

Revelation 13 – The Anti-Christ

We are continuing our study through the book of **Revelation**.

In chapter **12** we've seen how Satan hated God, and how he rebelled against God.

We've seen how he waged war with the angels of God and lost.

In **12:9** we saw Satan cast out of Heaven into the Earth.

And in **12:12** we saw that he came to the Earth full of wrath because he knew that he only had a short while left.

Before we go any further let's bow our heads and our hearts before the Lord in a word of prayer.

Father, we come to you now in the name of Jesus. And we ask that you would open our hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit, the work of the Holy Spirit to lead us into truth, the work of the Holy Spirit to unfold the truth of your Word, and in so doing flood our hearts with light. We pray that the Holy Spirit would shine into our hearts the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus. We pray for those who don't know you, that they would hear the Gospel, that they would believe on the Lord Jesus with all of their heart and be saved. And for those who know you, I pray, Lord, that things that are set before us would set their hearts on fire with a very deep and intense love for the God who has rescued us, who has delivered us from the lies of the god of this world, who has rescued us from our own broken, darkened wisdom, and given to us life. Father, we thank you for your Word. Lord, you said there is a blessing in just reading this book. So we look forward to you blessing to us. And we ask these things of you in the wonderful name of Jesus, amen.

Before we go any farther into chapter **13** –

I want us to consider the implications of the close of chapter **12**, where it says –

“When the devil Satan came to the earth he was full of wrath because he knew that he only had a short while left.”

As I was preparing for this study it struck me as to how often Christians could be careless.

And sometimes we use words in our English language; and we lose the meaning of them.

But you can hyphenate that – care-less or less-care – not having care.

A lot of times as Christians we're thoughtless.

We're without a lot of serious thought & consideration about the kingdom of God & the times in which we live.

Christians might be careless;

Christians might be thoughtless about the kingdom of God & the times in which we live – but not Satan.

Satan knows that he has a very small window of opportunity to maintain his dominion in the hearts and lives of men.

Satan knows that he has a very small window of opportunity to harass and harm the people of God and to dishonour the name of Jesus.

Christians, we don't want to be those who know about important matters, but act as if they know nothing about them.

Jesus said,

“To whom much is given, much is required.”

We're responsible for the light that God gives to us.

And I believe especially this fellowship – I can't speak for any other local church – I can speak for this one –

We've been so committed to bringing the light of God's Word to you every single time we meet.

And we have a lot of light in the Scriptures. So we're responsible for the light that God has given to us.

And yet there are so many men and women who know so much.

They know that, like everybody else around them in this world, one day they are going to die just like everybody.

But they live as though they'll never die.

Now here's the deal – We know some things. We know that we are dying. Right now you're dying, I'm dying.

If you ever go to the doctor, and the doctor comes in and gives you a few tests, then walks out and comes back in, and says, *“I've got bad news – You're dying”* –

Lighten the doctor up a little bit – Say, *“Tell me some news. I've been dying my whole life.”*

We know that we're dying.

We know that we're living in the last days.

Now there are a lot of Christians today who say,
“*Get off the last days thing. Where do you get off saying that we are living in the last days?*”
Well, here’s how I can say that with absolute authority.

Remember when Peter preached the first evangelistic sermon in the history of the Church.
He prefaced it with an explanation of what had just transpired as the Holy Spirit fell upon men and women –
And they were baptized in the Holy Spirit;
And they began to speak in tongues as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance.
He said, “*These people aren’t drunk as you might consider. This is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel.*”
And then he quotes **Joel**. And the prophet **Joel** said that in the last days these things would happen.
So the Holy Spirit inspires the record of the book of **Acts** that says that since **Acts 2** and the Day of Pentecost –
We are in the last days.

Now for some people that’s problematic. They’re thinking 2,000 years is a long time for the last days.
Well, don’t forget that – “**with the Lord a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as a day**”.
For the Lord it’s been two days.

But we know that all of us, barring the rapture of the Church, we are all dying.
We know that we’re living in the last days.
And yet the challenge to me is – I thought – Do those realities move us as they ought to?
And on the other hand Satan is activated and driven by the knowledge of the shortness of his time.
The knowledge of the shortness of his time excites his emotions. It says he was full of wrath.
Satan does not know how to love. So the shortness of his time excites the only emotion that he’s capable of – hate.

We need to pray. We need to pray as the Psalmist prayed.
Would you write this in the margin of your Bible between the end of **Revelation 12** and the beginning of **13**?

Psalm 90: “¹² Teach us to number our days that we apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

I have found that life is harder at the age of 62 than it was at the age of 22.
Now some of you are thinking, ‘*Duh! Look at you. You’re falling apart. Of course it’s harder.*’
No, not that way, not that harder. It’s harder because I understand my life is shorter.
I don’t know when I’m going to see Jesus. It could be tonight.
I was taking a walk today after I finished putting a rough draft of my notes together.
And I was thinking, ‘*What if I just dropped dead right here?*’ That’s not impossible.
But barring that kind of suddenness, when I was 22 that’s a big chunk of time in front of me.
But now I’m 62; and I have a little bit of life left.
And I don’t quite know long that is; but it’s way shorter than it was when I was 22.

And so now life is harder because –
I begin to think harder about every decision;
I begin to measure out the consequences of commitment and time and necessity, because my time is shorter.

What is going to excite me?
What is going to move me about that?
What is there in my heart and my life to be moved by the shortness of time that I have left?

And in reality – how short is our life? I don’t know.
It might be as short as the end of this day for some of us. We don’t know.

The shortness of our time ought to stir our hearts to all that you and I are capable of by -
the indwelling presence, the empowering and the leading and the gifting of the Holy Spirit.
[And we spent 3 months / 12 weeks studying that specific portion of what God’s Word has to say.](#)

The shortness of our time, knowing the times in which we live, should stir our hearts to all that we are capable of by way of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

Are we stirred to as great a love as Satan is stirred to such great hatred in light of the shortness of his time?
Are we as anxious to save as he is to destroy?

The shortness of his time excites him to action. There is nothing that Satan can do that he doesn't do from that moment forward when he was cast out of Heaven, and he saw how short his time was – 3 ½ years left for him. We might be half-hearted. But I've got news for you – Your adversary the devil is never half-hearted.

The demons that surround him and join him in his rebellion that are now assigned to harass you and to rob you of all that Jesus died for you to have – They can't rob you of the eternal life Jesus has given to you; But they can rob you of the abundant life that he has promised belongs to you because of his death and resurrection. And they are not half-hearted. They never have a holiday. They never take a day off – never.

In this 13th chapter we're going to see Satan's final efforts and plans to deceive the world and carry out his warfare against his Creator, our Creator – the great war, this cosmic conflict that is all centred around the object of worship.

In this 13th chapter we see his final efforts and plans to rule humanity and be worshipped by them. That very reality is set before us in our text.

Now this chapter divides into two sections –

1. In verses **1-10** we're brought face to face with this personage that we call the Anti-Christ. We'll be talking a bit about that very title in this study.
2. In verses **11-18** we're introduced to a second person, the false prophet. And that's the person that we'll look at in our next study.

This man is an intensely dominating personality in the world. He's going to be a religious leader unlike any other religious leader that's ever gone before him. And I don't call Jesus a religious leader because he came to kill religion and bring life. So let's dive in – Here we go –

Revelation 13: “¹ And I saw a beast rising out of the sea,”

Just that phrase sounds like strange stuff, like a b-rated sci-fi movie script. It sounds more like Godzilla than the Bible.

“¹ And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems (or crowns) on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. ² And the beast that I saw was like a leopard;”

And remember we said when John, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit uses words such as “like” – we're not to understand them as literal; we're to understand them as “like” something.

“² 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.

Now please understand –

When the Anti-Christ shows up he's not going to have “seven heads” and “ten horns” and “ten crowns”; Because if he did everybody would be going, “*Whoa, the Anti-Christ*”, right?

He's not going to have the body of a “leopard”, “bear” feet, and “a lion's mouth”.

This is symbolic language. This is God speaking in images used throughout Scripture –

to describe the man that Satan is going to use in his war against God and his war against man.

In the totality of Scripture we're told that this man is going to essentially come on the scene like a saint.
He's going to come on the scene like a genius;
This guy is going to be the kind of guy that you see on the cover of GQ;
He's the kind of guy that's going to be the Time magazine man of the year.
Don't think Godzilla. Think George Clooney. Think Brad Pitt.
He comes on the scene as the man that the whole world is looking for.
He's going to be the world's man. And people are going to love him.
This man is going to impress the United Nations.
He's going to amaze the European Union.
He's going to out-politic the United States.

I don't know if you've noticed this – but the voice that speaks to post-modern world is the voice of the celebrity.
Have you noticed that? If somebody is a celebrity, somebody is good at acting, somebody is good at playing music-
They can say things – And the whole world believes whatever comes out of their mouth because they're a celebrity.

The world is literally going to bow down to this guy.
Now you might think – '*Could you just talk reality?*' '*Like when has the world ever bowed down to a man?*'

How about Caesar? When Christians were being slaughtered they were given an option.
The only way to not die for faith in Jesus was to renounce Jesus as Lord, and say, '*Caesar is Lord*'.
Why were the Jews in the day of Jesus so livid about the Roman presence in the land?
Well, because it was a polytheistic pagan government ruling this fiercely monotheistic people.
And this polytheistic pagan government worshipped its leader.
You not only had to renounce Jesus as Lord;
You had to say, "*Kaiser Kyrios*" – "*Caesar is Lord*".
You couldn't use a Roman coin in the temple's precincts towards the worship of God;
Because there was a false god on the coin. It bore the image of Caesar.

26 times in the book of **Revelation** God specifically calls this man "**the beast**".

God wants us to know that this man that's going to be the world's man,
the one who could be plastered on the cover of GQ,
the one with his face plastered on Time magazine as man of the year,
the celebrity that everybody wants to listen to –
God wants us to know that this man is really no Saviour; he's a "**beast**".

The word translated "**beast**" there is '*therion*'.

Thayer defines this word as – *a wild animal, a wild beast, metaphorically a brutal savage ferocious man.*
God knows this man for who he is.

But the world is going to see him for who he isn't – He's a calculating, brutal savage. He's a wicked dictator. And his true nature is going to be hidden to the world for at least the first half of this 7-year period of time called the tribulation.

Daniel says this in **Daniel 8:25**. Put this in the margin of your Bible next to the word "**the beast**".

Daniel 9: "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.**"

I want to tell you how the **King James Version** reads that last bit –

"and by peace he shall destroy many"

See, he's going to come on the scene as a man of peace.
And the peace that he sells is going to be the death of man.

This man is referenced in a number of places in the Bible by way of various names and titles –

Daniel 7:8 “the little horn”
Daniel 8:23 “the king of fierce countenance”
Daniel 9:26 “the prince that shall come”
Daniel 11:36-45 “the wilful king”

In **John 5:43** Jesus calls him “the one who comes in his own name”.

There Jesus says, “I have come in my Father’s name, and you don’t receive me.

There is someone who is coming in his own name, and him you will receive.”

He’s referencing the antichrist.

In **2 Thessalonians 2** he’s called –

“the son of perdition” (or destruction),

“the man of sin”,

“the lawless one”.

John, the author of the book of **Revelation** is the one who introduces the title “**antichrist**” in his **1st** epistle.

In the margin of your Bible write **1 John 2:18**. John writes –

“**18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming...**”

Now people say,

“Stop talking about the antichrist.

What is this the ‘antichrist’?

What’s all this business about him?”

At the end of the **1st** century Christians had heard about and had been taught about the personage of the antichrist.

John, one of the twelve who spent day and night with Jesus for three years –

John, one of the pillars of the Church –

John, the last surviving apostle –

John, who received the Revelation of Jesus Christ on the isle of Patmos – says –

“**it is the last hour, and you have heard that antichrist is coming...**”

John speaks of the “**antichrist**”.

And then he also speaks of “**many antichrists**”.

John speaks of “**the spirit of antichrist**”.

He gives little hints at, previews of this man and his mission, a man who is yet to come. The spirit of antichrist will one day find its ultimate fulfilment in the person of the antichrist who will lead humanity in rebellion against God prior to the second coming of Jesus. In other words, the world still waits to see the ultimate revelation of the antichrist. I personally believe – and this is an open-hand issue in the Scriptures – I personally believe that this man, the antichrist, is not going to be revealed until the Church is removed from the Earth in the rapture.

The first thing that comes to mind when we see the prefix “**anti**” is the idea of ‘*against*’, the idea of ‘*opposite*’.

And without a doubt this man will be against Jesus in every way.

But the big idea for us here in the title “**antichrist**” is the idea of ‘*instead of*’.

He is the ‘*instead-of-Christ*’.

He is the ‘*pseudo-Christ*’.

He is the ‘*counterfeit-Christ*’.

He is the counterfeit replacement of the real Christ.

He is coming as a false messiah.

This is so very important – Satan has a counterfeit version of whatever we hold to be true as Christians. We have the Gospel. Satan has his counterfeit gospels (plural). We'll talk about this in a moment – But Satan has cleverly crafted and authored a cross-less form of Christianity. Paul speaks of it as, **“having the form of godliness, but denying the power.”** He has cleverly crafted and authored countless false religions that offer man many ways to God without the cross. And with his false gospels comes a false hope. The false hope is offered in a false messiah, the antichrist.

In our next study we're going to look at the false prophet. The false prophet completes the counterfeit satanic trinity. The false prophet is the counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. He's the *'instead-of-Holy Spirit'*. The role of the false prophet, we're going to see in our next study, is to point people to **“the beast”**, the false messiah, through whom the dragon, Satan, will be worshipped by the world.

That is the anti-trinity.
It's against the Triune God of the Bible.
That is the *'instead-of-trinity'*.
It's the false replacement of the Triune God of the Bible

Christianity is Trinitarian. Our worship is –
by the Spirit,
through the Son,
to the Father.

The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, reveals Jesus to us, points us to Jesus, whose death and resurrection makes the way for us to know and worship the Father. That's the real Trinity. Satan has his counterfeit.

John says, **“¹ And I saw a beast rising out of the sea...”**

John explains the imagery for us. You can circle that little part of verse 1, and write in the margin of your Bible –

Revelation 17: “¹⁵ The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.”

So the sea is a reference to – **“peoples, multitudes, nations and languages”**. I've always found it interesting that Israel, a nation that is bordered on one side by the beautiful Mediterranean Sea; I've always found it odd that Israel was never really a sea-faring people. Ancient Israel, under the reign of Solomon, had a navy. But in **1 Kings 9:26, 27** it says that Hiram, the king of Tyre, supplied the sailors. Why? Because the Israelites didn't want to go in the water. In Biblical times Jewish people were essentially terrified of the sea. And because they were terrified by the sea, for them the sea became a figure of everything evil, everything chaotic.

In the margin of your Bible write **Isaiah 57:20** –
“²⁰ But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, & its waters toss up mire & dirt.”
So in Biblical language the sea was a figure of –
the restless strivings of the nations without God,
the restless strivings of man unable to govern himself, and as a result unable to govern others,
the restless strivings of the nations as they strove against God.

**Psalm 2: “¹ Why do the nations rage? Why do the heathen imagine vain things?
² They plot against your Messiah? And they say, “Let us cast their bonds away.”**

So here's the picture –

The beast, the antichrist, will rise up out of the chaos of the nations.

Now it's not hard to get our head around that. Throughout history the most despicable, violent, amoral dictators rarely rose to power in a social, political or economic vacuum.

There has almost always been –

social, political and economic chaos,

social, political and economic forces at work that set the stage for tyranny.

I'm going to read a quote to you. And I want you to guess who made this statement.

"The streets of our country are in turmoil. The universities are filled with students rebelling and rioting. Communists are seeking to destroy our country. And the republic is in danger – yes, danger from within and from without. We need law and order. Without law and order our nation cannot survive."

Now there are a lot of people who would say, "Oh that was Richard Nixon in the 60s", right?

No, it was **Adolph Hitler** in 1932.

Hitler came to power out of the social, economic and political chaos of post-World War 1 Europe.

The beast, the false messiah, is going to rise out of stormy geo-political seas.

We live in a time of rough waters in the geo-political scene.

I don't know how much you stay abreast of the news –

what's going on in Russia relative to Ukraine,

what's going on in the Middle East.

In 2005 Vladimir Putin claimed that Russia was –

the greatest ally of Islam,

the greatest ally specifically of Iran.

In 2004 a man named Charles Krauthammer in the Washington Post wrote this big editorial on Iran speeding towards the development of nuclear weapons. We're a decade late on that. And the man who is running the country wants to commit genocide on Israel.

We live in very troubling times in the sense of geo-politics.

The antichrist is going to arise out of such stuff.

Now let's get back to the description.

"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. 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."

We could spend the next 3 studies walking through the various views on the meaning of the heads and the crowns.

Please make note of this. There are some very striking and very important correlations between –

the prophecies in the book of **Daniel**, **Daniel 7** in particular,

and the imagery used in regards to the antichrist here in **Revelation 13** and also in **Revelation 17**.

So on your own time head that way.

There are some great resources to check out concerning these things.

You can go online and get a bunch of them for free.

Here is where I want us to spend our time.

What we want to be very careful of is to avoid making the mistake of looking at the beast, and saying –

that the beast is actually a collection of nations in the world,

that those nations collectively are the beast.

There are world powers that are going to work with and finally capitulate to a person.
Again, in the margin of your Bible write –

Revelation 17: “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.**
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...**”

So they are going to possess power in the geo-political scene.
They don't have it at the moment. But they're going to be receiving it together with the beast as the beast receives it.
And they are of one mind with him. And they are going to hand over their power and their authority to the beast.
And collectively under his rule they will make war on the Lamb.
So this is not a collection of nations that we're going to try to label as personage.

Here's what **Joseph Seiss** says in his commentary – which, by the way –
If you want a great resource on the book of **Revelation**, this is a great one.
This is what **Seiss** says –

“We would therefore greatly err from the Scriptures, as well as from the unanimous conviction and teaching of the early church, were we to fail to recognize in this Beast a real person, though one in whom the political power of the world is finally concentrated and represented.”

So that's a very important thing for us to see.
This beast is a person, a man. And he's a man energized from Hell.
We're told in two places in the book of **Revelation 11:7; 17:8** that he comes out of the pit.
And you think, *'Well, how can he be human, but come out of the pit?'*
Well, remember the beast is Satan's counterfeit messiah.
And just as Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, the beast will be Satan in a human body.
We get a preview of that in the man who betrayed Jesus.

John 13: “²⁶ ... **So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.**
²⁷ **Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him...**”

“²the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth.”

Under the authority of the antichrist this final world empire will have –
the vigilance of a predatory **“leopard”**,
the slow and crushing power of a **“bear”**,
and the authority and ferocity of a **“lion”** – this final world-governing empire.

The thing that is most important for us to see concerning the beast is at the end of verse **2** –

“And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.”

In **Revelation 12** we're told that the dragon is Satan.
In **Revelation 12:12** we're told that Satan was cast out of Heaven, and his time was short.
There is now 3 ½ years of a window that he has. And he's filled with wrath. He's furious.
Satan gives his power to this man so that thru him he can unleash his hate & wrath on the world that God so loved.

Now think of the *'instead-of-messiah'*.
Jesus Christ, the real Messiah, is the expression of the heart of God the Father.

John 1: “¹⁸ **No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God, and is near to the Father's heart, he has revealed God to us.**”

That word “**revealed**” there comes from the Greek word from which we get our English word ‘exegesis’ – to bring something out into the open.

Jesus, the real Messiah, is the one who reveals God to us. He expresses the heart of God to us. Jesus reveals to this world the love and the mercy and the grace and the truth of God. Jesus said, “**When you see me, you see the Father.**”

The false messiah is going to express the heart of Satan –
his hate,
his wrath,
his lies.

Write **Matthew 4:8, 9** in the margin of your Bible there where it says –

“And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.”

Matthew 4: “⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”

Two striking things –
Jesus didn’t argue with Satan;
But he refused the offer.

The great ambition of Jesus was to lay down his life to redeem rebels to himself. His great ambition was to redeem and reconcile rebels to himself at the price of his own blood. Jesus did not need, nor did he want, mere power or title. Jesus wanted to be the King of hearts.

He desired to –
rule over those that he redeemed,
rule over those who willingly, gladly bowed their hearts and surrendered their lives to his love.

And if you don’t know Jesus you need to understand that’s what it is to be a Christian. You are so moved by the love of Jesus, who loved you and washed you from your sins with his blood – That you bow to him, that you love him; and you say, “*Jesus, be the King of my heart.*” And if that’s not what you’re understanding your Christianity to be, let me tell you something – Probably the case is – You’re not a Christian. You may be very religious. But when you know Jesus and you know his love, you ask him to be king of your life.

So Satan makes this offer to Jesus. Somewhere along the timeline of history someone will bow down to Satan. Satan is going to make the exact same offer to this individual, the beast, the same offer that he made to Jesus. This man, with all of his charisma, as much as Hitler, will have a passion for power, Perhaps in his own mind he’ll even have a desire to save the world. And he’ll be willing to pay any price to make his mark on history. And he will literally sell his soul to Satan for the opportunity of ruling the world. The bummer is that whoever this man is that takes the offer, whoever this man is that bows to Satan in utter complete surrender, he ends up cast into the lake of fire where he is tormented forever and ever.

Don’t miss this – Satan does not and Satan cannot deliver. The antichrist doesn’t get the victory. It won’t happen, because he is under the sovereignty of God. The antichrist can’t change the number of his name from 666 to 665 or 667. He has 1,260 days – not 1,261.

God is in charge. God is sovereign.
Satan will not deliver on his promise to this man.
And Satan cannot deliver now to anybody.
He promises pleasure, possessions, power.
But the truth is he cannot truly deliver.

Anyone who takes him up on his offer ends up broken, empty and destroyed in this life. And they end up in the company of the antichrist, the false prophet, and the devil & his angels, in the lake of fire that burns forever and ever.

It's only God who offers life.
And it's only God who delivers life in the person of his Son.
And here's the amazing thing – God offers life at his expense.

**John 3: “¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”**

God offers life out of his resources.
This is the reality that God delivers what he offers.

**1 John 5: “¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God,
that you may know that you have eternal life.”**

I hope you know that you have eternal life.
I can never convince you that you have eternal life.
It's the Holy Spirit who comes and dwells in you –

the minute you make Jesus the King of your life,
the minute you abdicate the throne of your life,
the minute you say,

*“I am walking away from my little kingdom of one;
I am stepping off the throne;
I am no longer going to be the self-appointed sovereign of my life;
I tried desperately to take your place, God;
But Jesus is the one who stood in my place to pay for my sins;
And so I want Jesus to have his place as King of my life.”*

And when that happens, when you make that decision the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of you. And the Holy Spirit bears witness with your spirit that you are the adopted child of God, so much so that you can use a term of endearment, and say to the God who created the heavens and the earth out of nothing – you can say –

“Abba Father” – “Daddy”

I hope you know him that way.
I hope you love him that way.
And if you don't, don't leave here without knowing him that way.

**“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.**

⁴ And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast,”

That's the big part – underline it, circle it, asterisk it, draw arrows to it –

“4 For they worshiped the dragon,” – that’s what Satan has always wanted – **“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?””**

Now three times in this chapter we’re told that one of the things that makes this man so famous is that – he receives a fatal wound; and is healed.

Remember the antichrist –
He’s the *‘imitation-christ’*;
He’s the *‘instead-of-christ’*.
He’s the *‘counterfeit-christ’*.

Jesus is –
God’s Christ;
the true Christ;
God’s Messiah.

God’s Christ, God’s Messiah came to die in our place for our sin.
In perfect and loving obedience to the Father Jesus laid down his life and raised it up again on the third day.

But here’s Satan’s Christ.
Here’s the *‘instead-of-Christ’*.
He’s going to come as a deliverer.
He’s going to have the answer for wars and famines and economic woes.
He’s going to have the answer relative to this world, offering to men & women the glories & kingdoms of this world.

And the world has always wanted that kind of king.
That’s the king the world has always wanted.

You remember how in the Gospels when Jesus miraculously fed multitudes –
They tried to take him by force and make him their king.
That’s the kind of king the world wants.

The Caesar knew that the way to the hearts of the people was to give them a circus and give them bread.
Jesus won’t be a bread king.
But the world will happily receive the bread king who sorts out the geo-political and economic threats, truly existential threats on the planet that man has never been able to resolve.
And somewhere in this process there is apparently an assassination attempt made on this man.
Who knows, it may be.

We know that the antichrist at one point in the middle of this seven-year period of time –
He’s been on the scene for 3 ½ years;
He’s come on;
He’s the GQ guy;
He’s the Time magazine guy;
He’s that guy that the whole world knows;
He’s the celebrity of all time on planet Earth.

But at the halfway point of that seven-year period of time –
he’s going to go into the Holy of Holies;
and he’s going to demand to be worshipped as God.
And perhaps at that time some Jew is going to go in, and say, *“You are crazy”*, and try to kill him.
Satan has his *‘instead-of-Christ’* who even imitates Jesus in his death and resurrection.
And the world will believe this. And it will add tremendously to his fame and his power.

“³ but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.

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?””

They worshipped the dragon.

That’s been Satan’s agenda all along.

From the beginning Satan has wanted to stand in the place of the God of infinite worth.

He said, **“I will be like the Most High”**.

He has tried to blind mankind to the infinite worth of God.

He’s done everything in his power to influence man to worship anything other than God –

But all to the end that he would be worshipped.

“⁴ And they worshiped the dragon”

That is why Satan gave power to this man.

The world thinks that this satanic counterfeit is the Messiah.

The Lord Jesus said in **John 5:43** –

“I have come in my Father’s name, and you don’t receive me. If another comes in his own name you will receive him.”

And at the front end of this seven-year period of time Israel is going to receive him.

The whole world runs after the antichrist.

And in bowing before the antichrist they’re giving to Satan the very thing that he wanted from the beginning.

Isaiah 14: “¹⁴ I will be like the Most High.”

And then there’s this – they say –

“Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?”

Now I want you to think about this -

Satan has just waged war in Heaven against Michael and his angels, and was defeated and cast out of Heaven.

Yet he’s able to convince the world that this incarnation of himself is invincible.

He’s just had his satanic butt kicked out of Heaven; and he convinces the world that he’s invincible.

That’s how great a deceiver he is.

How does that happen?

People, who reject the truth –

They don’t believe nothing;

They believe anything.

How incredible! –

The world rejected Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

The world rejected Jesus Christ, the visible image of the invisible God.

The world rejected Jesus Christ, God manifest in human flesh.

The world rejected Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth.

But they will accept and follow this man who represents all that Satan is – a murderer, a thief and a liar.

They will accept this one who is called by God—**“the man of sin”**, **“the son of destruction”** and **“the lawless one”**.

Now people might say –

“Well, how can that take place?”

“How will people actually worship Satan?”

Well, remember it's wrapped up in the concept of antichrist – the *'in-place-of'*.

The terrifying fact of the matter is that Satan is priming the entire world to believe the ultimate deception – which is – Satan posing as God, the antichrist posing as the true Messiah.

And he will not only deceive the unbelieving world.

The apostate church is going to buy into that lie.

The antichrist is going to come on the scene looking just like the Jesus that the apostate church preaches – which, by the way, Satan is the one at work within what is called the church, within what is called Christianity, to create a false Christianity, a Jesus who isn't the Jesus of the Bible, so that when the *'instead-of-Jesus'* shows up the apostate church is going to say, *"That's the Jesus we've been talking about."*

Satan's false messiah will not come into power by a frontal assault.

He will pervert the biblical view of Christ so as to be able to pose as the very founder of Christianity.

Yes, he is against all that Jesus is.

But he's also a substitute for the real thing.

Satan's lie will be honoured as truth.

“⁵ And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.”

Again, there's the 3 ½ years.

“⁵ ... uttering haughty and blasphemous words” –

That was not his MO when he came on the scene in the first 3 ½ years of this seven-year period of time. But in the middle of that seven-year period of time he demands that he be worshipped as God.

The **New Living Translation** reads the last part of verse 5 as –

“⁵ ... And he was given authority to do whatever he wanted for forty-two months”

Six times in this chapter we're told that he is given power.

The antichrist did not have his own power.

This is the dragon's power given to him.

And he was permitted to have such authority;

He was permitted to have such power because the world had refused the truth.

2 Thessalonians 2: “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. ¹¹ Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, ¹² in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

“⁶ It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 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.”

Now, again –
the antichrist is allowed;
the authority was given it.

Now people take this, especially the very beginning of verse –
“7 it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them” –
As to say this is the Church in the tribulation.

I think we need context.
Remember context starts in the most immediate context within a chapter, within the verses surrounding it,
Then it can go out to –
the context of the entire chapter,
the context of the surrounding chapters in a book,
the context of the book that it's in,
the context of the New Testament or the Old Testament, depending upon which,
and then the context of the entire Bible.

In the Old Testament you will find the word **“saints”** in –
Deuteronomy,
1 Samuel,
2 Chronicles,
Job,
Psalms,
Proverbs,
Daniel (six times),
Hosea,
and **Zechariah.**

These were not references to the Church.
The Church was still hidden in the Old Testament.
In the Old Testament the Church was still a mystery.
It isn't until the New Testament where Paul begins to talk about this mystery that is made known in these last days,
that God is calling, not just Jews, but Gentiles.
Old Testament believers – and that would be within Israel – were called **“saints”**.

“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.”

Now this is one of those moments where people run to their various theological camps.
And they're saying, *“Richard, are you saying that we are predestined?”* – Yes.
Now you might say, *“Well, that's not fair.”*
Well, the Bible says – **“to as many as receive Jesus to them he gave the right to become the children of God.”**
So if you don't think it's fair, I'm going to give you a chance to be saved.
And if you say, *“Well, I'm not going to do that”* – Well, I guess your name wasn't written in the book of life.
But you can't say, *“That's not fair”* –
Because right here, right now you've heard of the real Saviour, and what he did to save you.
And you now have the light of the Gospel.
And you can choose to receive Jesus.
You can say, *“Jesus, you did that for me? I want you to be King of my heart.”*
And you'll be saved right here, right now.
“Believe with your heart on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved.”
This isn't about how unfair – I wasn't predestined.
No – Give your life to Jesus, right here, right now.

Father, thank you for this time in your Word. Lord, thank you that you have actually revealed to us future events in this world. Lord, with everything that has been served in the Word, the meat, the milk, the manna, we pray that which you have for each of us personally between us and you, that you would now allow us to press, to move with one heart towards you in response.