

# The Antichrist

## Sane and Sensible Perspectives on the Last Days

Here's the villain of the story. This archenemy of humanity and of the Lord Himself is going to make his way onto the world stage several years before Jesus arrives. And there is nothing we can do to stop him. Trained by the Enemy and likely possessed by him, this cruel deceiver will be deceived. He will be fully convinced he can succeed in destroying the church, enslaving humanity, and seizing the earth as his own dominion. But the Lord will overthrow him "with the breath of his mouth" and destroy him "by the splendor of his coming." Don't overrate his power, but don't underrate his cruelty. Here's what we can know about him now.



**Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. 2**

Thessalonians 2:3-4 ESV

## Chief Characteristics

Whole books are written about most of these crucial components. These characteristics are summaries of what is grounded in scripture, not fabricated through speculation.<sup>1</sup> Speculation is trying to "see" more than we are being shown. What we see by Biblical revelation is real enough, but a fuller view will only come as these still distant components draw nearer.

The antichrist is on the earth now, preparing to take his place on the world scene. All the other elements and prophetic signs are in place, so he must be close at hand. The only question about this is whether we're seeing him now without recognizing who, or what, he will become. He may be entirely hidden away. On the other hand, he may be a political leader known to all, or just rising from obscurity. He may be a tech genius or new age guru, becoming known and followed, waiting his moment. He may be working on ways to end famines and plagues, gaining a reputation as a problem solver.

Very likely, he is already well known to the worst players in the deep state, those who are most closely attached to their dark lord. He will certainly be involved in luciferin worship with them, though this will of course be hidden from public view. He may already be pulling the strings which control the beast system as it extends its power and influence upon the earth. Others have been building that monstrosity for decades, if not centuries, behind the scenes. They have prepared it for him. Some of them know who he is and are already bowing to his right to rule over them. We will see him, too. Soon.

What should we be looking for?



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## 1. Political and Military Power

Since the antichrist will be a world political leader, we can turn our attention to those who are rising on the world scene, looking for whoever may be jockeying for position. Keep in mind that he will seem to be a kind of political savior, someone who really cares for world peace, for alleviating hunger and poverty and for advancements in science. He will likely rise out of one of the current centers of power or be quickly recognized and honored by it. One prophet with a very credible track record has gone on record saying he was told by an angel that Berlin will be the antichrist's political headquarters. Others have noted that the very "seat of Satan" mentioned in Revelation was unearthed and shipped to Berlin just in time for Hitler to make obscene use of it as the model for his speaking platform at Nuremburg.<sup>2</sup> This is none other than the infamous Temple of Zeus from Pergamon.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Economic Control

The world banking cartel will certainly be behind the rise of the antichrist, contributing to his schemes and preparing the way for his coming. More power for him means more wealth for them. However, since the truly powerful banking families prefer to operate in secrecy, it is unlikely that the antichrist will rise visibly out of their ranks. The world hardly knows that they exist and little suspects the true power and wealth they hold. Their operating motto seems to mirror a quote that is often attributed to Mayer Amschel Rothschild: "Permit me to issue and control the money of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws." They will care—but only once they see that the lawless one has led them to their doom. As of this writing, it is impossible to say where the antichrist's financial capital will be located, though London and New York are likely options.

## 3. Religious Authority

Unquestionably, the religious center for the antichrist will be Jerusalem. If those are right who see the current pope (Pope Francis) as the false prophet, then Rome will certainly play a part, but Jerusalem is the epicenter. The earth's true Savior will be returning there. Until then, however, the earth's false savior, the antichrist, will seek to rule and reign as the enthroned god of this world, having taken his "seat in the temple of God." Obviously, the thing to watch for here is the construction of the final temple. This would be the fourth. The first was Solomon's which was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; the second was built by Nehemiah and Ezra; while the third was erected by Herod the Great. Ironically, many Christians are looking forward to and contributing towards the construction of this temple. Don't they know that its first occupant will be the blasphemer himself?

## Pre-Figured in Scripture

Every crucial component of the Last Days has already "appeared" in the Biblical prophetic narrative in the past, somewhat like a dress rehearsal for the final drama. These foreshadows are



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called “types” because they precede their ultimate expression (the “antitype”).<sup>4</sup> As shadows of the future reality, however, they cast a revealing light of their own.

## 1. Nimrod the Mighty Man of Shinar

Nimrod is a perfect archetype for the antichrist. He was the “first on earth to be a mighty man,” founding two kingdoms that would forever be the bane of God’s people: Nineveh of the Assyrians and Babel of the Babylonians. The former destroyed the northern kingdom in 721 BC, carrying captive the ten tribes of Israel and causing them to be lost forever to history. The latter kingdom under its king Nebuchadnezzar, destroyed Jerusalem in 596 and carried Judah into captivity in Babylon. Both these invasions were judgments of God against His own people, but the invaders were also judged and destroyed for their arrogance and cruelty when divine justice turned full circle.

**Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD.” The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. Genesis 10:8-12 ESV**

Nimrod set all this violence in motion as the mighty man and hunter who not only gave rise to two empires, he also gave rise to the Tower of Babel on the plains of Shinar. This attempt to “invade” heaven by a united humanity came under God’s judgment, just as his kingdoms later would. The Lord not only destroyed the tower, he broke humanity’s unity of tongue, dispersing the nations in different directions with different languages. This seems severe, but it ensured a balance of power would exist among the dispersed nations. This in turn ensured that humankind could never again unite to form a “one world government” powered by a diabolical agenda. Never, at least until our time. Nimrod’s ancient dream is about to become the End Times nightmare of a “new world order” in the hands of a mighty man who will hunt the souls of those who serve the living God.

**Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there... And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the LORD said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.” So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth. Genesis 11:1-2, 5-9 ESV**



## 2. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon

King Nebuchadnezzar of ancient Babylon epitomizes the arrogance and ruthlessness of the one who will rule over the modern Babylon—the beast and his governmental and religious system of world domination. Daniel interpreted the king's dream of a succession of world conquering empires, praising the king as the first and greatest of them all.<sup>5</sup> The king decided to enforce the vision of his magnificence with a towering image of himself crafted of gold. It was not enough that he had more power and wealth than anyone alive. His pride demanded worship from all those who looked to the statue at appointed times. No one could escape scrutiny or servile obeisance. It was worship or die, much like the coming mark of the beast.

**King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon... And the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace."** Daniel 3:1, 4-6 ESV

King Nebuchadnezzar flew into a royal rage upon learning that his three Hebrew counsellors—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—would not bow to the edict or his image.<sup>6</sup> That he had power to enforce his demand, no one questioned. Likewise, the absurdity of demanding that he be worshiped as a god completely escaped him. So, it will be with the antichrist. No amount of reason will change his demented mind or soften his hardened heart. The Hebrew youth knew instinctively that it was pointless to appeal to the king. They cast all their hope on the Lord, not knowing if they would be saved in this life, but certain that faithfulness would save them for the next. They are true heroes of the faith, whose noble example will be a guiding light for all of us going forward.

**Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."** Daniel 3:16-18 ESV

## 3. Antichrists Plaguing the Early Church

The title antichrist describes someone who is opposed to or acts in opposition to Jesus Christ. Thus, an antichrist is someone who sets himself up as an enemy of Christ and whose activities are the opposite of what Jesus promotes. Such persons were already becoming a problem for the Early Church as John's letters indicate. John wants believers to know that "many deceivers" are abroad in the land. He specifically has in mind those who will not profess that Jesus Christ has come "in the flesh." This holds

significance for deception-spotting in our day because the coming antichrist will certainly not admit that the true Christ (the world's Savior) has already come in the flesh or that He is coming again. We are to know, too, that antichrists do not "abide" in the teachings of Jesus. Watch for this. There will always be significant departures from essential Christian teaching.

**For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 1 John 1:7-9 ESV**

The salient characteristic of the human antichrists plaguing the Early Church was their demonic empowerment. Whether due to being deceived themselves or being doubly depraved, these impostors all made room for the devil in their lives. John cautions that discernment by the Spirit of God is necessary and recommends a test to see if they can confess that "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh." A caution needs to accompany this caution. While demonized individuals usually cannot say the Name of Jesus and certainly can't say it with reverence, some can manage to get it out. The devil is a deceiver. His servants will say anything that advances their agenda and they have had centuries to practice answering this challenge. There is a difference even with evil spirits between what they can say, and what they "confess" as their own belief. Listen carefully! On the other hand, sometimes it's best to rebuke first and ask question later.

**By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. 1 John 4:2-3 ESV**

## Revealed by Scripture

The Bible exposes the secret plans and deceptive operations of the dark kingdom, even as it unveils the glorious realities of what our God is doing. The truths of scripture are, therefore, our rock-solid building blocks for interpreting the times we are entering. Nevertheless, for biblical information to become true revelation both prayer and the Holy Spirit are needed.

### 1. Paul: Full Exposure

**1 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, 2 not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 ESV**

Paul launches into an extended description of the person and reign of the antichrist in response to a question he knew concerned the believers in Thessalonica. They were



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wondering when the Lord Jesus would return and when they would be “gathered together to him.” In the ancient world, news travelled slowly—at donkey speed. Evidently, they were thinking Jesus had already come and they hadn’t heard about it yet.

**3 Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. 2**

Thessalonians 2:3 ESV

Paul initially writes this part of the letter in order to set the Thessalonian Christians straight on the timing of events. Jesus will not come, and the rapture of believers will not happen “unless the rebellion comes first” and the antichrist is revealed. He is adamant about this, preceding it with a strong warning: “Let no one deceive you in any way.” We should ask ourselves: Have any in the church already been deceived? Indeed, are there not many who imagine that they will be “raptured out of here” before the dire events Paul lists begin to happen? Paul would be the first one to say that those who believe in a pre-tribulation Rapture are deceived.

**3 Let not anyone deceive you by any means. For that Day shall not come unless there first comes a falling away, and the man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition. 2**

Thessalonians 2:3 MKJV

Depending on the translation, we get different descriptors of the antichrist and different perspectives of the event that precedes his appearing. First, his description. The antichrist is variously described as “the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction” and as “the man of sin... the son of perdition” (see the MKJV quote below). These traits signify similar things, but with interesting nuances. Man of sin points to his moral corruption; whereas man of lawlessness speaks of his complete disregard for the rule of law, either human or divine. The former, therefore, highlights his personal life while the latter accentuates his abuse of power. We don’t have to choose between these meanings. We will certainly see evidence of both.

The differences concerning the event that precedes his revealing are not as easy to merge. Some translation streams say that “the rebellion (or the “revolt”) comes first,” while others describe that same event as a “falling away” (or “apostacy”). Rebellion and revolt are words that could lead us to think of demonstrations, civic disruptions and armed uprisings. That image would have us thinking about the world in general, but this would miss the mark by a mile. The clear meaning of the underlying Greek word is “falling away from the truth” or “apostacy.” There can be little question that this word (*apostasia*) describes an abandoning of the faith by a great many Christians.<sup>7</sup>

In His [Matthew 24 timeline](#) this falling away is the event that Jesus said would precede the antichrist’s appearing. Will that falling away happen when believers aren’t rescued from the terrors of the times by suddenly being whisked away? Failing to understand the truth of what is coming and what is being asked of us may crush the faith of many. This is all the more reason to “not let anyone deceive you.” Such a massive loss of faith is a tragedy from our perspective—one that seems natural given the circumstances, especially since faith is difficult for most of us during times of duress. The reality,



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however, is that abandoning faith is a rebellion against God's revelation of Himself as a good sovereign and it is a revolt against His leadership. In this sense only, can the two variations in translation be reconciled.

**3 Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 ESV**

**36 "And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done. Daniel 11:36 ESV**

Returning now to the "that day" of the antichrist, a further connection can be drawn between the falling away and the revealing of the man of lawlessness. According to Jesus, the falling away happens as what He calls the birth pains transition into a great tribulation. All the nations of the world will turn in hatred against believers. The antichrist will likely be active during this opening season of the seven-year tribulation period, working behind the scenes to promote ideas that ultimately turn the world against the church. He may even be visible. Our prophets may identify him for us as the Lord reveals more to them. His steady advance into power and world acclaim may be what reveals him to those who are watching the signs.

Nevertheless, all Christian eyes will see the antichrist with full recognition the moment he "takes his seat in the temple of God." At this point, his deceptive demeanor will woo the world into worshipping him as he proclaims himself to be God. We alone, it seems, will know better. What the world adores will be abhorrent to us. Remember, this enthronement happens three and a half years into the time of tribulation and persecution. The great falling away will have been several years in the past. Those who remain will be fully alert, awakened believers, laboring to save as many as they can from being captured forever by this massive deception.

**5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 6 And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. 2 Thessalonians 2:5-7 ESV**

Until this blasphemous moment in the temple of God, there will have been a "restraining" hand of God's governance upon this lawless one. At this critical junction, the restrainer's hand will be removed. At the mid-point of the seven-year tribulation, the antichrist receives full, unbridled authority over the earth and its citizens. Truly, this is a mystery of lawlessness. Why does God allow it? Even so, this release from restraint does not mean that everyone will cooperate with him or that he will accomplish everything he desires. But it does mean that he will pursue his evil agenda as fully as he can.<sup>8</sup>



**8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:8**  
ESV

We should be under no illusion concerning two things: the antichrist's power and his powerlessness. First, once the "lawless one" is revealed, no one will be able to assassinate or otherwise remove this evil dictator from his position of power. There will be no point in hoping for that, though very likely rumors will abound, spreading a false hope of his imminent demise. Giving in to that all-too-human tendency will be a waste of time and a drain on spiritual effort. Let us brace ourselves in advance to go the full distance, enduring by clinging to Jesus in full hope. While he is allotted his time, no power on earth will remove him.

Second, the Lord Jesus will have absolutely no problem ending the antichrist's reign of terror when the moment is right. When will that moment be? As soon as He appears, Jesus will kill this hateful character "with the breath of his mouth"! For all his boasting and cruelty to others, the "lawless one" will prove powerless to save himself. By the timeline Jesus gave us, the moment of our Lord's return will be three and a half years from the time the antichrist enthroned himself in the Temple at Jerusalem "proclaiming himself to be God."

**9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, 10 and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10** ESV

On a closing note, Paul reminds his readers that behind the lawless one, stands Satan, who is working through him "with all power and false signs and wonders." Clearly, the antichrist is no mere human being. Nor is he a man oppressed by a legion of demons. He is in some way fully possessed by the evil one himself. The lust for worship that we see demanded by the antichrist comes directly from the foul, perverted heart of Satan who desired to be worshipped from the beginning of his fall from grace.<sup>9</sup> This master of deception, not only has deceived the evil spiritual beings who follow him, he will work to deceive the whole world if he can, so that they would perish with him. Our task will be to work with the Lord to save all those who have enough love of the truth left within them to turn to the One who is Truth.

## 2. Revelation: The Beast Rises

**1 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. Revelation 13:1** ESV

John on the Isle of Patmos was shown the antichrist as "a beast rising out of the sea." What is meant by the sea? If we let scripture explain scripture, which is usually the best rule, then we learn from Revelation 17:15 that the waters where the prostitute are seated "are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages."<sup>10</sup> This beast is, therefore,



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coming up out of the mass of humanity that cover the earth. He is in that sense one of us, but the use of sea in scripture carries undercurrents of a much darker meaning.

Although water represents life, it also can be used as an instrument of judgment, as it was with the flood of Noah's day, or it can become an obstacle to God's people, as the Red Sea was for the Israelites fleeing Egypt. Most significantly, the "tossing sea" is used several times as a metaphor for those who destroy the earth's peace with their wickedness.<sup>11</sup> This gives us a much fuller picture of the antichrist as one who rises out of the wicked side of humanity, who will take advantage of the tumultuous times to be elevated in power like the crest of a mighty wave.

**2 And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. Revelation 13:2 ESV**

**After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. Daniel 7:7 ESV**

The antichrist is also called a beast. This image used by John immediately calls to mind the dream given to Daniel in Babylon six hundred years earlier. Daniel, too, saw a beast, one that was different than the other three in his night vision, which were a lion with eagles' wings, a bear and a leopard. What John was shown are not three other separate beasts, but a single beast that is composed from parts of the other three: it had the appearance of a leopard, the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion. What does this discrepancy mean?

If Daniel's vision is taken at face value, then what he was shown are either successive or distinct world empires. Historically, many have linked these four beasts to the successive empires in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue: Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, empires which only existed in the ancient world. Thinking these two dreams describe the same empires and events is probably a mistake. A better case can be made that in Daniel's vision all four of these empires are present upon the earth at the same time—and that time is the Last Days. That brings us into the present.

Using national symbols, the Russian bear, the English lion and the American eagle immediately spring into view by means of Daniel's vision. Additionally, the leopard "with four wings of a bird on its back" could be taken as a symbol for Germany united with (and carrying) France in the European Union.<sup>12</sup> Leopards are commonly associated with Germany and France's symbol is a rooster, a bird that must be carried because it cannot fly. Alternatively, it should be noted that Islam predominately occupies regions of the world where leopards can be found, hence the leopard may signify radical Islam which is both fierce and swift in the way it attacks.

If this interpretation is true, then the fourth beast, the antichrist, will be someone who for a season manages to unite these disparate empires under his own rule and authority.



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They all form integral parts of his kingdom, a kingdom which we saw (in verse 1 above) that has ten horns and seven heads. It may be that this indicates that the antichrist will rule through 10 regional divisions upon the earth—horns represent authority.<sup>13</sup> The seven heads may indicate that the seven continents are all ruled over by the beast's kingdom. Better, these seven heads may be the seven mountains of cultural influence that control all societies: Religion, Family, Education, Government, Media, Arts & Entertainment and Business.

**3 One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. Revelation 13:3 ESV**

One of the beast's heads receives "a mortal wound." Let's keep in mind that the revelation John received switches from prophetic symbolism to images of reality and back again without always giving us a heads up. Does this mean that the antichrist at some point will die, then be brought back to life? Or one of his kingdoms? Later in this chapter, the false prophet (the second beast) makes an image for the first beast that was "wounded by the sword and yet lived." Wounded doesn't usually mean killed. Even the phrase a mortal wound only indicates a wound that could kill, unless death is averted by some saving action.

There is not enough here to be definitive about the event itself, but whatever happens, the whole unbelieving earth will marvel "as they followed the beast." This event may be the catalyst for launching the beast into a realm in the public's mind where worship, or something close to it, seems the natural and inevitable response to so supernaturally "blessed" an individual. This event, if it is indeed a death and resuscitation, may also be the moment when Satan enters the body of the now dead antichrist-to-be and "indwells" his corpse, bringing it to life through his life (not by any power of resurrection). Will the antichrist be "merely" possessed by Satan, or will he be a satanic avatar?<sup>14</sup> This remains to be seen (pun intended).

**4 And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"**

Revelation 13:4 ESV

The people worship the dragon by worshipping the beast, but many of them will not know that it is the dragon, Satan, that they are worshipping. Not until it is too late, or unless the Lord (working through us) manages to reach them with His salvation. Most people would be appalled at the thought that they are worshipping the embodiment of pure evil. Remember, the beast is a master of deception as is his master. Deception works by making the wrong thing seem right. The antichrist will seem like the best of the best, not the most beastly of the beasts. He will also seem invincible, his rise inevitable: "Who can fight against it?" Note also that text indicates that at this point the beast is still a separate entity from the dragon, who gives "his authority to the beast." If the antichrist is an avatar only then no such conveyance of authority would be necessary.

**5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. 6 It opened its mouth to utter**



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**blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Revelation 13:5-6 ESV**

**25 He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. Daniel 7:25 ESV**

This beast is blasphemous. He will hate and despise the one true God and everyone who stands up for Him, spewing all kinds of outrageous lies and vilifications. Our modern culture is well-prepared to accept this. The most outrageous blasphemies are already being uttered or depicted in art, movies or videos against God and Jesus. Christians are required to accept this as “free speech.” Yet, this demand for tolerance on our part is coupled with extreme denunciations of racism or hate crimes against anyone who brings the false religions and immorality of the world into question. This dual attack will seem intolerable to us. Fortunately, it will not last. Heaven has decreed that this beast will have only forty-two months to strut his stuff. That will seem three and a half years too long!

**7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, 8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. Revelation 13:7-8 ESV**

**24 His power shall be great—but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. 25 By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken—but by no human hand. Daniel 8:24-25 ESV**

Although the beast will come to power through promises of bringing peace to the world, he will not bring peace to believers.<sup>15</sup> He will instead end the warfare between nations by uniting them in his unholy war against God and His “saints” on earth. Saints speaks of all who live separated for God. The pressure of the times—tribulation, persecution, impending starvation or death—will likely make true saints of all who endure. Hence, Jesus will be returning for a spotless Bride.<sup>16</sup> He will indeed find deep and abiding faith on the earth.<sup>17</sup>

Those believers who now are compromised or only half-converted will be forced by the times to go deeper into Christ or fall away through the great deception. All those whose names have “not been written... in the book of life” will join the ranks of the antichrist by taking his mark. Whatever you do, don't take that mark! No one can be marked by the antichrist and be written into the book of life at the same time. Do not be deceived about this.

**9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear: 10 If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints. Revelation 13:1-10 ESV**



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Why would the Lord call for us to endure, if there was not something terrible coming our way that must be endured? True, we may be able to take a certain amount of evasive measures. It is wisdom to seek shelter from a storm. It would be wise, for instance, to take practical steps to unite with others in finding ways to survive. Nevertheless, this is a storm that will be sweeping over the face of the whole earth, seeking to overturn everyone and everything in its path. It will be wisest of all to make as sure as possible that our faith will hold firm no matter whether we are caught by the storm or not. Millions, perhaps billions, will be captured. For them, the Lord's word is to accept it, because there is no escape: "If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes." Be prepared to die bravely, trusting in Him. This truly calls for "endurance and faith."

### 3. Revelation: The Beast that Was and Is Not

**3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality. 5 And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations." 6 And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I marveled greatly. Revelation 17:3-6 ESV**

John's companion carries him to a wilderness where he is shown a disgusting vision of an abominable woman seated on a scarlet beast. This beast is none other than the antichrist, since it is identified as having the same seven heads and ten horns depicted in Chapter 13. As others have noted, the woman is "seated" on the beast, not riding it. She is being carried by the beast wherever it wills; she is not the one in control. In fact, later in this same chapter she will be unseated by the one she rides who will turn on her in hatred.<sup>18</sup> If nothing else, this reveals how treacherous and hate-filled is the heart of the beast, if we can even say he has one, humanly speaking. The scarlet color of the beast emphasizes its bloody nature as it carries the woman on his murderous rampage, trampling his enemies so that she becomes "drunk with the blood of the saints."

**7 But the angel said to me, "Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. 8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come. Revelation 17:7-8 ESV**

The appalling sight of this beast and Mystery Babylon which it carries greatly astonishes John, causing him to "marvel" as he ponders what it means. We may well wonder at the explanation he is given! Let's deal with the easier parts first. The messenger tells John that this beast, the antichrist, "was and is not and is to come."<sup>19</sup> This formula sounds like an intentional, negative comparison to the true God, our Lord Jesus Christ "who is and who was and who is to come."<sup>20</sup> Unlike the true Christ, this pretender will "go to



destruction.” Here, it is revealed that this beast doesn’t just rise “from the sea” as in an earlier verse (13:1), but “from the bottomless pit.” What does all this mean?

Some commentators think “the beast” used here refers to his system of government—what many of us call “the beast system.” They, therefore, extend the metaphor at this point to mean that the messenger is referring to ancient Rome as the beast that “was,” which being destroyed by barbarians, became the beast that “is not,” but which will be revived in the Last Days to rule once again as the beast that “is to come.” This is wholly inadequate, if you take verse 8 seriously. Empires cannot “rise from the bottomless pit.” No, ancient Rome was built by humanity upon the earth and just like all other human governmental systems was “ordained by God.”<sup>21</sup> We are left with an entity which is human—rising “from the sea”—but shares in the demonic. The demonic side which possesses him certainly qualifies as rising from the pits.

**9 This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; 10 they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while. 11 As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. 12 And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast.** Revelation 17:9-12 ESV

Now we arrive at a larger mystery. No doubt, time and further revelation will resolve the tangle of kings and horns mentioned in the messenger’s explanation given in verses 10-12. Until then, there is a widespread discord of interpretation, which may be best left to the Lord to resolve. Fortunately, this hardly seems necessary for us to know at this point. It is a matter of intellectual curiosity, though it may become more critical in the future. Part of the preparation for the road ahead is knowing what you don’t know. And resting content until genuine revelation arrives.

**13 These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast. 14 They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”** Revelation 17:12-14 ESV

All the seven mountains (or kings or kingdoms) and ten kings (or horns) “hand over their power and authority to the beast.” That’s the part of this we are shown with complete clarity. The antichrist will take the tangled web of earth’s interconnected rivalries and fulfill Nimrod’s ancient vision of a united humanity. Sadly, it will be humanity united once again, as on the plains of Shinar, in opposition to God, seeking to dethrone the earth’s rightful Ruler and raise up a godless substitute in His place. They will “make war on the Lamb”—as laughable an idea as it is hopeless. Our Hero is, after all, “the Lord of lords and King of kings.” May we who have been “called and chosen” indeed prove faithful to Him. Amen!

## Other Scriptures to Study

### John: Antichrists in the Church

Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. 1 John 2:18-22 ESV

### Daniel: Prophecies of the Antichrist

After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. Daniel 7:7-8 ESV

24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. 25 He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. 26 But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. 27 And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.' 28 "Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart." Daniel 7:24-28 ESV

9 Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. 10 It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them. 11 It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown. 12 And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper. Daniel 8:9-12 ESV

22 As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power. 23 And at the latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise. 24 His power shall be great—but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. 25 By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind





he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken—but by no human hand. 26 The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now.” 27 And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it. Daniel 8:22-27 ESV

36 “And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done. 37 He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women. He shall not pay attention to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all. 38 He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these. A god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. 39 He shall deal with the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall load with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price. 40 “At the time of the end, the king of the south shall attack him, but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. And he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through. 41 He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites. 42 He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. 43 He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Cushites shall follow in his train. 44 But news from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go out with great fury to destroy and devote many to destruction. 45 And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him. Daniel 11:36-45 ESV

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<sup>1</sup> Cambridge Dictionary defines speculation as “the act of guessing possible answers to a question without having enough information to be certain.” It derives from the Latin word “speculari” which means “to look at, view,



observe” and originally indicated “close observation and intelligent contemplation.” By the late 1500s it gained the disparaging sense it carries today of “mere conjecture.” See etymonline.com.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www1.cbn.com/700club/seat-satan-nazi-germany>

<sup>3</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword. ‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. Revelation 2:12-13 ESV

<sup>4</sup> Adam is the type; Jesus, the “second Adam” is the antitype: Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. Romans 5:14 ESV

<sup>5</sup> You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold. Daniel 2:37-38 ESV

<sup>6</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, “Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? Daniel 3:13-14 ESV

<sup>7</sup> Strong’s G646, apostasia: Feminine of the same as G647; defection from truth (properly the state), (“apostasy”): - falling away, forsake.

<sup>8</sup> A governing “authority” is definitely an it, not a person. With that in mind, the best candidate for the verse 7 “he” is God in His providential capacity—His self-chosen ability to work through the governmental authorities He raises up as restraints upon sin. By this reading, the restrainer is God the Father. Apparently, He has ordained “a time” in which the antichrist is to be revealed. By removing His restraining Hand upon government, the Father will give the antichrist the opportunity he needs. The lawless one will seize full control for himself. This has been foretold. This is ordained. Just as the Father’s Hand once restrained Herod from killing the Christ child, so now the removal of His Hand will loose the antichrist from all restraint.

<sup>9</sup> You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ Isaiah 14:13-14 ESV

<sup>10</sup> And the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. Revelation 17:15 ESV

<sup>11</sup> But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt. There is no peace,” says my God, “for the wicked.” Isaiah 57:20-21: O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O LORD, with your faithfulness all around you? You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them. You crushed Rahab like a carcass; you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm. Psalm 89:8-10 ESV; see also Psalm 74:13-14 and Isaiah 51:10.

<sup>12</sup> The first was like a lion and had eagles’ wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it. And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, ‘Arise, devour much flesh.’ After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it. Daniel 7:4-6 ESV

<sup>13</sup> Various schemes have been proposed by the UN and others for a ten-region division of the world. One is Africa, Asia, Europe, N America, Oceania, S America, Polar, Seas.

<sup>14</sup> Bing online dictionary: avatar – Hinduism: a manifestation of a deity or released soul in bodily form on earth; an incarnate divine teacher. synonyms: deity · god · goddess · mother goddess · divine being · celestial being · [more] an incarnation, embodiment, or manifestation of a person or idea.

<sup>15</sup> The antichrist will make a covenant at the beginning of the seven year tribulation and break it at mid-point: And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.” Daniel 9:27 ESV

<sup>16</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:25-27 ESV



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<sup>17</sup> I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" Luke 18:8 ESV

<sup>18</sup> And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire. Revelation 17:16 ESV

<sup>19</sup> I am referring to "the angel" speaking to John as "the messenger" because a strong case can be made that this is a human guide in heaven, not a divine being who is showing John around.

<sup>20</sup> "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." Revelation 1:8 ESV

<sup>21</sup> Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Romans 13:1 ESV



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