13:1-10)** and **The Beast from the Earth (Revelation 13:11-18)**.

The Beast from the Sea – The Antichrist

Before we talk about this person, we must realize other Scriptures prepare us for understanding him and others like him. Jesus warned us about false Christs who would come to deceive (Matthew 24:23-28). John warned of the spirit of antichrist and many antichrists, already among us (I John 4:1-3; 2:18-22; II John 7). This is a warning about false teachers and false teachings about Christ.

Please note that I John 2:18 makes it clear that, though there are many antichrists, we are to know that there is one coming who is the ultimate antichrist. In **II Thessalonians 2:1-10** Paul refers to him as "that man of sin (*lawlessness*)...the son of perdition...that Wicked (*lawless one*)...whose coming is after the working of Satan." See Daniel 7:7-12, 19-25; 8:8-12, 23-25; 9:26-27; 11:36-45.

The references to many antichrists have caused some confusion as to whether there will be a future singular person who is the ultimate Antichrist. As mentioned before, some feel that the prophecies of Revelation were fulfilled in the first century of the Church Age. Certainly, the behavior of the Flavian Caesars would serve as a powerful example of totalitarian government that persecuted Israel (A.D. 70) and the churches, even demanding emperor worship (cp. Revelation 13:11-12). If you will only study the details and the great magnitude of the events in Revelation 6-19 you cannot possibly find those events fulfilled yet (especially the visible return of Christ!).

There is a pattern repeated over and over in history: A political or religious leader appeals to a needy society and promises them prosperity, but the ungodly leader actually delivers them into bondage and destruction. Whether it is a Caesar, or a Hitler, or a Stalin, etc., they all serve as a model for us to learn that despots come and go. Through courage and faith, such oppressions and deceptions can be overcome – even if it costs us our lives.

These chapters in Revelation have been given to each generation as an inspiration to fight the good fight of faith (I Timothy 6:11-16); **to never give up** (I Corinthians 15:51-58; Galatians 6:9; I John 2:15-28; 5:4-5); **that Satan is already defeated** (Hebrews 2:14-15; Romans 16:20; I John 2:12-14; 3:8; 4:4; 5:18); **that God will not forsake us** (Romans 8:28-39; II Timothy 4:17-18).

A few thoughts about The Antichrist from Revelation 13:1-2

- He rises up from the sea – a reference to the Gentile nations (Revelation 17:15).
- He is directly linked to Satan by the seven heads, ten horns and seven crowns (Revelation 12:3 cp. 13:1; 17:3). His connection with Satan is also emphasized when he is described as one who comes up out of the bottomless pit (Revelation 11:7; 17:7-8).
- He has seven heads – a reference to the city of Rome (Revelation 17:9); also a reference to seven kings or kingdoms (**Revelation 17:10**). In Daniel 2:31-45 only five kingdoms were mentioned, starting with Babylon. However, there were two previous world empires before Babylon. So, the total list of kingdoms that Satan has influenced (Ephesians 6:12) would be Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece (*"five have fallen"*), Rome (*"one is"* i.e. at the time of the Apostle John) and the kingdom of Antichrist (*"the other has not yet come"*).
- He has ten horns and ten crowns – a reference to a confederation of ten nations, probably European. If the two iron legs in Daniel 2:31-45 refers to Rome, then the iron and clay mixed feet extending from the legs would be some revival of the old Roman Empire.
- He is described as a beast and is associated with animals that can be identified in Daniel 7.

Some basic things that The Antichrist will cause to happen on earth (Revelation 13:3-10).

- Wonder (Revelation 13:3) when he receives a deadly wound and is healed.
- Worship of Satan and of the Antichrist (Revelation 13:4,8). Something Satan attempted with the true Christ (Matthew 4:8-10).
- Words of power, persuasion and blasphemy (Revelation 13:5-6 cp. II Thessalonians 2:1-12).
- War against the saints (Revelation 13:7-10 cp. Daniel 7:25). The Beast first appeared to bring peace (Revelation 6:2 ~ note the bow without arrows, i.e. conquering through peace treaties and agreements). Antichrist shall make a covenant with Israel that he will break later. See Daniel 9:27.

The Beast from the Earth – The False Prophet

He is called "the false prophet" in Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10. He is in charge of public relations. As Satan represents the unholy father and The Beast represents the unholy son or messiah, so the false prophet completes the unholy trinity usurping the place of Holy Spirit. In Revelation 13:11-18 we see him having horns like a lamb, but no crown. His power is religious, not political. He speaks like a dragon (Satan). He directs people to worship the Beast. He does miracles, signs and wonders. He forces humanity to show their allegiance to the Beast by receiving a mark which actually insures their damnation. He is allowed to inflict the death penalty to those who don't comply.

Do not be discouraged!

Chapter 13 is full of frightful things, but the remainder of the book will swallow up Satan's threats and resound in the words of victory! Notice the positive and powerful voices in Revelation 14:2-3, 6-12, 13, 15; 15:1-4; 16:1, 17-18.