

# **REVELATION 13 HOW TO ESCAPE THE MARK OF THE BEAST**

Imagine what it would be like if a perfect leader were to step forward tomorrow. Add to that a man who appears seemingly from no where, almost a person from the past who rolls into one all the great leaders of the world. Imagine one man

- ✓ with the strength of a Caesar,
- ✓ the military genius of an Alexander,
- ✓ the mesmerizing oratory of a Hitler,
- ✓ the warmth of a Ronald Regan,
- ✓ the ruthless determination of a Genghis Khan and
- ✓ The apparent compassion and tenderness of Jesus Christ!

Impossible? No, he is coming. He may well be walking around today. Ever since Eden, mankind has sought to be 'like God' and in this insatiable quest has come the glorification of the 'creature more than the Creator.' This exaltation of man has called for men of strong persuasion to be able to rise to extreme heights of power. In history these have been the Ramses, Alexanders, the Caesars and Napoleons. But there is a man on the horizon whose rise shall be as the sun's rays across the earth; he shall be the embodiment of such power and personage that the world has never seen. The entire world shall seek after him as after no other leader ever before.

He will be one who seems to stop all atomic bomb threats.

One that would take charge and stop all the simmering hatred and volatile ethnic conflicts around the planet.

One that will stop the global fear of terrorism, biological warfare and food shortages.

He also seems to triumph a global form of religion that at last all the world can agree to. It may even be a counterfeit version of Christianity (anti in place of Christ).

Jesus warned of a day of deception coming that was so intoxicating even God's children would succumb without His intervention. Revelation 13 shows the second flood, which will destroy our world. The first Flood in Genesis was with water from God to judge sinful humanity. This second flood is with deception from Satan to seal the doom of humans unwilling to follow the Lord.

Perhaps he will step into the world from a battle field, maybe from the United Nations or even more likely, perhaps a glowing metallic UFO will slowly descend in a globally watched spot and before the wondering eyes of all the inhabitants of the earth our will step the ultimate Superman - the First Beast.

### STAND AND READ REVELATION 13

In concise word pictures he describes the culmination of Eden's lies as being:

1. SUBMIT TO JESUS' PERFECT AUTHORITY TO ESCAPE SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT AUTHORITY 12:17 - 13:2
2. TRUST JESUS' PERFECT RESURRECTION TO ESCAPE SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT RESURRECTION 13:3 - 5
3. CLAIM CHRIST'S HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP TO ESCAPE SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT CITIZENSHIP 13:6. 10
4. OFFER JESUS TRUE WORSHIP TO ESCAPE SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT WORSHIP 13:11 - 15
5. REST IN JESUS' PERFECT SECURITY TO ESCAPE SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT SECURITY (the mark) 13:16-18

Would it surprise you to know that Americans in 1998 are actually LOOKING for an ET to come and help? According to pollsters 72% of America believes that there is life out there beyond the earth (extra-terrestrial life); 48% believe UFO's are real and 15% have seen one with 3% of Americans (that's 8.4 million of us) have abducted by aliens into a UFO.

One noted journalist after studying UFOs and those in contact with them concluded, "The earth is not inhabited by them, it is infested." What do UFOs do to the Word of God and our faith?

1. UFOs would support naturalistic evolution (Mar's Rock; water on Jupiter's moon) to the point of perfection, overcoming death, disease, etc.
2. ETs lessen the incarnation of Jesus (there are many aliens out there, all-powerful).
3. The earth is just an insignificant dot in the Universe.
4. Man is not the crown of God's creation.
5. Sin is just our problem, or not even a problem.

6. Hope lies in contact with some of these "higher" life forms.
7. Christ's death was a local not cosmic event.
8. The Word of God is anachronistic, local and out of touch with the big picture of the Cosmos.
9. We are not in God's image.

THE WORLD  
IS HEADING TOWARD  
UNPRECEDENTED DAYS OF DECEPTION

Matthew 24:24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. (Now check v. 4, 5, 11)

Luke 21:11 "And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

WE MUST BE  
LOVING THE TRUTH.

How? First, see how evil Satan really is. Satan is as to:

Background	(adversary, accuser, tempter)
Looks	(dragon, serpent)
Characteristics	(liar, murderer, ruler, worthless)
Activities	(accuser, tempter)

Thus, The Ultimate Father of all Beasts!

Secondly and most importantly, we must love the One Who is the TRUTH. The beauty of the self-existing, endless perfection, which is God is seen in His attributes:

He our God is God the Incomprehensible, Holy in His Tri-unity, Self-existent in His Eternity, Self-sufficient in His plentitude, Eternal in His Magnitude, Endless in His Infinitude, Immutable in His Divine Omniscience, Fathomless in His Wisdom, Omnipotent in His Ability,

Divinely Transendent in His Omnipresence, Faithful in His Goodness,  
Merciful in His Grace, Lovely in His Holiness, Sovereignly our God!

But the real beauty is in the names God has revealed Himself through. They are intimate, personal and utterly irresistably beautiful! Adore the Lord God Almighty in His Matchless names as God:

God (Gen. 1:1); Most High Possessor of Heaven and Earth (Gen. 14:8-22); Almighty God (Gen. 17:1); All Seeing (El Rohe) (Gen. 16:13); Judge of All the Earth (Gen. 18:25); Everlasting God (Gen. 21:33); All Providing God (Yahweh Jireh) (Gen. 22:14); God of Heaven and Earth (Gen. 24:3); All Healing God (Yahweh Rapheka) (Ex. 15:26); Merciful God (Deut. 4:31); Faithful God (Deut. 7:9); Holy God (Josh. 24:19); 13. God of Peace or Completeness (Yahweh Shalom) (Judges 6:24); Gracious God (Neh. 9:31)

LETS JUST WORSHIP OUR GOD  
#88 FAIREST LORD JESUS STANZA 1,4

JESUS IMITATED BY THE ANTICHRIST Tonight, meet the Beast. As we examine at the person of the Antichrist, drawn in the words of the apostle John—and see him whose cause is not only to be “anti-” (opposed), but also “anti-” (the exact inverse of) Christ Jesus the Lord of Glory.

Now what is the counterfeit of Satan imitating?

1. HIS FALSE AUTHORITY ( the "beast") 12:17 - 13:2 is imitating the kingdom of God, the king of kings, the lord of lords, the creator.
2. HIS FALSE RESURRECTION (the "wonder")13:3 - 5 is imitating the prince of life, the first born from the dead, the empty tomb, the way, the truth and the only hope.
3. HIS FALSE CITIZENSHIP (the "earth dwellers") 13:6 - 10 is imitating the wonders of our father's house he is preparing, The heavenly city, the streets of gold, the water of life and God with us. Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus, (NKJV)
4. HIS FALSE WORSHIP OR RELIGION (the “earth” worship) 13:11-15, is imitating the true worship of the living and true God in spirit and in truth, not self-styled but biblical.
5. HIS FALSE SECURITY (the "mark") 13:16-18, is imitating the sealing by the holy spirit of those in the book of life, betrothed to Christ, his very bride, kept and protected by the power of God unto salvation.

Either the beautiful God of the universe or the beast!

Which will it be? You must choose.

Reference	Counterfeit	Real Thing
12:17-13:2	False Ruler, Authority vs. Government	Isaiah 9:6, Kingdom of God
13:3-5	False Resurrection	Empty Tomb
13:6-10	False Citizenship	Heaven (enrolled) Heb. 12:23
13:11-15	False Worship	Spiritual Worship
13:16-18	False Security	Sealed by Holy Spirit

#### THE MAN OF SIN REVEALED AS THE ANTICHRIST OPPOSED TO THE THINGS OF CHRIST.

1. He comes from the place of darkness, not light, in the name of Satan
    - ✓ Revelation 11:7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. OPPOSITE OF Jesus
    - ✓ John 6:38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.
  2. He comes as a terrible beast in awesome power (Rev. 13:2). "And the beast which I saw was like a leopard...and the dragon gave him great power." This is in opposition to the Lamb, slain, who "stood in the midst of the elders" (Rev. 5:6-9).
  3. He is given all his power from Satan (Rev. 13:2), which is in opposition to Him Who is empowered of God (Mt. 28:18; 11:27).
  4. He is a loud and evil orator who can move the masses by rhetoric (Rev. 13:5). "A mouth speaking blasphemies," he is in opposition to the meek and quiet Lamb Who is declared to be the Son of God (Rev. 5:12; Rom. 1:4), of Whom it was said, "Never man spake like this" (John 7:46).
  5. He is the fullness of sin and evil (II Thess. 2:3, 7-8), whereas the Lord Christ is the One Who "knew no sin" (II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15).
  6. He usurps authority over all and wars to control (Rev. 13:7-8), in opposition to the saints of the Lord Jesus, and to their Lamb.
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1. SUPER INTELLIGENCE: The Antichrist has a Super Mind in Daniel 7:8 "I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, [were] eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words. (NKJV)

2. SUPER COMMUNICATOR: The Antichrist is Super Mouth in Daniel 7:8 and a mouth speaking pompous words. (NKJV)
3. SUPER POLITICIAN: The Antichrist is Super Man (politician) in Revelation 6:2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. (NKJV); Daniel 11:21 "And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. (NKJV).
4. SUPER BUSINESSMAN: The Antichrist is Super Money in Daniel 8:25 "Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt [himself] in his heart. He shall destroy many in [their] prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without [human] means. (NKJV). See also Rev. 18.
5. SUPER GENERAL: The Antichrist is Super Master (military) in Daniel 7:23 Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be A fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all [other] kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces. (NKJV); Revelation 13:4-7 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who [is] like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?", 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. (NKJV). He rules the world!
6. SUPER EGO: The Antichrist is Super Megalomaniac (ego) in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 Let no one deceive you by any means; for [that Day will not come] unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (NKJV).

The Man of Sin is revealed as an opposite to Christ and as a counterpart of the truth.

1. He is first of all an exact opposite and counterfeit, image of God. He puts himself in the place of God (Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3).
2. He, secondly, is the second personage in an unholy trinity made up of the Dragon (Satan), the Beast (Antichrist), and the False Prophet (Anti-Spirit); Rev. 16:13.
3. He is, next, one who imitates by the power of Satan, a counterfeit resurrection that is to counter the glorious work of our Lord (Rev. 5:6; 13:3,12).
4. He is also the recipient of false worship and of adoration which is only to be due our Lord (Rev. 13:3-4).
5. He has a ministry that is of very close similarity to that which our Lord performed, a 3 ½ year reign on earth (Rev. 12:6; 13:5).

6. He is, finally, the head of his church, that filthy harlot who is his prostituted wife (Rev. 17), which is an exact counterfeit of all the external facets of the true holy Bride (Eph. 5:25-27), but with none of the internal changes wrought by the Spirit.

How do we escape the Mark of the Beast? Three keys:

1. RESEARCH YOUR ADDRESS LABEL:
  - ✓ Are you a citizen of Heaven or an Earth-dweller?
  - ✓ Where are you headed?
2. TURN ON THE SECURITY SYSTEM:
  - ✓ Are you an authentic, signed original?
  - ✓ Are you sealed as a secure container of heavenly treasure?
3. INVESTIGATE THE REAL THING:
  - ✓ How well do you know Jesus by personal contact?
  - ✓ How quickly do you recognize Him in His Book?

WE ARE SECURE BECAUSE GOD'S SPIRIT SEALS US

- ✓ 2 Corinthians 1:22a who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

The ancient world was built around the security of sealed shipments. With all the perils of the old world it was imperative that a customer knew his shipment was untainted from the journey to him. Thus all the ancients recognized the sealing of goods. This was accomplished by the pressing of a signet ring into soft wax across the opening of a document, tomb, sealed box and so on. Holy spirit "Seals" us = security of divine ownership. He is our precious possession. The seal assured three things:

- ✓ Certified the contents as authentic.
- ✓ Signified the presence of the owner.
- ✓ Verified the image of the signet was transferred.

WE ARE SECURE BECAUSE GOD'S SPIRIT SECURES 2 Corinthians 1:22b and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Holy Spirit also given to us as a pledge. God delivered us our engagement ring = security of divine protection

The Holy Spirit signs each saint of God as an authentic original masterpiece. Holy Spirit is poured out on us by our Heavenly Father. Thus to have been "anointed" means we bear the signature of God. This signing promises us the security of divine authenticity.

- ✓ GOD'S GIFT IS GRACIOUS: John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

- ✓ GOD'S SUPPLY IS INEXHAUSTIBLE: John 3: 34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.
- ✓ GOD'S ANOINTING IS PERSONAL: I John 2: 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.

### WHAT IS THE ENDING WE CITIZENS OF HEAVEN AWAIT?

- ✓ CHRIST'S INTIMACY: WE ARE GIVEN A NAME, BECAUSE WE ARE A LOVE GIFT FROM THE FATHER TO THE SON! John 17: 24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (KJV)
- ✓ CHRIST'S ADOPTION: Romans 8: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together. (KJV)
- ✓ CHRIST'S CLOTHING: Then what indescribable joy to hear our Father say, "Bring the best robe and put it on him." Think of it, a robe of white, bright as the day, pure as the light! When the Lord Jesus was transfigured on the mount, something happened not only to His countenance, something happened also to His clothes. His raiment became white as the light. What a reward for faithfulness, to have a robe like that draped around the shoulders and to be invited to walk the shining ways of glory in light transfigured clothes. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these
- ✓ CHRIST'S CONFESSION: Revelation 3: 5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
- ✓ What an unbelievable promise! Jesus with His nail scarred hands outstretched, welcomes us through the door of death, walks with us through the dark valley and welcomes us to Glory. But not as the fluttering host that slips away, no, He walks by us down the golden streets. He leads us up the broad main street of River of the water of life all around us the saints of all the ages look on in wonder as again Jesus leads one of His precious blood bought brothers and sisters, up to meet their Father in Heaven. And then, on the Throne in blazing light, with a river of fire flowing out before Him, and billions of angels standing around Him the Ancient of Days looks upon His Beloved Son walking toward Him. And there holding the hand of Jesus we hear Him call us by our new name, the one He gave us, our name. And standing there before the throne, God will hear Jesus present us by name as His beloved and precious one.



CONCLUSION: So, this Antichrist is the sum of counterfeit Christianity; endowed with the spirit of the Devil, he seeks to counterfeit the truth. This day—are you seeking outward signs or trusting in a mere outward conformity and profession, rather than in an inward change? Let us look to the Lamb slain, this day, and be set free from Satan’s grasping after our attention with his counterfeits!

One Leader Or The Other Is Preparing Your Future. Only One Way Is True And Leads To Life.

Three Issues Are At Stake In Your Soul Tonight:

1. The first issue has to do with YOUR RESPONSE. You can either believe or disbelieve the word of God,
2. The second issue has to do with YOUR DESTINY *which* hangs in the balance. Again, God only gives two choices - eternal life or eternal death., Forgiveness or doom, hope or horror, deliverance or doom.
3. The final issue is the critical area of YOUR CHOICE. You must choose to receive the free gift of Christ for you or reject it. Take the nail pierced hand or turn away, bow and give up everything for him or miserably fail in your vain attempts to rescue yourself.

#409 I know Whom

It is composed of the five counterfeits of Revelation 13:

12: 1 7- 13: 2	False Authority - Beast False Government or Ruler	Not King of Kings, Lord of Lords
12: 3- 5	False Resurrection - Wonder	Not Empty Tomb, Not First Born from the Dead, Jesus
12: 6- 10	False Citizenship - earth	Not Heaven
12: 1 1-15	False Religion - human	Not true spiritual worship
12: 1 6-18	False Mark of Security	Not Sealed by the Holy Spirit in Book of Life

If the world is being overrun with counterfeits of God:

1. Examine yourself 2 Cor. 13: 5

## 2. Pass the test 1 Jn. 4:1-15

CHRIST came from heaven (John 6:38)	the Antichrist will come from hell (Rev. 11:7)
CHRIST came in His Father's name (John 5:43)	the Antichrist will come in his own name (John 5:43)
CHRIST humbled Himself (Phil. 2:8)	the Antichrist will exalt himself (2 Thess. 2:4)
CHRIST was despised and afflicted (Is. 53:3)	the Antichrist will be admired and lauded (Rev. 13:3, 4)
CHRIST came to do His Father's will (John 6:38)	the Antichrist will come to do his own will (Dan. 11:36)
CHRIST came to save (Luke 19:10)	the Antichrist will come to destroy (Dan. 8:24)
CHRIST is the Good Shepherd (John 10)	the Antichrist will be the Evil Shepherd (Zech. 11:16, 17)
CHRIST is the Truth (John 14:6)	the Antichrist will be "the lie" (2 Thess. 2:11)
Christ is the Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16)	the Antichrist will be "The Mystery of Iniquity," Satan manifested in the flesh (2 Thess. 2:7-9), the living son of Satan

The phrase "inhabiters of the earth" (or "them that dwell on the earth") is found twelve times in Revelation (3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10 [twice]; 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:2, 8). It means much more than "people who live on the earth," for that is where all living people reside. Instead, it refers to a kind of people: those who live for the earth and the things of the earth. These are just the opposite of people who have their citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:18–21). John described this worldly sort well in his first epistle (1 John 2:15–17), and later in this prophecy he again makes it clear that "earth-dwellers" are not born again (Revelation 13:8).

### The Prince That Shall Come

The Coming World Leader--commonly known as the Antichrist --has 33 titles in the Old Testament and 13 in the New Testament. One of these, The Prince That Shall Come, comes from Daniel 9:26-27 in which the people of the

Prince that shall come would destroy the city and the sanctuary. The fulfillment occurred in history when the Roman legions under Titus Vespasian destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 A.D. This reflexive reference to the Romans in Daniel 9:26 is one of several reasons why most Bible scholars view the future Prince that shall come as a Roman, or European.

REVELATION 13  
PARENTHESIS: THE FIFTH AND SIXTH PERSONS:  
THE TWO BEASTS.

- ✓ The beast out of the sea (vs. 1-10).
- ✓ The Roman Empire is in view in vs. 1-3; the last individual emperor is seen in verses 4-10 (Scofield, Pentecost, Scott, Ironside).
- ✓ He is the Roman prince of Daniel 9 who will break his covenant with the Jews at the middle of the week.
- ✓ He is the antichrist, the man of lawlessness (Pentecost, Seiss, Newell).
- ✓ Some think that he is raised from the dead - Seiss, Newell (v. 3).
- ✓ The beast out of the earth (vs. 11-18).
- ✓ He is a religious leader, the false prophet, apparently a Jew, who causes men to worship the first beast.
- ✓ He has the power to do miracles to deceive men (vs. 14-15).
- ✓ Some call him the antichrist, the one instead of Christ (Scott, Ironside, Gaebelein, Kelly).
- ✓ It is better to make antichrist one opposed to Christ (Pentecost, etc.).
- ✓ These beasts can make war with the saints and overcome them (v. 7).
- ✓ All who are not elect will worship the first beast (v. 8).
- ✓ By economic warfare they can starve out those who will not worship the first beast (vs. 16-17).
  
- ✓ *The peacemaker (Rev. 6: 1–2)*. Certainly, this man will be on the scene before the Rapture of the church. He will be a peaceful political leader who unites ten nations of Europe into a strong power bloc (see Rev. 17:12–13). The rider on the white horse imitates Christ (Rev. 19:11ff). He goes forth to conquer peacefully: he has a bow, but no arrows. He will bring a brief time of peace to the world (1 Thes. 5:1–3) before the storm of the Day of the Lord breaks loose.
- ✓ *The protector (Dan. 9:24–27)*. We cannot examine the exciting details of this prophecy, but it is important to note several facts. First, the prophecy applies to Israel, Jerusalem, and the temple, and not to the church. Second, it announces the time when Messiah will come and accomplish certain purposes for the Jewish people. The word *week* refers to a period of 7 years; 70 weeks are equal to 490 years. Note that these 490 years are divided into three parts: 7 weeks or 49 years, during which the city

would be rebuilt; 62 weeks or 434 years, at the end of which time Messiah would come and be cut off; 1 week or 7 years, during which a "prince" would have a covenant with Israel. The seventieth week will start with the arrival of Antichrist. He will make a covenant with Israel to protect her and permit her to rebuild her temple. This covenant will be for seven years. *He will temporarily solve the Middle East crisis.* Israel will rebuild her temple in peaceful times. It is the signing of this covenant, not the Rapture of the church, that signals the start of Daniel's seventieth week, that seven-year period known as the Day of the Lord.

- ✓ *The peace-breaker (Dan. 9:27).* After three and one-half years, Antichrist will break his covenant with the Jews *and take over their temple.* This was what Paul termed "the falling away" (2 Thes. 2:3b). A better translation would be "the rebellion, the apostasy." Not simply *a* rebellion, but *the* rebellion. Up to this point, Antichrist has been a peacemaking leader of ten European nations, obligated to protect Israel. But now he reveals his true character by taking over the Jewish temple and demanding that the world worship him (see Rev. 13). Since Antichrist will be energized by Satan, it is no surprise that he will seek worship; for Satan has always wanted the worship of the world. There have been various "apostasies" in church history, when groups have turned away from God's truth; but this final rebellion will be the greatest of all. The man of sin will oppose everything that belongs to any other religion, true or false. He will organize a world church that will, by worshiping him, worship Satan. Our Lord predicted this apostasy; He called it "the abomination of desolation" (Matt. 24:15), a clear reference to Daniel 9:27. The world will wonder at this great leader who, with Satan's power, will perform signs and wonders and deceive the nations.
- ✓ *The persecutor (Rev. 13:15–17).* Most prophetic students agree that the abomination of desolation will occur three and one-half years after the Antichrist makes his covenant with the Jews. (Dan. 9:27—"in the midst of the week" or three and one-half years.) This will usher in a period of intense persecution and Tribulation. Jesus said, "For then shall be great Tribulation" (Matt. 24:21). Satan will vent his wrath against Israel. He will so control the world's economic system that citizens must bear "the mark of the beast" to be able to buy and sell (Rev. 13:16–17).
- ✓ *The prisoner (Rev. 19:11–21).* Keep in mind that God has a timetable. Satan will not be permitted to control the world forever. Jesus Christ will return "in power and great glory" and take Antichrist and his associates prisoner—and also Satan—and cast them into the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1–3). This will be the climax of the great Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:16) during which the nations of the world unite with Satan to fight Jesus Christ. This leads to our next event.

- ✓ The 7 heads refers to 7 historical kingdoms: Sumeria, Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ The seven heads represent seven mountains (Rev. 17:9); and since Rome was built on seven hills, this must be a veiled reference to that powerful city (see Rev. 17:18). It would be a most meaningful allusion in John's day!
- ✓ The ten horns represent ten kingdoms (Dan. 7:24; Rev. 17:12). It appears that "the beast" will head a "United States of Europe," a revived Roman Empire, before taking over as world dictator. All nations will no doubt admire and thank him for the "peace" he has achieved, little realizing the sorrow and destruction he will bring to the world.

The three animals named in Revelation 13:2 remind us of the four beasts Daniel saw in his dream (Dan. 7): a lion (Babylon), a bear (Media-Persia), a leopard (Greece), and a "terrible beast" (the Antichrist). John saw these animals, or kingdoms, in reverse order since he was looking *back*, while Daniel was looking *ahead*. The final world empire will be rooted in all the previous empires and unite in one their evil and power. Added to the ferocity of these beasts will be Satan's own power, throne, and authority!

Once Satan presents his great "masterpiece," the counterfeit Christ, to the world, what will happen next?

First, there will be *wonder* (Rev. 13:3). Certainly a terrified world will wonder at Antichrist's power and his sudden rise to international fame and authority. But mankind will also wonder at the healing of his "wound." What is this "wound"? John does not explain it, but perhaps what he later wrote (Rev. 17:9–13) can help interpret the symbolism. This "wound" must be important, because John mentioned it three times (Rev. 13:3, 12, 14), including the fact that it was sword-inflicted.

The seven heads represent seven mountains, but also seven kings or kingdoms (Rev. 17:10). Antichrist or "the beast" is one of these seven kings (Rev. 17:11), but he is also the eighth. Apparently, he reigns twice; but how can this be? The suggestion has been made that "the beast" will be a European leader who will form a ten-nation federation (Rev. 17:12), but be slain in the process. Revelation 11:7 and 17:8 state that "the beast" will ascend out of the abyss. Is it possible that Satan will (with God's permission) resurrect a man from the dead? If Satan has power to give life to a dead idol (Rev. 13:15), could he not also give life to a dead body?

If "the beast" ruled as one of the seven kings, was slain, and then raised up again, he could rule as the eighth king. If, on the other hand, the image is seen representing *kingdoms* rather than individuals, we would have the reemergence of a "dead kingdom" on the world scene. However, it would be

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<sup>1</sup> See Morris, p. 237.

difficult to understand how a kingdom could be slain by a sword. It is best, I think, to apply this prophecy to individual persons.

Not only will there be wonder, but there will also be *worship* (Rev. 13:4). Worship is the one thing Satan has always wanted (Matt. 4:8–10), and he will receive it through “the beast.” The second “beast,” described in the last half of this chapter, will organize and promote the worship of Antichrist, making it the official religion of the world!

There will also be *words* (Rev. 13:5–6). Almost all dictators have risen to power by controlling people with their words. Some of us can recall when Adolf Hitler was rising to power, and know now how he mesmerized huge crowds with his speeches. Satan will make “the beast” a great orator, whose addresses will blaspheme God, His name, His tabernacle (heaven), and the saints in heaven. Since Satan will have recently been cast out of heaven, this blasphemy is to be expected.

Finally, there will be *war* (Rev. 13:7–10). God will permit Antichrist to war against His people (“wear out the saints,” Dan. 7:25) and even to defeat some of them. John prophesied that some of the saints will be captured and some will be martyred. But because of their faith, they will have patience, or endurance (see Heb. 6:12; Rev. 1:9), and will not deny the Lord in spite of persecution and death.

The world’s population will be divided: those who are saved, with their names in God’s book, will not submit to “the beast”; those who are lost—the earth-dwellers—will worship “the beast” and do his bidding. Note that Revelation 13:9 applies this truth to “any man,” no matter in which age he may live. Certainly in John’s day, this was meaningful; for every Roman citizen had to acknowledge, “Caesar is Lord.” Likewise in every age of the church, true believers have had to take their stand for Christ, come what may.

What is “the abomination of desolation”? It is the image of “the beast,” set up in the temple in Jerusalem. An idol is bad enough; but setting it up in the temple is the height of all blasphemy. Since Satan could not command worship in heaven, he will go to the next best place—the Jewish temple in the Holy City (see Dan. 8:9–14).

The false prophet, energized by Satan, will perform his “lying wonders” and even duplicate some of the signs performed by the two witnesses (Rev. 13:13; see also 11:5). Up to this time, the two witnesses have been ministering at the temple in Jerusalem, but “the beast” will slay them and take over the temple. When God raises the two witnesses from the dead and takes them to heaven, the false prophet will answer that challenge by giving life to the image of “the beast.” Not only will the image move, but it will speak!

Not content to control people through religious deceit, the false prophet will institute strong economic measures as well. Everybody (except

believers; Rev. 20:4) will receive a special mark in order to buy or sell; but the only way to get that mark is to submit to “the beast” and worship him. Surely this is a strong allusion to the Caesar worship in the Roman Empire, but this same policy has been used by political leaders throughout history.

This special mark is the name or number of “the beast”—the mystical 666. In the ancient world, the letters of the alphabet were used for numbers, both in Greek and Hebrew; and Bible students have been attempting for years to unravel the mystery of this name and number. If you work at it hard enough, almost *any* name will fit!

Since man was created on the sixth day, six is the number of man. Creation was made for man and likewise has the number six stamped on it: twenty-four hours to a day (4 x 6), twelve months to a year (2 x 6). Seven is the number of perfection and fullness, but six is the “human number,” just short of perfection.

Despite all man’s imaginative calculations, we must confess that no one knows the meaning of this number and name. No doubt believers on earth at that time will understand it clearly. The “satanic trinity” cannot claim the number seven; it must settle for 666.

This much is sure: in recent years, we have seen a worldwide increase in the use of numbers for identification. In the United States, a person’s Social Security number is indispensable. In fact, numbers are more important to computers than names! Perhaps this is an advance warning of what will happen on earth when “the beast” is in control.

We have reached the middle of the Tribulation in our study, but we are not yet ready for the return of the Lord. Before John revealed how the great drama will climax, he paused to overview great events to come; and that will be our next topic.

An antichristian system pervades our world, and true believers must not be a part of it (1 John 2:15–17). We must shun false worship (1 Cor. 10:14–22), that we may be found faithful to the Lord in these last days! (2 Tim. 3) 2

In 2 Peter 2:3, Peter pointed out that the false teachers used “feigned words.” The Greek word is *plastos*, from which we get our English word *plastic*. Plastic words! Words that can be twisted to mean anything you want them to mean! The false teachers use our vocabulary, but they do not use our dictionary. They talk about “salvation,” “inspiration,” and the great words of the Christian faith, but they do not mean what we mean. Immature and untaught believers hear these preachers or read their books and think that these men are sound in the faith, but they are not.

Satan is a liar and his ministers are liars. They use the Bible, not to enlighten, but to deceive. They follow the same pattern Satan followed when

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2Wiersbe, Warren W., *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1997.

he deceived Eve (Gen. 3:1–6). First, he questioned God’s Word—“Yea, hath God said?” Then he denied God’s Word—“Ye shall not surely die.” Finally, he substituted his own lie—“Ye shall be as gods.”

Keep in mind that these apostate teachers are not innocently ignorant of the Word, as was Apollos (Acts 18:24–28). They know the truth but they deliberately reject it. I read about a liberal pastor who was asked to read a paper at a ministerial conference on “Paul’s views of justification.” He read a paper that superbly presented the truth of the Gospel and justification by faith.

“I didn’t know you believed that,” a friend said to him after the meeting.

“I don’t believe it,” the liberal pastor replied. “They didn’t ask me for *my* views of justification. They asked for Paul’s!”

*Denial (v. 1b)*. False teachers are better known for what they deny than what they affirm. They deny the inspiration of the Bible, the sinfulness of man, the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross, salvation by faith alone, and even the reality of eternal judgment. They especially deny the deity of Jesus Christ, for they know that if they can do away with His deity they can destroy the entire body of Christian truth. Christianity is Christ, and if He is not what He claims to be, there is no Christian faith.

It must be made clear that these false teachers are unsaved. They are compared to dogs and pigs, not to sheep (2 Peter 2:22). Jude describes these same people, and in Jude 19 he clearly states, “having not the Spirit.” If a person does not have the Spirit of God within, he is not a child of God (Rom. 8:9). He may pretend to be saved and even become a member or an officer in a fundamental church, but eventually he will deny the Lord.

In what sense were these people “bought” by the Lord? While it is true that Jesus Christ died for the church (Eph. 5:25), it is also true that He died for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2). He is the merchant who purchased the whole field (the world) that He might acquire the treasure in it (Matt. 13:44). When it comes to *application*, our Lord’s atonement is limited to those who believe. But when it comes to *efficacy*, His death is sufficient for the whole world. He purchased even those who reject Him and deny Him! This makes their condemnation even greater.

Even good and godly Christians may disagree on fine points of doctrine, but they all agree on the person and work of Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God and God the Son. He is the only Saviour. To deny this is to condemn your own soul. 3