

Revelation 13

The “Unholy Trinity”

Before we dive into Revelation 13 it is important to discuss the workings of Satan. This chapter reveals much detail about the workings of Satan in the Tribulation period. Satan is a spirit-being, and can only work effectively through men. Let us see how he does this.

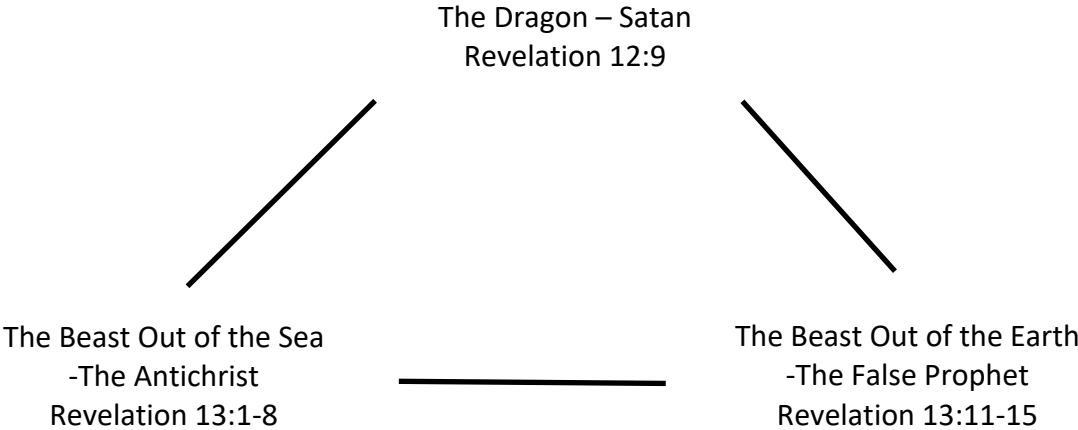
In Isaiah 14:14, which relates to us the initial rebellion of the mighty angel Lucifer, we have a statement of desire from this being which has NEVER changed.

“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”

From this time and to the very end, Satan seeks the worship and allegiance of creation. In Matthew 4:9, he even sought the worship of God the Son.

The Bible teaches us that the ONE true and living God (Deuteronomy 6:4) exists as THREE distinct, separate, harmonious Persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Matthew 28:19; I John 5:7

This chapter in the Book of Revelation shows that Satan will present Himself as a ‘trinity of evil’, a pseudo-trinity. This Satanic trinity may be represented as such:



Satan is the Great Counterfeiter. Everything God does, Satan imitates. Consider the following Satanic substitutions for the real things:

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1. Counterfeit God.
Satan himself – the “god of this world.” Isaiah 14:13; II Corinthians 4:4
2. Counterfeit Christ
 - a. Many in history – false Messiahs
Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Hitler, etc. have all sought to usher in a kind of millennium.
 - b. Many in religion – I John 2:18, 22; 4:3
 - c. One in prophecy – THE Antichrist, as opposed to many antichrists.
3. Counterfeit Holy Spirit
Again, there have been false spirits in history, II Corinthians 11:4; I John 4:1-3, 6, but in the time of the Tribulation Satan’s counterfeit will be the False Prophet.

Just as the Holy Spirit points men to Christ (John 16:13-14), so this False Prophet will point men to the Antichrist, Revelation 13:11-15.
4. Counterfeit Gospel
II Corinthians 11:4; Acts 15:1, 11; Galatians 1:6-9
5. Counterfeit Baptism
Acts 19:1-5. This was a baptism without salvation – which is exactly what infant-sprinkling is today.
6. Counterfeit Preachers
II Corinthians 11:13-15; II Peter 2:1-2; Matthew 7:21-23
7. Counterfeit Bibles
II Corinthians 2:17. From the very beginning, Satan sought to have man doubt (Genesis 3:1) the Word of God, dilute (Genesis 3:3) the Word of God, deny (Genesis 3:4) the Word of God.
Many corruptions of the Word of God are readily available and used by Christians today.
8. Counterfeit People
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43. Tares refers to a ‘look-a-like’ wheat.
9. Counterfeit Church
Revelation 17 give details of the “church of the Antichrist.” This system is likened to a ‘harlot.’ The Lord’s churches are likened to ‘chaste virgins’, II Corinthians 11:2-3.

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In this chapter, we learn how Satan will counterfeit Jesus Christ and pose as Israel's messiah.

- I. The beast rising out of the Sea – vs. 1-8
 - a. The Emergence of the Beast – vs. 1
This Beast is said to come up out of the sea. In Daniel 7:2-3 the 4 beasts representing the world empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, respectively come up out of the Mediterranean Sea. According to Isaiah 17:12; 57:20; and Rev 17:15, the sea represents the 'mass of humanity', described as restless and troubled. This beast will come as the answer to a troubled world.
 - b. The Description of the Beast – vs. 1
 - i. Seven heads
According to Rev 17:9, these heads represent 7 mountains. This is a clear reference to Rome, the city built upon 7 hills.
 - ii. Ten horns
According to Rev 17:12, these represent 10 kings.
 - iii. The name of blasphemy
Rev 17:3 – This speaks of the opposition of self-deification of the beast. II Thess 2:7-11

The description of the beast lines up exactly with the prophecies of the Book of Daniel.

- The last of the 4 'metallic empires' in Daniel 2:31-45 represents Rome. Just prior to the second coming of Christ (Dan 2:44-45) this empire will exist in the form of TEN KINGS or kingdoms.
- The last of the 4 'beast empires' in Daniel 7:2-8 also represents Rome. Just prior to the second coming of Christ (Dan 7:9-11, 19-24) this empire will exist in the form of TEN KINGS. The blasphemy is seen in Dan 7:25.
- According to Dan 9:26, the people of the 'prince that shall come' (i.e. the Antichrist) would destroy the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary. This occurred in 70 A.D., and the people were Rome.

Putting it all together, we see that this beast comes out of the sea as part of the "revived Roman Empire".

The question is: "Does the Roman Empire still exist?"

History tells us that the City of Rome fell in 476 A.D. when invaded by the Barbarians.

Prior to this time, the Roman Empire had been divided into Eastern and Western divisions (just like the 2 legs of Nebuchadnezzar's image – Dan 2:33). In 330 AD

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the Emperor Constantine shifted the seat of the Empire from Rome to Byzantium (renaming it 'Constantinople' – today's Istanbul). This was made permanent by the last Emperor over a united kingdom, Theodosius I (378-395 AD), who divided the Empire between his two sons – Arcadius (East) and Honorius (West).

So, although Rome as a city fell in 476 AD, the Empire lived on. Consider the following:

“The Roman administration lives on in the Church of Rome. The ecclesiastical provinces coincided with the State provinces; and Rome, the chief city of the world empire became the chief city of the world church, the seat of the papacy.

The Roman tongue lives on in the Latin of the Church, and is still in use in the international technical language of law, medicine, and natural science.

Roman law lives on in legislation. The Corpus Juris Romanum (body of Roman law) of the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian (AD 527-564) became the foundation of juris-prudence among the Latin and Germanic peoples throughout the Middle Ages and far into modern times.

The Roman army lives on in the military systems. It became the model for armaments and western defense. We still use Latin words such as captain, major, general, battalion, regiment, army, infantry, artillery, and cavalry.”
(The King Is Coming. – Dr. H. L. Willmington)

Today, countries that once made up the old Roman Empire are joined in
military alliance – NATO,
economic alliance – the Common Market, and
political alliance – the European Parliament.

c. The Nature of the Beast – vs. 2

This beast looked like a mixture of wild animals, but this is significant. In Daniel 7, the Babylonian Empire was likened to a lion (Dan 7:4), the Medo-Persian Empire was likened to a bear (Dan 7:5), and the Grecian Empire was likened to a leopard (Dan 7:6). The fourth beast, representing Rome, was without description, but we now learn it is a mixture of the preceding Gentile empires.

According to Rev 13:18, the Beast is a man, not a kingdom. This is a man who rises up within the revived Roman Empire. This is the Antichrist.

d. The Power behind the Beast – vs. 2

The Antichrist is 'Satan in the flesh'. He is the antithesis of Jesus Christ. Note the following:

Jesus Christ descended from heaven

John 6:38

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Antichrist ascends from below	Revelation 11:7
Jesus Christ came in His Father's Name Antichrist comes in his own name	John 5:43 Jong 5:43
Jesus Christ humbled Himself Antichrist exalts himself	Philippians 2:8 II Thessalonians 2:4
Jesus Christ was despised Antichrist will be admired	Luke 23:18 Revelation 13:3-4
Jesus Christ will be exalted Antichrist will be cast down	Philippians 2:9 Isaiah 14:14-15
Jesus Christ did His Father's will Antichrist will do his own will	John 6:38 Daniel 11:36
Jesus Christ came to save Antichrist comes to destroy	Luke 19:10 Daniel 8:24
Jesus Christ is the Truth Antichrist is the Lie	John 14:6 II Thessalonians 2:8
Jesus Christ is the Holy One Antichrist is the Wicked (one)	Mark 1:24 II Thessalonians 2:3
Jesus Christ is the Man of Sorrows Antichrist is the man of Sin	Isaiah 53:3 II Thessalonians 2:3
Jesus Christ is the Son of God Antichrist is the son of perdition	Luke 1:35 II Thessalonians 2:3
Jesus Christ is the Mystery of Godliness Antichrist is the mystery of Iniquity	I Timothy 3:16 II Thessalonians 2:7

e. The Wounding of the Beast – vs. 3

Three time in this chapter the wounding and healing of the Beast is mentioned (vs 3, 12,14). Many believe this is simply a miraculous 'resurrection' of the old Roman Empire, however if the Beast is a man this has to do with a person 'death and resurrection'. Rev 17:8 traces the career of the Antichrist ("was", "is not", "shall ascend", "shall go").

The wounding and healing of the Beast is in keeping with his imitation of Jesus Christ:

- i. Antichrist appears on a white horse – Rev 6:2
The Lord Jesus Christ will come again riding a white horse. – Rev 19:11-16
- ii. Antichrist establishes a counterfeit millennium

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Dan 9:27 – According to Ez 38:11, the nation of Israel will be at rest prior to the invasion of the Northern confederacy. This false millennium will soon be shattered – Rev 6:4.

- iii. Antichrist will undergo some form of death and resurrection
Rev 13:3, 14
- iv. Antichrist will be worshipped
II Thess 2:3-4
- v. Antichrist will perform miracles
This will be through the power of the false prophet. Rev 13:13-15

- f. The Worship of the Beast – vs. 4
This is surely Satan's finest hour – to receive the worship of the world. II Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 11:36
- g. The Words of the Beast – vs. 5-6
The statements issued from the mouth of the Antichrist are blasphemies. Cf. Ez 28:2. See: Dan 7:8, 11, 25.
There are 3 things pertaining to the blasphemy of the Beast, which he hates above all else:
 - The Name of God – Jesus Christ
 - The Tabernacle of God – which portrays redemption through the blood
 - The People of God
- h. The Warfare of the Beast – vs. 7
It is in the person of the Antichrist that Satan will carry out his persecutions. Rev 12:13,17.
In this relentless warfare, many who turn to God will pay with their lives – Rev 7:14; Dan 7:25; 12:10.
- i. The Domination of the Beast – vs. 7-8
Antichrist will be the first real (total) world ruler
- j. The Identity of the Beast
There have been numerous attempts to identify the Antichrist. In more recent times names such as Hitler, Mussolini, Kissinger, Geller, etc. have been suggested.

Suffice it to say the Bible DOES NOT identify this man, and in fact tells us he will be revealed (II Thess 2:3).

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- II. The Exhortation to Hear – vs. 9-10
 - a. The Seriousness of this Prophecy – vs. 9
This phrase lines up with the parenthetical warning of Matthew 24:15
Note: Unlike similar statements in Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22, there is no mention of churches in this verse. This is because all true members of New Testament churches and all other believers will have been raptured to glory.
 - b. The Die is Cast – vs. 10
The battle lines are drawn. There is no more respite. The actors are committed to their course and ultimate end. (This may also be that no one else can be saved from this point on.) Rom 12:19; Matt 5:38
 - c. The Patience of the Saints – vs. 10
See: Rom 16:20
- III. The Beast coming up out of the Earth – vs. 11-15
 - a. The Origin of this Second Beast – vs. 11
The first beast comes from out of the sea – political humanity. This second beast comes from the earth. There is nothing in Scripture which adds symbolic significance to this difference. We note that Cain brought an offering of the ground – salvation by works (Gen 4:3). This is a mark of all false teachers and prophets – Jude 4, 11.
 - b. The Appearance of this Second Beast – vs. 11
Two horns like a lamb – a religious figure.
Speech like a dragon – not necessary loud, frightening sounds – perhaps lies!
Jn 8:44; Rom 16:18
 - c. The Power of this Second Beast – vs. 12
From Satan (vs 2), powerful blasphemies (vs 5), war with the saints (vs 7).
 - d. The Identity of this Second Beast
Rev 19:20 clearly identifies this beast as the “False Prophet” who is associated with the Antichrist. Matt 24:24
Some commentators believe this second beast is the Antichrist because of his ‘lamb-like’ features (and that the first beast is a political system – Rome). Here are some reasons why this is not the case, and that the first Beast is the Antichrist, and the second Beast the False Prophet:
According to John 5:43, Antichrist will come in his own name – but in Rev 13:16-17 this second Beast causes all men to take the name of the first.

This second Beast causes all men to worship this first Beast (Rev 13:12 and II Thess 2:4 clearly says it is the Antichrist who will be worshipped.)

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e. The Work of the False Prophet

We can readily see how this Beast is a counterfeit Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit points men to Jesus Christ – Jn 16:13-14

The False Prophet points men to the Antichrist.

The Holy Spirit Worked great miracles – Acts 1:8; 8:5-7, 18

The False Prophet is able to work miracles

This chapter tells us of 6 things the False Prophet will do during this period

He causes the whole earth to worship Antichrist – vs. 12

It seems he is the religious character, whereas the Antichrist is the political character.

He performs amazing miracles – vs. 13

Let this be a lesson for us in these last days. SATANN CAN DO MIRACLES! These last days are characterized by Satanic activity within the bounds of Christendom – I Timothy 4:1, so all apparent miracles and “spiritual display” must be tested by the Word of God. I John 4:1-3

He deceives the world – vs. 14

He gives apparent life to the image of the Beast – vs. 15

This reminds us of the great image erected of Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 3:1-7. The giving of ‘life’ to this image is explained by saying that the image would speak. This is a simple task for demons!

This image is mentioned 10 times in the Book of Revelation. It is the focal point of Satanic worship.

He causes the execution of those who refuse to worship the image – vs. 15

The account of the three faithful Jews in Dan 3:12-25 takes on prophetic significance here. Many will refuse to bow down.

He cause all men to receive a mark – vs. 16

Satan exercises economic warfare. – vs. 17

IV. The Mark of the Beast – vs. 16-18

One of the greatest areas of speculation in Bible prophesy has been over the significance of these verses, particularly verse 18.

The fact is, the Word of God does not tell us the meaning of the number 666, but it does tell us the significance of the number.

a. The Reason for the Mark

A means of identification

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A means of persecution

b. Number Six in Scripture

6 = 'Man's Number', 1 short of God's perfect number, 7.

- Man was created on the 6th day.
- Man was to labour for 6 days.
- There are 6 recorded generations of Cain.
- Goliath was 6 cubits and a span tall.
- Nebuchadnezzar's statue was 60 cubits by 6 cubits.
- There were 6 longed-for foods in Egypt – Numbers 11:5 (7 in Canaan, Deuteronomy 8:8).

c. 666 is the Number of Man

It is a trinity of man's number. It is mentioned 6 times in the Book of Revelation