

So far in our study of Revelation, we have followed the order of the book as it is written (the first five chapters) and then looked ahead at chapter 12, which provides a broad overview of the spiritual battle that has been taking place since the Garden of Eden. However, as we progress from here, it seems that separated passages often deal with the same issues or characters of the end-time; therefore, rather than proceeding with a chapter-by-chapter study, I have brought those passages together that deal specifically with the Antichrist, the False Prophet, and the Devil. With this slight change, let's begin with a look into what is said about the Antichrist, keeping in mind that this continues to be a study of what will come *hereafter* (Revelation 4:1).

You will recall from our study of Revelation chapter 5 that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God and the Root of David, has taken the “book” from the right of God – a book that He alone was found worthy to open and to reveal what it contained. Although we are not told what the book contains, its significance seems evident, for only the Lord Jesus, out of all of the creatures in heaven and earth, *prevailed* (was victorious) to open the book, and, as He takes the book, all of the saints and angels in heaven break forth in praise to Him.<sup>1</sup> We are not given a time-frame as to when the opening of the seals will take place, but we can be assured that it will be at precisely the right time and according to God's schedule. With this assurance, let's begin to consider the Antichrist and the role that he will play in the days ahead.

## **ANTICHRIST:**



**<sup>1.</sup> And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. <sup>2.</sup> And I saw, and behold a white**

---

<sup>1</sup> Strong's Online.

horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. (Revelation 6)

As the Lord Jesus opens the first of the seven seals of the book, John is invited by one of the living creatures to observe what takes place.



As John looks, he sees a *white horse* (*leukos hippos*), and he invites the reader to see it along with him through his descriptive language (*behold*).<sup>2</sup> When the Lord returns to establish His millennial kingdom on earth, we are told that He will come riding upon a *white horse* (*leukos hippos*), exactly the same Greek phrase that John uses to describe what he sees with the opening of the first seal (Revelation 19:11). However, we must exercise discernment about what John is seeing before we hastily conclude that this must be Jesus. Paul warned the Corinthians that “Satan [*satanas* – the adversary] himself is transformed into [a change in outward appearance so as to deceive; he disguises himself as] an angel [messenger] of light [*phos* (*foce*)]” (2 Corinthians 11:14).<sup>3</sup> In his first epistle, John declared that “God is light [*phos*]” (1 John 1:5); therefore, the warning that Paul gives is that our adversary, Satan, can make himself appear to be a messenger of God for the purpose of deceiving the unsuspecting. We must heed Peter’s warning to “Be sober, be vigilant [two commands]; because your adversary the devil [Satan], as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour [overcome/destroy] ...” (1 Peter 5:8).<sup>4</sup> We are called upon to be spiritually discerning, which can only happen when we spend time studying the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15)! Indeed, we must

<sup>2</sup> Strong’s Online.

<sup>3</sup> Strong’s Online; Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>4</sup> Strong’s Online.

be continually diligent in this day of great spiritual compromise and accommodation of error!

## **DILIGENT DISCERNMENT**

Jesus said that someday there will stand before Him those who will say: “Lord, have we not prophesied [to declare God’s truth] in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works [miracles]?”; yet His response will be: “I never [not at any time] knew [come to know, recognize] you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity [lawlessness]” (Matthew 7:22-23).<sup>5</sup> Notice what it is that Jesus calls lawlessness: the declaration of His truth, the casting out of demons, and the performance of miracles – all done in His name; His basis for doing so is that He has never known those who are carrying out these seemingly wonderful spiritual activities. A brief consideration of the Ecumenical movement today reveals that it fits this description perfectly. By compromising God’s truth and accommodating error, the narrow Gospel message that leads to spiritual life has been abandoned in favor of a redefined gospel that has a much broader appeal. In some cases, they may still declare some of the truth of God, but His narrow truth is denied in favor of a negotiated “truth” that permits them to enjoy a much-desired, loving **unity** with other compromisers. Do not miss it: not everything that the Ecumenically-minded teaches will be error. However, do not take that as permission to sit under their teaching, rather, it is to be a warning to us that we must have no part with any of them (spiritually), lest we fall prey to their deceptive speech. Who is Ecumenical? Obviously, the one who embraces and promotes Ecumenical thinking and activities (a compromise of the Truth and accommodation of error in order to participate in a broader unity), but it is not limited to those who are overtly Ecumenical. Although the leadership of a church might well actively participate in Ecumenism, there may be others within the congregation

---

<sup>5</sup> Strong’s Online; Friberg Lexicon.

who are “passively Ecumenical”; these people are tolerant of the course that their leaders are taking and are not prepared to handle the matter Biblically (2 Corinthians 6:17). God’s Word is not silent on this subject, yet, for some reason, they refuse to separate from the error of their leadership.

“Now I beseech [exhort] you, brethren, mark [watch out for] them which cause divisions [*standing apart*, hence: disunity with Christ] and offences [enticements to sin] contrary to [*para* – alongside of] the doctrine [teaching] which ye have learned; and avoid [turn away from – an imperative!] them” (Romans 16:17).<sup>6</sup> Here we are commanded to turn away from (or to shun) those who *stand apart* from the true doctrine that we find in the Bible; the command of Scripture is clear, yet those who are accommodating of Ecumenism refuse to obey it. Notice that this verse identifies two errors and provides the acceptable response to them: **Error 1:** the one who teaches a false gospel of delusion and deceit (yet perhaps only slightly wrong) is bringing disunity with, or separation from, Christ, **Error 2:** the one who entices others to sin, and **the Response:** the command is issued that we are to avoid (have no part with) such divisiveness; this speaks of a teacher of incorrect doctrine and our required response to him. The one who does not heed this command, but remains tolerant of such error, might appear to be very loving and kind, yet, by his life he is proclaiming that he thinks it to be a small thing to disobey the Word of God; too frequently the justification for such tolerance is that he wants to be a light to the Ecumenist. Even though he might not be actively teaching error (like the Ecumenist), his tolerance of error places him in a state of sin before God, and, by his example, he is a stumbling block to those who might be wondering what their attitude should be toward this error. Take this one step further; simply sitting under the teaching of someone who shows such a tolerance for error is, in itself, a sin, because the command of Romans 16:17 is to turn away from those who would entice you to sin – disobedience to the commands of

---

<sup>6</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

Scripture is sin, and, by his example, he is enticing others to sin! The greatest error that we face today is that of a flourishing Ecumenism; it is one of the many signs that we are in the end times. Anyone who remains a part of an Ecumenical group is saying that it doesn't really matter; a skewed view of the holy God of the Bible permits them to ignore those Scriptures that they might find to be inconvenient or convicting. Do NOT forget: **obedience is always a choice**; disobedience, on the other hand, can be either a deliberate choice or simply an unwillingness to be obedient (a subtle attempt to ignore what we know to be true, whether by rationalization or self-justification). The children of disobedience (whether willful or passive, it matters not) are subject to the working of Satan: "... the prince of the power of the air [Satan], the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience ..." (Ephesians 2:2). It might be easy to identify the one who actively promotes Ecumenical thinking, but the tolerant one (the passive Ecumenist) must also be identified and turned away from, or we will find ourselves in the uncomfortable position of being disobedient to the Word of God. This is all part of exercising clear-thinking and vigilance so that we are not overcome by the devil (1 Peter 5:8). If our focus is truly on the Lord Jesus, as it must be (Hebrews 12:2), why would we even want to sit under the instruction of someone who is tolerant of error?

Nevertheless, we must be discerning, for the Ecumenist will provide Biblical support for his erroneous teachings that are *alongside of* the Scriptures – his doctrine will not be in direct opposition to the Word of God, just not quite Biblically accurate! In other words, even though they will be teaching and living in contradiction to the Bible, that does not mean that they will be quoting from Satan. We need to understand that the Ecumenist may well teach some things that are Biblically sound, yet we must not lose sight of the fact that he does not truly accept the narrow message of the Gospel (if he did, he would then lose his ecumenical thinking and tolerance for error). He might even go so far as to **profess** belief in the narrow truth of the Gospel, but, on this, his mind will be split:

when alone or among those of like mind, he will profess to believing the truth, however, when among the Ecumenical, his willing presence there denies the narrow truth of the Gospel, and his profession! Our unity must be with the Lord Jesus Christ, not with those who enjoy the loving camaraderie of the Ecumenical – the two are mutually exclusive; they have nothing in common. We need to be aware that there will be those around us (like the Ecumenical) who, despite proclaiming the name of the Lord, will be doing the bidding of the adversary, Satan; they are acting as double-agents in Satan's hope of deceiving and overcoming the child of God – they are leading others into sin. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:22-23).

You might wonder how exercising diligent discernment has anything to do with our study at hand. The Spirit of God has been given to everyone who has placed his faith in the Lord, and one of His tasks is to guide us into all truth (John 16:13). Such guidance will only come by living according to the leading of the Spirit – i.e., obedience to the Word of God (Romans 8:1-6). We cannot claim to have our minds set on the Spirit of God if we are not living according to God's Word. Revelation, which is filled with difficult metaphors, absolutely cannot be understood by the fleshly mind; therefore, if we desire to learn what God has for us in this book, then we must be sure that we are living Biblically. We must carry out the examination prescribed in 2 Corinthians 13:5 and be sure that our hearts are right with God. Compromise of the truth and accommodation of error will close the Scriptures to us, leaving us in spiritual confusion or in spiritual delusion; if these are present in our lives, then we are NOT living according to the leading of the Spirit of God (Romans 8:7-8).

## **THE RIDER OF THE WHITE HORSE**



With this caution in mind, let's consider what else John tells us about what comes with the opening of the first seal. The one whom John sees sitting upon this white horse, is holding a *bow*. Although the bow can be used for hunting, it frequently (and in this case as well) refers to an instrument of war. Unlike the sword, which requires close, personal engagement with the enemy, the bow and arrow are used to inflict injury and/or death from a distance; using a sword means that you see your enemy up close, whereas with the bow, you can kill from a distance – even randomly (1 Kings 22:34). This rider of the white horse does not come with a sword, which means that, although he will be engaging in warfare, the destruction that he inflicts will be from a distance – he, personally, will not be involved in the dirty work of battle, but will operate from behind the scenes.

Here is our first affirmation that this is not referring to the Lord Jesus; when the Lord comes riding upon a white horse, “out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword [*rhomphaia* - *hrom-fah*’-yah – a large sword], that with it he should smite the nations” (Revelation 19:15).<sup>7</sup> When Jesus first appeared to John (on the island of Patmos), He came with a *sharp twoedged sword* [*rhomphaia*] coming out of His mouth (Revelation 1:16).<sup>8</sup> As the Lord comes to usher in His millennial kingdom, He will be equipped with a sword that He will use to subdue the peoples who are gathered in battle against Him; they will see Him and know, before they die, that it is the Lord, against Whom they have rebelled, and that He is bringing judgment upon them. He will personally attend to the enemies gathered against Him, and, even though the armies of heaven follow Christ into battle, there is no indication that they will actually participate in the conflict. Christ does not come carrying a bow, but the sword of His spoken word will be sufficient to kill those who are gathered against Him (Revelation 19:21).

---

<sup>7</sup> Strong's Online.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

To this rider is given a crown (*stephanos*), a sign of his authority as a ruler;<sup>9</sup> there is no indication that he has done anything to gain or deserve this honor – it is simply handed to him (*given* is in the passive voice – he is the recipient of the action).<sup>10</sup>

The writer of Hebrews says that “we see Jesus ... crowned [*stephanoo* – verb form of *stephanos*, in the passive voice] with glory and honour” (Hebrews 2:9).<sup>11</sup> However, in this case, Paul explained: “being found in fashion as a man, he [Jesus] humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore [for this reason] God also hath highly exalted [put in the most important position] him, and given him a name which is above [superior to] every name” (Philippians 2:8-9).<sup>12</sup> God has given to the Lord Jesus ultimate honor and authority because He willingly died to break the power of sin and death that the devil held over the sons of Adam (Hebrews 2:14). Jesus is crowned with glory and authority because He defeated Satan at the cross, and rose again to bring us new life.

Unlike the Lord Jesus, we see that this rider of the white horse is *given* authority as he comes onto the scene (we’ll see more on this later), and he goes out overcoming (*conquering*) so that he might overcome (*conquer*).<sup>13</sup> This is Satan’s attempt to parallel the works of the Lord in an effort to bring confusion to those who are not spiritually discerning. The purpose of this rider is to become the ruler of all by bringing everyone into submission to his authority. Perhaps world acclaim will elevate this rider to a place of authority, but it is also clear from this that he will endeavor to defeat anyone who might oppose him. Here is someone who comes impersonating the Lord Jesus Christ; to summarize: he is riding a white horse, carrying a weapon of war, receives a sign of authority, and

---

<sup>9</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>10</sup> Strong’s Online.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Friberg Lexicon; Gingrich Lexicon.

<sup>13</sup> Friberg Lexicon.



goes forth to establish his rule over the earth. Here we have our first, brief description of the Antichrist.

## ANTICHRIST DEFINED

John is the only one of the Bible writers who uses the term *antichrist* (*antichristos*), someone who is an opponent of Christ.<sup>14</sup> “... as ye have heard that antichrist [the Antichrist] shall come [is coming], even now are there [*have come* (perfect tense, a completed action with ongoing consequences)] many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time [*hour*]” (1 John 2:18).<sup>15</sup> From this we learn that there is an Antichrist coming (an individual who may appear to many to be the Christ), and that, in the meantime, there are many who are even now fulfilling the role of antichrist, and, thereby, we know that we are living in the last *hour*.

How could John, writing at the end of the first century AD, say that because of the many *antichrists* who were already in place, he was coming to realize that he was living in the last *hour*? Almost 2000 years later we are still living in the *last hour* – how is this possible? Consider that from the sin of Adam to the sacrifice that Christ made on the cross was a period of some 4000 years, during which individuals could obtain forgiveness of their sins through faith in the promises of God to one day defeat the enemy of our souls, Satan; this was a time of anticipation for the promised One. Christ’s sacrifice fulfilled those promises, and became the pivotal point in the passage of time. Satan was now defeated, and the New Covenant from God came into place, therefore, the rest of time (after the cross), until God’s faithful ones will be brought into eternal, timeless fellowship with Him, is considered to be the *last hour* – the last measured portion of time before eternity.<sup>16</sup> Jesus gave signs to His disciples that would alert those who are vigilant to His coming again (Matthew 24:29, 33-34), but He also

---

<sup>14</sup> Strong’s Online; Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>15</sup> Strong’s Online.

<sup>16</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

assured them that they would not know either the day or the hour when He would come (Matthew 24:36). The unfolding of events leading up to the signs of Christ's return rests securely in God's hands, and they will transpire as quickly or slowly as He has determined.

John also goes on to define an *antichrist* for us; we do not need to guess. He provides us with two perspectives on what an *antichrist* is; let's consider them both.

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son” (1 John 2:22). Notice that *antichrist* is someone who is denying *the Father and the Son*; this is a very unique relationship that exists within the Godhead. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us ...” (John 1:1, 14); the eternal Word took on a body of flesh, being conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). God, Who is spirit, came to earth in the body of a man, thereby creating this unique Father-Son relationship. Jesus (which means Jehovah is salvation) is the embodiment of God in human flesh: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ...” (Philippians 2:6-7).<sup>17</sup> During His earthly ministry, Jesus openly declared: “I and *my* [the] Father are one,” for which the religious Jews sought to stone Him because they understood that He had just proclaimed that He was God (John 10:30, 33).<sup>18</sup> John tells us that those who bear the spirit of antichrist will deny God the Father and God the Son – the religious Jews began by denying *the Son*.

Early in His ministry, the Jews took offense with Jesus and sought to kill Him: “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath [according to their traditions], but said also

---

<sup>17</sup> Strong's Online.

<sup>18</sup> Stephanus 1550 NT.

that God was his Father, making himself **equal with God**” (John 5:18). As Jesus explained the matter more fully for the Jews who were thus incensed, He said “That all *men* should honour [to revere, venerate, or worship\*] the Son, even as they honour [\*] the Father. He that honoureth [\*] not the Son honoureth [\*] not [absolute] the Father which hath sent him” (John 5:23).<sup>19</sup> From this we can understand that a denial of the Son of God is also a denial of the Father, whether expressed or not. At His trial, it was Jesus’ affirmation that He was the Son of God (equal with Jehovah) that convinced the religious Jews that He needed to die (Matthew 26:63-66). Therefore, everyone who does not accept Jesus as being equally Almighty God with the Father is promoting the spirit of antichrist by denying both the Son and the Father. Consequently, even though “Jesus” may hold a prominent place within Mormon and Jehovah’s Witnesses’ theology, since they do not permit Him to be God as the Scriptures teach, they are of antichrist! Interestingly, at one time the JWs promoted the worship of Jesus, but, in the early 1950s, they changed their theology and proclaimed the worship of Jesus to be idolatry.<sup>20</sup> John makes it very clear that Jesus must hold that place of equality with God the Father, and that anything less is a denial of both God the Father and the Son, and, as a result, is an expression of the spirit of antichrist.

John then goes on to provide a further elaboration on what an *antichrist* is: “And every spirit that confesseth [agrees] not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist [literally: *this is of the antichrist*], whereof ye have heard that it should come [*is coming*]; and even now already is it in the world” (1 John 4:3).<sup>21</sup> In his second epistle, John says: “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (2 John 7). John is emphatic that denying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh is of the antichrist; clearly, there must be greater

---

<sup>19</sup> Strong’s Online; <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/honor?s=t>.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/worship-jesus.php>

<sup>21</sup> Strong’s Online; Stephanus 1550 NT.

significance here than might be apparent at first glance. Let's look more closely at this.

John tells us that whoever is believing that “Jesus is the Christ [*the Anointed One*] is born of God” (1 John 5:1).<sup>22</sup> Contained within this simple statement (*Jesus is the Christ*) is a full recognition that Jesus, born of Mary and the Holy Spirit, is the anointed High Priest, Who, through His personal sacrifice, paid the debt for the sins of the world. John the Baptist testified that the Spirit of God descended upon Jesus when he was baptized (John 1:32), thereby fulfilling “the anointing” that all priests required according to the Mosaic tradition (Exodus 28:41). However, inasmuch as His anointing was the Spirit from heaven, and not oil administered by an earthly priest, Jesus is *the Anointed One* (the Messiah), Who had been promised by the prophets (Daniel 9:25-26). Being born of the kingly line of Judah (both through Mary, His earthly mother, and through Joseph, his adoptive, earthly father – Matthew 1:2; Luke 3:33), Jesus did not become a priest according to the Levitical pattern, but was made a “high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Hebrews 6:20; 7:14-16). “But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come ... Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*” (Hebrews 9:11-12). Jesus, being true-God in the body of man, was sinless, and became the pure, willing Lamb Who shed His blood for the sins of the world, and freely gave His life in order to forever break the power of death (Hebrews 4:15; 7:26).

In His promise to Satan in the Garden of Eden, Jehovah stated that it would be through *her seed* (the Seed of the woman) that his head would be crushed (Genesis 3:15). This is the first prophecy of the coming of the Deliverer, Jesus Christ, and it is clear that He will come as a descendant of the woman (Eve). “And the angel answered and said unto her [Mary], The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall

---

<sup>22</sup> Strong's Online.

overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee [*the holy-begotten*] shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35)<sup>23</sup> – Jesus came as the seed of the woman **only**, since conception took place by means of the Spirit of God, not man. Subsequent to God’s promise to Satan in the Garden, we have the promise given to Abraham that through his seed all of the families of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:3); here are two simple Messianic promises that require the Savior of mankind to *come in the flesh*. The writer of Hebrews explains that it was necessary for Jesus to be born into the family of Israel: “For verily he [Jesus] took ... on *him* the seed [singular] of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved [it was necessary for] him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:16-17).<sup>24</sup> It is clear from this that if Jesus had not come in the flesh, then He would not have been qualified to be our High Priest, and to become the Sacrifice through which everyone might be delivered from sin. Therefore, it is central to God’s message to the world that Jesus come in the flesh, for it is only then that His sacrifice could find application for the human race. “For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ...” (1 Timothy 2:5); it was His humanity (being “made in the likeness of men” – Philippians 2:7) that permitted Him to become our Mediator with God.

Therefore, when someone does not believe that Jesus came in the flesh, in essence they are saying that Jesus did not take on the role of the Passover Lamb to become the means of bringing salvation to all of mankind, nor did He usher in the New Covenant in His blood. Jesus, Himself, said: “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6), thereby identifying Himself as being the only means of salvation. It is fitting that someone who denies this reality should be identified as an *antichrist*; God became flesh in order to

---

<sup>23</sup> Stephanus 1550 NT.

<sup>24</sup> Friberg Lexicon; Stephanus 1550 NT.

break the power of Satan, and to open a way of salvation for mankind in fulfillment of the sacrificial processes established under the Mosaic Law.

The antichrist will deny the Father and the Son, and/or that the Son of God came in the flesh. Both of these denials undermine the purpose for which Jesus came to this earth, namely, to pay the penalty for sin so that man might enjoy a restored relationship with his Creator. What could be more *antichrist* than to deny that God has provided a means of salvation for us? Denial, however, can come in more than one way; it does not, of necessity, require an expressed contradiction of what God has done – that would be far too simple and easily identified. Our adversary, the devil, is much more cunning than that, and so he will frequently muddy the spiritual waters with partial-truths so as to render ineffective whatever truth might still remain – truth is not truth unless it is 100% pure. Jesus warned: “Take heed [a command to be continually discerning] that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many” (Matthew 24:4-5). Let’s consider this for a moment so that we can be alert to the subtle deceptions of Satan.

## **THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH – SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST?**

If there is one organization within the world today that is working tirelessly to soften the hard edges of truth so as to bring peoples of all persuasions together, it has to be the Roman Catholic Church (RCC). Yet if you look at their doctrines, they acclaim both God the Father and God the Son, and readily agree that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. Regarding the former, they declare: “in the unity of the Godhead there are Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, these Three Persons being truly distinct one from another ... the Persons are co-eternal and co-equal ....”<sup>25</sup> Clearly, within their theology there is no doubt that they consider the Father and the Son (and the Holy Spirit) to be equally God,

---

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15047a.htm>



and eternal. Concerning Christ coming in the flesh, their doctrine states “that one and the same Person, Jesus Christ, was God and man”; again, there can be no mistaking that they claim that Jesus, as God, came in the flesh. Based solely upon this quick glance, we might be tempted to conclude that the Roman Catholic Church is not promoting the spirit of antichrist since their written doctrines stand against what John says are the characteristics of the spirit of antichrist. However, if we have come to this conclusion, then we are wrong! How many times have we heard Evangelicals insist that there are born-again Christians within the Catholic Church? However, someone who is truly born-again by the Spirit of God cannot, and will not, remain in a state of disobedience to the Word of the Lord (1 John 2:3), and God has made it abundantly clear that we are to separate from everything that is unclean (2 Corinthians 6:17) – despite appearances, the RCC is very, very unclean! These Evangelicals have undoubtedly fallen into the devil’s Ecumenical delusion, and have partaken of the intoxicating drink of unity of which the RCC is its strongest advocate and most willing dispenser. Let’s look deeper into the RCC in order to understand more fully their hidden reality.

However, before we go further, let’s review John’s definition of an antichrist and the spirit of antichrist so that we have it firmly in mind. We saw that those of antichrist will deny God the Father, God the Son, and that Jesus, as God the Son, came in the flesh of man. We also learned that anyone who does not worship Jesus as God, has also denied God the Father (John 5:23). The significance of this is that if Jesus was not God, then He would not have been qualified to be the sinless Lamb (Hebrews 7:23-28), and, further, if He was not man, then He would not have been the proper final-sacrifice for the sins of mankind (Hebrews 4:14-16).



Image of Ignatius of Antioch on Ancient Tile

Since the RCC is the cornerstone to ALL that is Ecumenical, and Ecumenism is flourishing within Evangelical circles, it is very important that we understand the issues that are at stake here, for Ecumenism has become the favored means used by the devil to draw the child of God away from the truth.

What is very evident in Paul's letters (which are a part of our Scriptures) is that doctrinal error came onto the scene even during his lifetime; the numerous warnings in Scripture make it clear that we are to be alert to such departures from the truth, and remain steadfast in the teachings from God's Word. Consider Ignatius of Antioch who was supposedly a student of the Apostle John, and who lived from c. AD 35 – 108; in his letter to those at Smyrna, he wrote:<sup>26</sup> "From Eucharist and prayer they [the heretics] hold aloof, because they do not confess [agree] that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ ...."<sup>27</sup> Tradition identifies Ignatius as being the third bishop of Antioch (c. AD 70-107), and here he states that the element of the communion service (which he calls *the Eucharist*) is the very *flesh* of the Lord Jesus.<sup>28</sup> We should readily recognize the precursor to RCC doctrine here, so let's evaluate this for a moment. As Jesus sat with His disciples at what is called the Last Supper, He broke the bread and said: "This is my body"; then He took the cup and said: "This is my blood"; however, He then goes on to say that He "will not drink henceforth of **this fruit of the vine**, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:26-29). *This* is a demonstrative pronoun in the Greek that specifically identifies the contents of the cup as the *fruit of the vine*; therefore, since Jesus refers to the contents of the cup as being the *fruit of the vine*, we can safely understand this to mean that the elements (the bread and the juice) did not

---

<sup>26</sup> There are many who hold that all of the letters attributed to Ignatius are forgeries that were written much later than the first century AD; this particular letter is dated by some as being from about AD 250. Although I would concur that it was written later than claimed, I would propose that came even later during the time of Emperor Theodosius I, who made Christianity (based on the Nicene Creed) the state religion (c. AD 380).

<sup>27</sup> Ignatius' *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans*, Chapter 7; <https://www.ewtn.com/library/SOURCES/IGNSMR.TXT>

<sup>28</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Patriarchs\\_of\\_Antioch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Patriarchs_of_Antioch)

somehow literally become His flesh and blood, but remained symbols of His flesh and blood.<sup>29</sup>

Another error that Ignatius promoted elsewhere in the same letter was the elevated importance of the bishop within the local assembly. As the **bishop of Antioch**, he stated: “See that ye all follow the bishop ... It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize, or to offer, or to present sacrifice, or to celebrate a love-feast [the communion service]. But **that which seems good to him, is also well-pleasing to God**, that everything ye do may be secure and valid. ... **Nor is there any one in the Church greater than the bishop, who ministers as a priest to God for the salvation of the whole world**” (emphasis added).<sup>30</sup> By contrast, Jesus said: “Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. **But it shall not be so among you**: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:25-28). What Jesus forthrightly condemned, Ignatius vehemently promoted; therefore, it would be fitting for us to look on this man as not only an unreliable teacher, but a heretic who must be avoided! Nevertheless, much of what you find in his writings (the above items not being in isolation) has become the accepted norm within the RCC. Ignatius was not alone in what he was promoting, for we have seen that Jesus addressed the error of the Nicolaitans (those who were guilty of elevating the role of some within their assembly) that was present in the assemblies at Ephesus and Pergamos (Revelation 2:6, 15). Satan was very active in those early days to introduce erroneous teachings wherever he could; he used man’s natural tendency to rationalize and justify his actions as a means to establish such error as accepted practice.

---

<sup>29</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>30</sup> Ignatius’ Epistle to the Smyrnaeans, Chapter 8 & 9; <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/ignatius-smyrnaeans-longer.html>

Notice, too, in Ignatius' writing (as quoted above), that the bishop "ministers as a priest to God for the salvation of the whole world." This is a significant change from the priestly responsibilities that we find in Scripture: "But ye [the elect, those who are in Christ (1 Peter 1:2)] *are* a chosen generation, **a royal priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light ..." (1 Peter 2:9); all who are born anew from on high are priests! As John begins to pen the Revelation, he notes that we, all those who have been washed from our sins by the blood of Christ, have been made "kings and priests unto God ..." (Revelation 1:6). What is evident is that very early on there was a strengthening of the power and authority of the bishop within the assemblies in direct contradiction to Jesus' words. With the extended favor of the presiding Roman Emperors, it was only a matter of time before the Bishop of Rome came to hold a position of greater significance than even his fellow bishops.

Three things were taking place during this period of the development of the RCC: 1) authority was being centralized – locally, in the bishop; more broadly, in the Bishop of Rome, 2) the bishop was considered to be the spokesman for God, and 3) the common people needed to come to God through the bishop, thereby circumventing the Biblical relationship between the re-born sinner and his Savior. In turn, this resulted in two things for the average assembly participant (the laity): 1) the full truth of the Word of God was being tainted, for it now came through the filter of the bishop, and 2) the accepted interpretation of God's Word was being restricted to those who were deemed to be in authority (the bishops – the clergy).

The question that might well come to mind is this: so what? How does equating the elements of the communion with the very flesh and blood of the Lord, and the elevation of the role of the bishop within the local assembly lead to the promotion of the spirit of antichrist – which,

according to John, must deny God (both the Father and Son) and/or that Jesus came in the flesh? I'm glad that you asked!

Consider, first of all, the Catholic Eucharist during which the presiding priest intones the transformation of the element of the wafer (or wafer and wine) to become the very body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is much more at work here, within their minds, than simply transubstantiation: "...in this divine sacrifice [the Eucharist] which is celebrated in the mass, that **same Christ is contained and immolated [sacrificed] in an unbloody manner**, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross; the holy Synod teaches, that **this sacrifice [the Eucharist] is truly propitiatory** [that by which the holy demands of God are met<sup>31</sup>] and that **by means thereof** this is effected, that **we obtain mercy, and find grace** in seasonable aid, **if** we draw nigh unto God, contrite and penitent, with a sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence" (emphasis added).<sup>32</sup> There are several things here: 1) the Eucharist (the celebration of communion) is considered to be an *unbloody* perpetuation of the sacrifice that Jesus made upon the cross, 2) the Eucharist provides saving grace by which the participant is brought into a place of being acceptable to God (propitiation), and 3) the efficacy of the Eucharist is dependent upon the attitude of the participant, thereby absolving both the RCC and the priest of any responsibility should such "grace" not be forthcoming. The greatest (but not the only) fallacy in this teaching on the Eucharist is that it is a means of imparting saving grace to the participant, thereby contradicting the Biblical statement that Christ "entered **once** in to the holy place, having obtained **eternal redemption** [deliverance] *for us*" (Hebrews 9:12). RCC doctrine (as quoted from the Council of Trent) acknowledges that Jesus *once offered Himself in a*

---

<sup>31</sup> Remembering the definition of *propitiation* (Greek - *hilasterion*) is something that I find difficult; I'm not sure why. However, it is the means by which the holy and righteous requirements of God are met; His wrath (John 3:36) is appeased, and our relationship with Him is established. The Septuagint uses this word (*hilasterion*) when translating the Hebrew for *mercy seat*; it was here that the blood was sprinkled for the sins of the people by the high priest once each year on the Day of Atonement. In Hebrews 9:5, the Greek word *hilasterion* is translated as *mercy seat*.

<sup>32</sup> Council of Trent, Session 22, Chapter 2; <http://www.thecatholictreasurechest.com/themass.htm>.



*bloody manner*, but then goes on to promote the Eucharist as a perpetual *unbloody* sacrifice that holds *truly propitiatory* qualities. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation [*hilasmo* – the means of forgiveness] for our sins” (1 John 4:10)<sup>33</sup>; Jesus **IS** the propitiation for our sins, not merely the first of a long line of sacrifices that must be made in order to eventually gain forgiveness of sins. Through their liturgy of the Eucharist, the RCC denies that Jesus is the **only** means of cleansing from sins; they equate the saving value of the Eucharist with Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, thereby demonstrating their belief that what Jesus did on the cross was not sufficient (even though they will frequently deny this)! The Council of Trent very explicitly states: “If any one saith, either that the **principal fruit of the most holy Eucharist is the remission of sins**, or, that other effects **do not result therefrom**; let him be anathema [accursed]” (emphasis added).<sup>34</sup> In other words, the RCC condemns to damnation anyone who does not believe that the primary result of participating in the Eucharist is that it cleanses from sin! “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father” (1 John 2:23); Jesus said: “For this is my blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28; cp. 1 Timothy 2:6 which provides a correct understanding of the somewhat vague *many*) – it is the blood that Jesus shed while upon the cross that brings cleansing from sin! In truth, the RCC denies that Jesus’ sacrifice upon the cross paid the price for the sins of the world in full. We are also told that “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17); there is no other means of salvation, and certainly not a ritual created by the RCC called the Eucharist! Despite their many attempts to sound Biblically accurate, the RCC has denied the Son of God His rightful place as the **ONLY** means of salvation (John 14:6) and, by doing so, they have denied both the Son and the Father (1 John 2:23) and, thereby, are

---

<sup>33</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>34</sup> The Council of Trent, Session Thirteen, Canon V.



guilty of perpetuating the spirit of antichrist. Like the Galatians, who added the keeping of the Mosaic traditions to faith in Christ, so the RCC adds their Eucharistic tradition to faith in Christ – both are guilty of perverting the Gospel of Christ (Galatians 1:7), and a perverted gospel holds no spiritual life.

Does elevating the bishop beyond that prescribed within Scripture also contribute to the RCC's promotion of the spirit of antichrist? Consider the RCC definition of a bishop: "*Bishop* is the title of an ecclesiastical dignitary who possesses the fullness of the priesthood to rule a diocese [an area or group of churches] as its chief pastor, in due submission to the primacy of the pope."<sup>35</sup> Therefore, within the terms of an Evangelical denomination, a bishop would be somewhat like a district superintendent who oversees an area of churches and reports to the denominational president. Moreover, within the RCC, "bishops are of Divine institution. In the hierarchy of order, they possess powers superior to those of priests and deacons; in the hierarchy of jurisdiction, by Christ's will, the [*sic*] are appointed for the government of one portion of the faithful of the Church, under the direction and authority of the sovereign pontiff ...."<sup>36</sup> Of course, the *sovereign pontiff* is the pope; as a matter of interest, *pontiff* comes from the Latin *pontifex*, which literally means bridge-builder, and was the term that was used to describe a member of the council of priests within the ancient Roman, pagan religions (NOT Christianity!).<sup>37</sup> *Pontifex maximus* was the title given to the supreme priest within the pagan religious tradition of Rome; after Julius Caesar was ascribed the quality of divinity, the emperors who followed him were accorded the title Pontifex Maximus.<sup>38</sup> By the time of Emperor Theodosius I (AD 379-395) who made Christianity the state-religion of Rome, this was a title that was no longer used by the emperors (as the Roman leadership became somewhat Christianized, they needed to withdraw from such paganism);

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02581b.htm>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Pontifex\\_Maximus](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Pontifex_Maximus)

<sup>38</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus>

Damasus I, bishop of Rome (AD 366-384), became the first *pope* to assume its use (as the RCC became increasingly pagan, this seemed to be



Pope Damasus I

an appropriate title).<sup>39</sup> The emperor now realized that he was not divine, and the pope now thought that he was God's man on earth! Even though *pontifex maximus* is not an official title of the pope, by using it he is being called the *high priest* (the great bridge-builder) in accordance with the ancient polytheistic, pagan religious traditions of Rome! How fitting for someone who is intensely laboring to draw all religions together into one great congregation of Ecumenical unity!

Along with the development of the hierarchical position and authority of the bishop (and, ultimately, the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome to become the *pope*) came a significant violation of Jesus' teaching on how the assembly of His disciples was to conduct itself, and a contravention of the clear teaching of the Apostles. When two of His disciples requested places of honor within His kingdom, Jesus said: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them [both *dominion* and *authority* involve an intensive control]. But it shall [absolutely] not be so among you: but whosoever will [*might desire to*] be great [*megas* – highly esteemed] among you, let him be your minister [*diakonos* – one who carries out the commands of another (*deacon*)]; And whosoever will [*might desire to*] be chief [first] among you, let him be your servant [*doulos* – slave]: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom [the price of release from sin] for many" (Matthew 20:25-28).<sup>40</sup> This was not an isolated incident; it seems that the disciples were often concerned about

<sup>39</sup> [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Pontifex\\_Maximus](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Pontifex_Maximus)

<sup>40</sup> Strong's Online; Friberg Lexicon.

who would be the greatest in the kingdom of God (Matthew 18:1), and, even the night before Jesus' crucifixion, it was a bone of contention among them (Luke 22:24). Yet Jesus consistently taught them that greatness within His kingdom could only come through humility and service, which is contrary to our natural way of thinking. What is very evident for everyone to see is that the RCC was not founded upon this principle; the writing of Ignatius proclaimed the superiority of the bishop in the local gathering (no one is *greater than the bishop*), and the present-day RCC definition of a bishop places great emphasis upon his hierarchical position under the pope, and his authority over the priests, deacons, and the common people.<sup>41</sup> Clearly, early in their formative years, the authority within the local assemblies moved upward, and there were men who were more than willing to assume such power.

As Paul expounded the qualifications of a bishop (*episkopos* – overseer, or elder) no mention is made of this man being in a position over the assembly (1 Timothy 3:1-7); even his *rule* within his family is focused on caring for them, not lording it over them.<sup>42</sup> The KJV translators used the phrase *office of a bishop*, but the Greek includes no word for *office*; the bishop is simply charged with the oversight of the assembly in order to ensure that the teaching and conduct are Biblically sound – it is a significant responsibility, but it is not an *office*.<sup>43</sup> As a matter of fact, Peter speaks plainly of the *elders* being *among you* (1 Peter 5:1-2); there is an equality within the Body of Christ – differing responsibilities, but we are all equally members of the Lord's assembly and gifted as He has seen fit (1 Corinthians 12:18-20).

We've already mentioned that when Jesus gave John His specific notes for each of the elders of the seven assemblies in Asia, twice He referred to a group called the Nicolaitans, whose very name describes them as

---

<sup>41</sup> Ignatius.

<sup>42</sup> Strong's Online; Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>43</sup> Liddell-Scott Lexicon.

being those who would lord it over others.<sup>44</sup> The messenger (elder) of Ephesus is commended for hating the work of these people (Revelation 2:6) even though his own relationship with the Lord Jesus was shaky; the elder of Pergamos, by contrast, is commended for his steadfastness but criticized for permitting some within his charge to hold to this way of thinking (Revelation 2:15).

The establishment of positional authority within the local assemblies (contrary to Jesus' instruction) and the increasing power given to them, led to a top-down, dictatorial form of "Christianity" where the laity (the common people) were told what to believe and what was required of them, and those in the upper echelons of authority willingly provided teachings that secured their positions. The bishops gained increasing power and authority through their alliance with the ruling Roman Emperor, and their position was further enhanced when it was decreed that Christianity was to be the state-supported religion of the Roman Empire. Beginning with Constantine I, it became standard fare for the "church" to accept pagan traditions that had been remodeled so as to make them appear to be more "Christian." Emperor Constantine sought to develop a unified system of religion for his entire empire by reworking paganism; for example: "... in 321 [he] forbade the sitting of courts and all secular labor in towns on 'the venerable day of the sun,' ... perhaps with reference at once to the sun god, Apollo, and to Christ, the true Sun of righteousness; to his pagan and his Christian subjects."<sup>45</sup> Notice the two-pronged approach to his decree that Sunday was to be a day of rest: 1) it fit with the prevailing pagan practice of setting the first day of the week aside for the worship of their sun god, and 2) it was duly rationalized and justified so as to be acceptable for the Christians as well. Regarding the example cited, it needs to be noted that at this time there was a growing rift between professing Christians and the religious Jews; because the Jews refused to accept Jesus as their Messiah,

<sup>44</sup> *Nikos*, meaning victory, or to conquer, and *laos*, people (from which we get our word *laity*); therefore, the root of the term speaks of those who have gained the victory over the people (<http://www.biblestudy.org/basicart/why-does-god-hate-practices-of-the-nicolaitans.html>).

<sup>45</sup> Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Volume III, p. 92 (pdf version).

many Christians began to vilify them for His death – failing to recognize that Jesus was not murdered but that He willingly gave His life for the sins of the world (Matthew 20:28; John 10:11). “The opposition to Judaism early led to the special observance of Sunday in place of the Sabbath”;<sup>46</sup> this anti-Semitic sentiment only made it easier for the Emperor to reformulate the pagan practices into something that was acceptable to the ruling bishops, who, in turn, would through their priests and deacons impose them upon the laity.



“Saint” Constantine, as viewed by the RCC, complete with sun-disk

Two things were happening within the church at the same time: 1) the bishops were gaining prestige and power, which resulted in the common people (the laity) living in spiritual subjection to them (the clergy) and to their teachings, and 2) Christianity, as it was practiced from day-to-day, went through a transition from obedience to the Word of God to a religion of expediency – i.e., the pathway of least opposition was accepted, particularly when it had the approval of the presiding bishops (if they said it, then it was *also well-pleasing to God*).<sup>47</sup> Consequently, for the average person in the church (the laity), the truth of God’s Word was being replaced by the rationalized dictates that came from the clergy, which, in turn, were frequently the product of consultation with the ruling Emperor. Paul warned Timothy: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers [deceivers] shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:12-13); the recognized church no longer felt the pains of persecution as she stepped deeper into deception, and it was not long before she became the one who inflicted suffering upon those who sought to live Biblically. The church leadership (the clergy) had tasted the favor of the world, and they

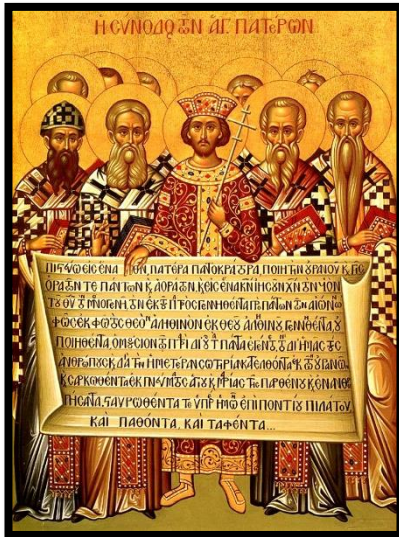
<sup>46</sup> Augustus Neander, General History of the Christian Religion and Church, Volume I, p. 295.

<sup>47</sup> Ignatius.



liked it! Rationalizing had replaced proving what was good and acceptable to God (Romans 12:2); what began as a step into the waters of compromise by the bishops, soon became a headlong plunge into winning the approval of the Roman Emperor, and thereby solidifying their positions of authority.

However, God’s desire for His people did not change, and it will not change: “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind [tie-up anything that



Icon of First Council of Nicea  
showing Constantine’s central role

might hinder; for work or travel, the long flowing robes of the day were tied-up by a belt around the waist; Exodus 12:11 – this was how the Israelites would have kept the first Passover], be sober ... As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so **be ye holy** in all manner of conversation ...” (1 Peter 1:13-15; Leviticus 11:44).<sup>48</sup> What was transpiring within the developing RCC was that the common people were not hearing what God

desired of them; they were being taught whatever would ensure the bishops’ control over their areas of responsibility. The elevated Bishop of Rome would soon be considered to be God’s representative on earth, and his words would be taken as God’s truth; one of his titles became the Vicar of Christ, by which the RCC acclaims his “supreme and universal primacy, both of honour and of jurisdiction, over the Church of Christ.”<sup>49</sup> The First Council of Nicea, held in AD 325, virtually ignored the common people (the laity), but took great pains to ensure that the distinctions between their prescribed hierarchical levels of authority were clearly understood: “Deacons must remain within their own limits, knowing that they are the ministers of the bishop and subordinate to the presbyters

<sup>48</sup> Strong’s Online.

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15403b.htm>



[priests].”<sup>50</sup> The ranks of authority, which were used to control the laity, were well defined so that everyone would know his place; the bishops controlled matters in several congregations (and appointed priests and deacons), the priests were responsible for a specific congregation (teaching, governing and administering the communion), the deacons were there to do the bishops’ bidding, and the laity were to simply fall into line and not question whether what they were told was really the truth or not.<sup>51</sup> The hierarchy was there to protect the ruling elite; consequently, by the second century this hierarchical tradition had already assumed sufficient clarity to become accepted as truth; today, within the RCC, Scripture, tradition and the *ex-cathedra* utterings of the pope are cited as their three pillars of authority – history tells us that the Scriptures are the least regarded of these three.<sup>52</sup>

Although its hierarchical structure might not appear to be a basis for claiming that the RCC is promoting the spirit of antichrist, we need to consider the bigger picture for just a moment. The bishops, within the developing RCC, were granted great authority over the people under their care, which they would exercise through their priests and deacons. Therefore, the unbiblical doctrine of the propitiatory nature of the “sacrament” of communion (Eucharist) was imposed upon the laity by the bishops; what the bishops proclaimed became the word and will of God for the people, and the bishops, in turn, were guided by the Councils where accommodations were being made for the aspirations of the Emperor to have complete religious unity. Although the RCC still formally upheld the teachings of God the Father, God the Son, and that Jesus was God in the flesh (the denial of which John identified as being the spirit of antichrist), these became mere professions that were violated by their activities. Like most Evangelical organizations today, the RCC developed a statement of faith that did not necessarily hold any bearing on their activities; their

---

<sup>50</sup> Canon #18, First Council of Nicea; <https://www.ewtn.com/library/COUNCILS/NICAEA1.HTM>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.catholic.com/tracts/bishop-priest-and-deacon>

<sup>52</sup> Ibid; <http://www.catholicdoors.com/fag/qu95.htm>

spiritual explanation of their beliefs was, in reality, isolated from their worldly programs. The functioning of the church became increasingly contrary to the Word of God, and so, despite still claiming some fundamental doctrines of Scripture, the RCC was no longer a true follower of the Word of God and had become an organization whose functioning was clearly heretical – they had become a tool that Satan was using to destroy the faith of many and lead millions of others down the broad road to destruction. The hierarchical structure of the RCC became its means of controlling what the common people heard and understood (i.e., this unbiblical structure was used to impose practices that denied the Lord, Whom they professed to love), and it was also used to retain its unbiblical and growing influence within the Roman Empire. With such a departure from God’s desire, the RCC was functioning as a tool of the devil – what could be more *antichrist* than that?

As noted earlier, the RCC is the key force behind the Ecumenical movement in the world today, and recent popes have done much to bring the many religions of the world together. For example, on October 27, 1986 in Assisi, Italy, John



Pope John Paul II with his “World Day of Prayer” guests

Paul II organized a World Day of Prayer for peace that was attended by the Catholics (of course), the Orthodox, World Council of Churches, YMCA, Anglicans, Lutherans, Reformed, Disciples of Christ, Baptists, Mennonites, Quakers, Jews, Buddhists, Shintos, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Baha’i, and animists from Africa and North America.<sup>53</sup> Every participant prayed within the prescribed tradition of their religion; it was a truly Ecumenical gathering. In light of this, our local ministerial association might well appear to be less controversial and much more

<sup>53</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day\\_of\\_Prayer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day_of_Prayer)

acceptable, for they are focused on more commonly acceptable “Christian” activities. However, be discerning so that no one will be able to lead you away from the truth (Matthew 24:4): this seemingly low-key, somewhat benign association is merely a local expression of the broader, world-wide community of Ecumenical unity – they are all singing to the same piper: Satan!

## **ISLAM – SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST!**

There is one more group to which we need to direct our attention for a moment; they are becoming increasingly prominent in our world today, and their position regarding the spirit of antichrist is not subtle (unlike the RCC). Yes, I am speaking of the Muslims. John laid out two criteria (which we have been looking into) by which we can identify the spirit of antichrist: 1) the denial of the Father and the Son, and 2) a denial that Jesus is come in the flesh; let’s consider each within the scope of Islamic teaching. First of all, they deny that Jesus is God: “According to the Islamic traditions Jesus will descend from the heaven and espouse the cause of the Mahdi [the Muslim “Messiah”]. The Christians and the Jews will see him and recognize his true status. The Christians will abandon their faith in his godhead. ... at that time Jesus will not be following the Christian law which has already been repealed. He will be following the Mahdi, the master of the time ....”<sup>54</sup> The Muslims believe that Jesus [their *Jesus*, or Isa, as he is also called] will return, “declare Himself to be a Muslim,” and “abolish Christianity entirely.”<sup>55</sup> Within their tradition, Jesus was simply another in a long line of prophets who came to carry out the will of Allah, and, when he returns, it will be to establish Islam as the only religion in the world. Moreover, the Koran states unequivocally: “Praise be to Allah, who begets no son, and has no partner in (His) dominion”;<sup>56</sup> Allah has no son – to a Muslim, the doctrine of the Trinity

---

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.al-islam.org/the-awaited-saviour-muhammad-baqir-sadr-murtadha-mutahhari/prologue>

<sup>55</sup> Joel Richardson, *The Islamic Antichrist*, p. 54-55.

<sup>56</sup> <http://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=17&verse=111>

is blasphemy. Secondly, they deny that Jesus came in the flesh: “In blasphemy indeed are those that say that Allah is Christ the son of Mary.”<sup>57</sup> “They say: ‘(Allah) Most Gracious has begotten a son!’ Indeed ye have put forth a thing most monstrous!”<sup>58</sup> Clearly, their Allah is a god alone; they vehemently deny the existence of the Son of God, and proclaim, in the loudest terms thereby, the spirit of antichrist. There is no doubt that Islam is a religion of the antichrist; it declares all that is in opposition to the Word of God, which is the written revelation of Jesus Christ (the Anointed Messiah), and the Son of God (Revelation 19:13).

However, that is not to say that the Muslims do not hold some veneration for the Bible, at least some portions of it; in particular they acclaim the Torah (the five books of Moses), the Psalms (as given to David), and the Gospels (which they claim were given to Jesus). “The Islamic belief



The arrival of the Muslim's Mahdi

regarding these scriptures [the Torah, Psalms and Gospels] is that they were revealed for specific people and for a specific amount of time and when new revelations arrived, they superseded the old ones. The Quran however has been revealed for all of mankind and is the last revelation that will be received from Allah until the end of times.”<sup>59</sup> Where there is obvious contradiction between the Koran and the Bible, their favored explanation is that the text of the Bible has been thoroughly altered with the passage of time, and that it is, therefore, unreliable; beyond that, the Koran is the last revelation, and so it holds priority over everything else.

The face of Islam is often painted as being amicable toward Christians and Jews since all are termed as being monotheistic faiths: “Islam's view

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.islam101.com/quran/yusufAli/QURAN/5.htm>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.islam101.com/quran/yusufAli/QURAN/19.htm>

<sup>59</sup> <http://talktoislam.com/39/do-muslims-believe-in-the-bible>

of Jews and Christians, who are named ‘the People of the Book’ in the Koran, is very friendly and tolerant.”<sup>60</sup> Yet under the Ottoman Empire, the last functioning Islamic caliphate, which ceased to exist in 1924, “Christians who did not convert to Islam had no right to life, but could save their lives on condition that they paid [many and constantly changing] taxes to their true-believing overlords. ... The Christians had no civil rights, only the status of slaves. They were not members of the state but merely slaves to cruel and inhuman conquerors who had the right at any moment to deprive them of their property, honour or life itself.”<sup>61</sup> The politically-correct portrayal of Islam that plays center stage here in the west bears little likeness to reality; of course, it is in their best interests for Muslims to portray their Islamic culture as being benevolent and tolerant.

## THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST AT WORK

What we have learned is that the RCC bears the banner of the spirit of antichrist and is also the leader in Ecumenical thinking; remember, all that is Ecumenical has its roots in the devil, and draws everyone, who is caught in its web, down the broad way that leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13). Nevertheless, despite its anti-Christian spirit, the RCC continues to portray itself as being Christian, and, indeed, many will commonly refer to Catholics as being *Christians*; however, do not be deceived simply because the true spirit of the RCC is not obvious, but requires discernment in order to recognize it. Islam, on the other hand, is blatantly anti-Christian (despite the many claims of its tolerance), yet that has not been a deterrent for many to convert; contrary to what we might have expected, since the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, which were blamed on Islamic terrorists, “the number of American converts to Islam has skyrocketed.”<sup>62</sup> The *Times of London* is reported to have noted

---

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.harunyahya.com/en/Articles/3415/people-of--the-book>

<sup>61</sup> <http://myocn.net/everyday-life-of-christians-in-ottoman-turkish-empire/>

<sup>62</sup> Richardson, p. 4.



“compelling anecdotal evidence of a surge in conversions to Islam since September 11, not just in Britain, but across Europe and America.”<sup>63</sup> Contrary to logic, after an attack on a western edifice that was supposedly initiated by Islamic ideology and was applauded by Muslims worldwide, there has been a dramatic increase in the popularity of Islam. The spirit of antichrist emanates from the prince of the power of the air who is now working in the children of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2), and it is being given new life through the popularity of, and protectionist attitude toward, Islam.

To compound the matter even further, there is a growing mindset among “Christians” (using the term in its broadest application) that the god of the Muslims (Allah) is also the God of the Bible. At his inauguration as pope on March 19, 2013, Francis received delegates from countries all around the world, from various “Christian” denominations, as well as other religions including Buddhists, Jews, and Muslims.<sup>64</sup> Addressing the Muslims during his speech, Francis stated that the Muslims “worship the one living and merciful God, and call upon him in prayer.”<sup>65</sup> Catholic commentators were quick to say that this must not be construed to mean that Francis equated the Muslim Allah with the Catholic God; their claim was that Allah and God are not “theologically identical.”<sup>66</sup> Therefore, these Catholic commentators must believe that there is more than one “living and merciful God,” which, in turn, means that Francis lied by saying that there is only *one*. More recently, Francis is quoted as stating: “All of us together, Muslims, Hindus, Catholics, Copts, Evangelical [Protestants] brothers and sisters — children of the same God ...” (brackets in the original).<sup>67</sup> The line of “theological” distinction is becoming immeasurably thin; it would seem that Francis

---

<sup>63</sup> Giles Whittell, “Allah Came Knocking at My Heart,” January 7, 2002, *Times of London*, as quoted by Joel Richardson in *The Islamic Antichrist*, p. 5.

<sup>64</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papal\\_inauguration\\_of\\_Pope\\_Francis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papal_inauguration_of_Pope_Francis)

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.catholic.com/blog/todd-aglialoro/christians-muslims-and-the-one-god>

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/03/25/children-of-the-same-god-pope-francis-washes-the-feet-of-muslim-migrants/>



has, at the very least, planted the seeds of confusion into the minds of many of the 1.2 billion Catholics in the world today.<sup>68</sup> Unfortunately, it is not only the Catholics who are experiencing such confusion about the god of Islam.



Pope Francis and Rick Warren, together in Allah

At Barack Obama's inauguration as president of the United States in 2009, Rick Warren was invited to give the invocation. He began with: "Almighty God, our Father ...," which would have appealed to Christians who speak of God as being their Father; he went on to say: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one," which is a traditional phrase repeated by the Jews, and found in Deuteronomy 6:4. This was followed immediately by: "you are the compassionate and merciful one," which is something that the Muslims use very frequently when referring to Allah. However, just in case someone might have missed all of these subtle efforts to make the broader audience comfortable, Warren concluded with: "I humbly ask this in the name of **the one who changed my life** – Yeshua [Hebrew pronunciation of *Jesus*], Isa [the Muslim "Jesus"], Jesus, [Spanish pronunciation], Jesus ..." (emphasis added).<sup>69</sup> Why would Warren, who claims to be a Christian, pray in the name of a false prophet (*Isa*) and say that he is the one who changed his life? Isa is not Jesus, and Islam makes it very clear that he is not God! Jesus eliminated any possible uncertainty regarding His place in our hearts and minds; He stated that there are only two options available for us: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30). Therefore, we can only conclude that the efforts of the pope and Warren to embrace

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-21443313>

<sup>69</sup> [http://www.christianstogether.net/Articles/137547/Christians\\_Together\\_in/Christian\\_Life/Christians\\_and\\_Politics/Rick\\_Warrens\\_prayer.aspx](http://www.christianstogether.net/Articles/137547/Christians_Together_in/Christian_Life/Christians_and_Politics/Rick_Warrens_prayer.aspx)

the Muslims is an ill-conceived notion that is nothing short of blasphemy against the Lord, and that it is an expression of the spirit of antichrist! Anyone, and everyone, who does not live in keeping with the Word of God is, by default, a member of the camp of antichrist – including the pope, Rick Warren, and our local Ecumenical Evangelicals. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21); it is the will of the Father that we must not cling to what is unclean (2 Corinthians 6:17) – in this case, that is the spirit of antichrist being expressed through both Islam and the RCC (Ecumenism).

We have considered John’s identification of the spirit of antichrist; however, he also says: “ye have heard that antichrist shall come” (1 John 2:18). There is coming one who will fill the role of Antichrist – the embodiment of all that we have looked at so far; this one will come riding upon a *white horse* so that many will believe him to be the Messiah of the Jews (Revelation 6:2), and the Muslims will welcome him as their long-awaited Mahdi. When Christ comes to establish His earthly kingdom, He will come riding on a *white horse* (Revelation 19:11); therefore, it should not be surprising that Satan (the great counterfeiter) will have his Antichrist appear in a manner that will deceive many. In the revelation that Jesus gave to John, He describes the Antichrist for us.



**1. And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. (Revelation 13)**

John was brought to stand (*stood* is passive) by a sea, and out of it comes a wild beast. Clearly, we are looking at the use of metaphoric language, and so we must proceed carefully. Daniel had a vision of four beasts rising up out of the sea (Daniel 7:1-3), and we are told that the sea

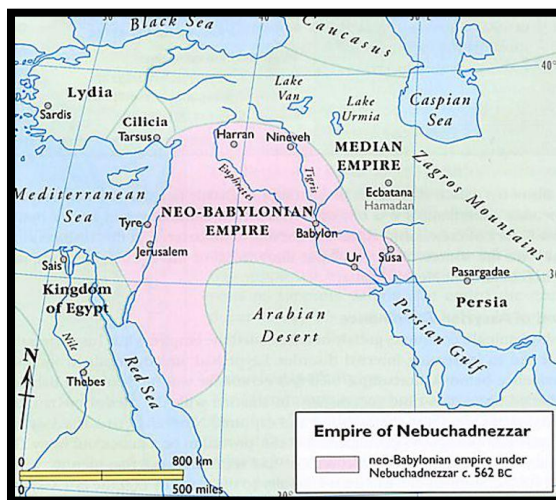
represents the masses of humanity in the world (Revelation 17:15). Like the seas, humanity is in a constant state of change and movement, and it is out of this that Daniel's beasts (kings representing kingdoms) arise. The metaphor is particularly applicable since it is common for conquering kingdoms to be likened to a flood of water overwhelming those who are being subdued (Jeremiah 46:7-8). Let's begin by considering Daniel's experiences (Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's visions are related), for they will provide us with some clarification regarding John's vision.



Statue from Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

## DANIEL'S INSIGHTS APPLIED

You will recall that Nebuchadnezzar had a vision of an image, which, through Daniel's interpretation (Daniel 2:37-45), gives us a glimpse of the kingdoms that were to come. We are specifically told that the head of gold

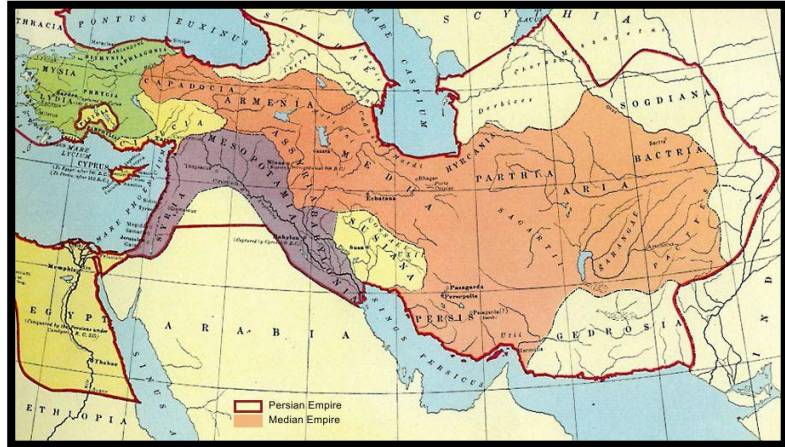


"Gold" Empire of Babylon

was Babylon (Daniel 2:38 states this), but the subsequent kingdoms are not as clearly identified here. Since the vision was given to Nebuchadnezzar, it would be safe to say that the region under consideration would be the area under Babylonian control, with the city of Babylon as being the center of rule. What the vision also made clear to Nebuchadnezzar was that his kingdom would not continue

indefinitely – it would come to an end. Nevertheless, when he later made an image for everyone to worship at the sound of the music, he constructed it entirely of gold – it was his not-so-subtle way of saying that he did not believe Daniel's interpretation of his dream (Daniel 3:1).

Nebuchadnezzar was told that following the head of gold (Babylon) would come a kingdom that is described as being “inferior to” Babylon (Daniel 2:39), namely, the chest and arms of silver. When Daniel deciphered the writing on the wall of



“Silver” Empires of Media and Persia

Belshazzar's banquet hall, part of his interpretation was that the kingdom of Babylon “is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians” (Daniel 5:28). That very night the city of Babylon fell, and “Darius the Median took the kingdom” (Daniel 5:31); the chest and arms of silver represented the Median and Persian Empires (the whole kingdom of Babylon was divided between the Medes and the Persians, and city of Babylon came under Median control). Since Darius the Mede was 62 years old when he took control of Babylon, it is not surprising to find that his reign was not a lengthy one (most historians agree that it was for only about two years<sup>70</sup>) and he was followed by Cyrus the Persian (Daniel 6:28). Many Bible scholars today create a Medo-Persian Empire to be the chest of silver; however, the Jewish historian, Josephus, identified “Cyrus, the king of Persia, and Darius, the king of Media.”<sup>71</sup> Even though there was not a merged Medo-Persian Empire as we might be led to believe, Josephus

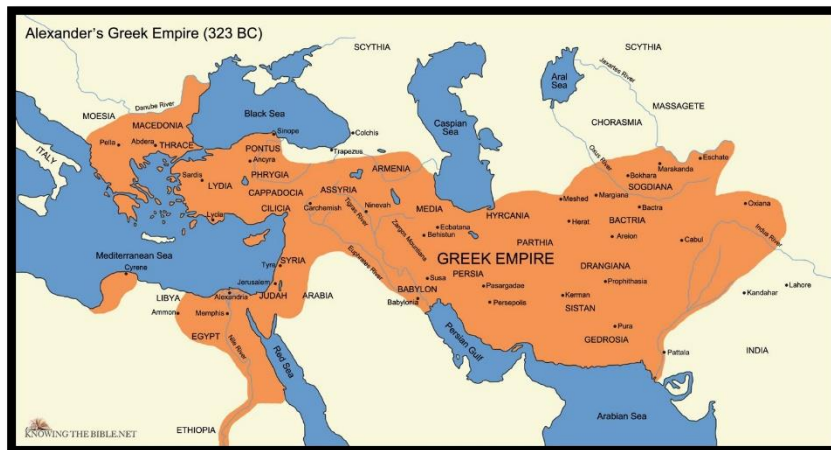
<sup>70</sup> <http://www.presenttruth.com/2008/06/darius-the-mede-his-identity-revealed/>

<sup>71</sup> Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Chapter 11.2.



tells us that Cyrus and Darius were related.<sup>72</sup> There is some disagreement among ancient historians as to the exact relationship that existed between Darius and Cyrus, but (to choose one that seems plausible) Xenophon (a Greek historian of c. 430-354 BC) identified Cyrus as being the nephew of Darius, and that, being without male heirs, Darius gave his daughter to Cyrus as wife and provided the kingdom of Media as her dowry.<sup>73</sup> Therefore it seems, in keeping with the evidence, that there was a peaceful merger of the Median Empire into the Persian without the usual conquer and control routine. This would account for the apparently seamless influence that Daniel had during the “reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian” (Daniel 6:28). Therefore, I believe the chest of silver to represent a Median/Persian control that flowed from Darius to Cyrus.

Following the chest and arms of silver comes the thighs of bronze. In a vision that Daniel had of a ram and a goat (Daniel 8:20-21), we learn that Greece followed the Median and Persian control of the Babylonian kingdom. Alexander the Great swept through this area in a flurry of



“Brass” Empire of Greece

conquests, and the city of Babylon came under his (Greek) control in 331 BC.<sup>74</sup> Alexander died in Babylon before he could make it the capital of his empire, and, without a named successor, civil war

broke out resulting in his empire being divided among four of his generals; the region of Babylon became known as the Seleucid Empire (under the control of one of Alexander’s friends, Seleucos).<sup>75</sup> This empire was

<sup>72</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, Chapter 11.4.

<sup>73</sup> <http://classicbooks.bookgenesis.com/excerpts/319686a87516e4075b647002fc8faee175f4c7f18a1f84c82d98773ee6837af0>

<sup>74</sup> <http://www.livius.org/sources/content/curtius-rufus/alexander-the-great-enters-babylon/>?

<sup>75</sup> [http://www.ancient.eu/Seleucid\\_Empire/](http://www.ancient.eu/Seleucid_Empire/)



strongly Hellenistic because, throughout his conquests, Alexander imposed the Greek language and culture.<sup>76</sup> Even though the Seleucid Empire was later replaced by the Parthian and then by the Sasanian, the Greek influence on this region was never completely removed despite the efforts of the Sasanians to restore their former Persian glory.<sup>77</sup> In 63 BC, Rome took the region and, after the leaders of the area affirmed their allegiance to Rome, it became a Roman province and was permitted to continue its traditions without much change – thereby, leaving the Hellenistic influence intact.<sup>78</sup>

The legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar's image, have traditionally been thought to represent Rome, divided into East and West, and that the feet and toes of iron and clay would be a revived Roman Empire – perhaps the European Union. However, as we have already noted, the vision is centered in Babylon, and it provides a look ahead to the dominating empires within this region beginning with Nebuchadnezzar's (c.605-562 BC).<sup>79</sup> Although the area did become part of a province within the Roman Empire, it cannot be said that Rome dominated the people; as long as they paid their dues to Rome, they were largely left to their own devices. Consequently, there is a significant difficulty with identifying Rome as being the kingdom of iron. As Daniel provided Nebuchadnezzar with the interpretation of his dream, he stated that this fourth kingdom will “break in pieces and bruise [crush or shatter]” (Daniel 2:40), and in his vision of the four beasts, the fourth beast had teeth of iron, nails of brass, and it “devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet” (Daniel 7:19).<sup>80</sup> This was **not** the Roman method of conquest; they exacted allegiance from those peoples whom they conquered and then left them to their own traditions;<sup>81</sup> by contrast, Alexander the Great imposed the Greek

---

<sup>76</sup> [http://www.ancient.eu/Alexander\\_the\\_Great/](http://www.ancient.eu/Alexander_the_Great/)

<sup>77</sup> [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Sassanid\\_Empire](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Sassanid_Empire)

<sup>78</sup> [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Seleucid\\_Empire#Collapse\\_.28100-63\\_B.C.E..29](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Seleucid_Empire#Collapse_.28100-63_B.C.E..29)

<sup>79</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar\\_II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar_II)

<sup>80</sup> Strong's Online.

<sup>81</sup> <http://iml.jou.ufl.edu/projects/Spring04/Tyler/LandR.html>

culture and language upon the conquered peoples. It's true that the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and decimated its occupants, but Josephus tells us that that was not Rome's choice: "How often Titus [the Roman General who ultimately destroyed Jerusalem], out of his desire to preserve the city and the temple, invited the seditious to come to terms of accommodation."<sup>82</sup> Clearly, this places Rome in a very different light than that ascribed to the fourth kingdom and beast of Daniel, which *breaks, shatters*, and devours the gold, silver and bronze kingdoms that were before it. To further support this position, consider the Byzantine Empire (the eastern portion of the Roman Empire centered in Constantinople [modern Istanbul]): it remained Hellenistic (Greek) until its fall in 1453, providing further evidence that Roman occupation and control had virtually no impact on the culture, language, and religion of an area – actually, Rome was very multi-cultural.<sup>83</sup> The fourth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and the fourth beast of Daniel 7, certainly cannot be described as being a multi-cultural empire!

During Belshazzar's reign (c. 555 BC), we've already noted that Daniel had a vision of four beasts rising up out of the sea (Daniel 7:3), and it was explained to him that each of these beasts represented successive kings (and their kingdoms) who were to come (Daniel 7:17, 23). In his vision, Daniel saw a lion, a bear, and a leopard arise, but the last beast is simply described as being "dreadful and terrible" – evidently its appearance instilled fear, for Daniel's attention was drawn to its iron teeth and its ten horns (Daniel 7:4-7). Even though the kingdoms are described as being different from one another (even as the animals differ from one another), this last kingdom was to be **very** different from the first three. This vision, like Nebuchadnezzar's, covers the passage of time from Babylon until God sets up His kingdom and replaces all of the kingdoms that came before (Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14). The sequence of kingdoms in Daniel's vision is the same as that of Nebuchadnezzar's: the lion represents

---

<sup>82</sup> Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, Preface, No. 11.

<sup>83</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine\\_Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Empire)

Babylon, the bear speaks of the Media-Persia alliance, and the leopard is Greece. We come then to the terrible beast that instills dread (Daniel's vision), and is seen as being the legs of iron (Nebuchadnezzar's dream).



Muhammed

This fourth kingdom, which is described as being “diverse [different] from all kingdoms,” will also “devour [devastate] the whole earth” (Daniel 7:23).<sup>84</sup> As we looked at the spirit of antichrist that John wrote of in his epistles, we noted that Islam is openly and blatantly in opposition to Biblical Christianity. Muhammed is said to have received several visions and revelations that have been preserved in the Koran of Islam and form the basis and guide for the Muslim faith. By the time of his death in AD 632, a significant portion of the Arabian Peninsula had declared their allegiance to Muhammed and this new faith. His successors mounted an aggressive push into the weakened empires of Byzantine and Sassanid, and so the expansion of Islamic-controlled territory began; this is called a caliphate, an area governed by a caliph or successor of Muhammed who imposes Islamic law. In our day, when everything Islamic is being carefully sanitized so as to portray the Muslims as a peace-loving community (so unlike the fourth beast of Daniel's vision), it is important to understand what truly took place during those early years of rapid expansion.

While Muhammed was alive, many of the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula showed nominal support for him; however, upon his death, these same people perceived this to be an opportunity to desert their ties to Islam. Muhammed's successor, Abu Bakr, within a matter of two years brought all of the area under strict control by proclaiming a jihad against these deserters, and slaughtering tens of thousands of them until the remaining tribes fell into line.<sup>85</sup> This became the start of more than a

<sup>84</sup> BDB.

<sup>85</sup> <http://www.meforum.org/3182/history-muslim-conquests>

century of conquests in all directions, and Muslim accounts of these early years tell us that the invaded people were given three choices: 1) convert to Islam, 2) become second-rate citizens, subject to many special taxes and limitations, or 3) fight to the death.<sup>86</sup> Even though *jihad* is often spiritualized to describe a personal conflict with vices (which is how we often hear of it in the west), the reality is much different. *Jihad* is defined as a “military action with the object of the expansion of Islam ...,” which, in turn, is founded upon the principle that Islam “ought to embrace to [sic] whole universe, if necessary by force.”<sup>87</sup> Lest this be construed as being simply a textbook definition that is not practiced, Ayatollah Ahmad al-Baghdadi, the leading Shia cleric of Iraq, made it very clear that Islam and the rest of the world can never be at peace with one another because it is the obligation of every able-bodied Muslim to “go on the offensive and conquer non-Muslims” when they can, when the circumstances are right, or when they are strong enough.<sup>88</sup> He went on to elaborate: “If they are people of the book [Jews and Christians] we demand of them the *jizya* – and if they refuse, then we fight them. ... He has three choices: either convert to Islam, or, if he refuses and wishes to remain Christian, then pay the *jizya*. But if they still refuse—then we fight them, and we abduct their women, and destroy their churches—this is Islam! ... As for the polytheists [Hindus, Buddhists, etc.] we allow them to choose between Islam and war!” (the square brackets are in the original).<sup>89</sup> The *jizya* that is referred to is the special taxation to which all “people of the book” are subjected, along with the degradation and humiliation that is theirs within Islamic society. Failure to convert or submit to the *jizya* only leads to death and destruction. This is not the jihad that is being taught in our western culture!

---

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.meforum.org/3182/history-muslim-conquests>.

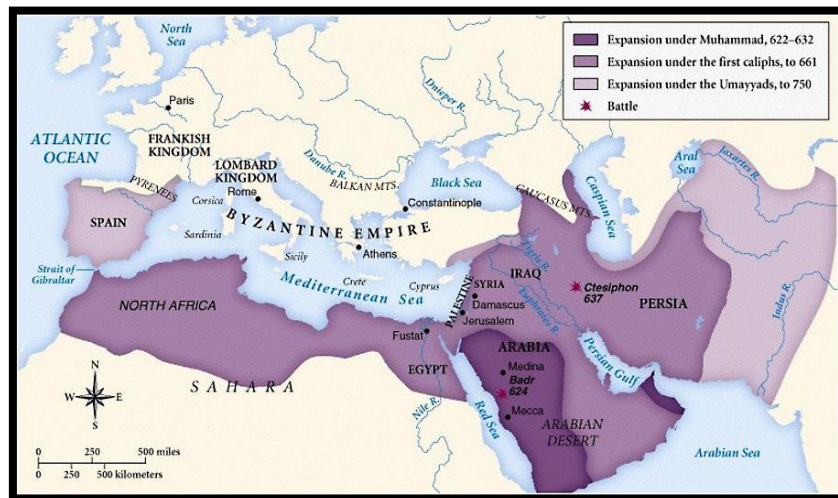
<sup>87</sup> *Encyclopedia of Islam*, “Djihad.”

<sup>88</sup> <http://raymondibrahim.com/2015/10/15/abducting-women-and-destroying-churches-is-real-islam-iraqi-grand-ayatollah/>

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*.

As we envision the rapid spread of Islamic rule, clearly that picture must include the devastation of cultures and the thousands of people who died for no other reason than that they refused to convert to Islam. Truly, this is in keeping with the fourth beast of Daniel's vision, which was "exceeding dreadful, whose teeth *were of iron*, and his nails *of brass*; *which* devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet ..." (Daniel 7:19). Muslim conquest has one primary priority, and that is to conquer the whole world and bring it under Islamic rule. Jihad is justified as being a means of liberating the infidels (non-Muslims) from their ignorant ways.<sup>90</sup> Today, except for the terrorist activities of ISIS, offensive jihad, for the most part, has been placed on the back burner. It is not unusual for Muslims to openly and vehemently deny that jihad is an integral part of the Islamic faith; however, their doctrine of *taqiya* (deception) also permits them to "deny or misrepresent any aspect of their faith in order to help correct the negative image of Islam in non-Muslim countries."<sup>91</sup> It would appear that they are actively practicing the latter in order to hide the reality of their goal to conquer the world for Islam.

At its peak, the Islamic caliphate (the territory controlled by the caliph, or successor of Muhammed) was greater than all of the previous kingdoms, and its destructive approach to conquest was unique — it was truly "diverse from all the others" (Daniel 7:19). Although the Islamic caliphate officially ended March 3, 1924, that must not be



Rapid expansion of Islamic rule

<sup>90</sup> <http://www.articlesbase.com/politics-articles/islams-secret-war-of-infiltration-3955162.html>

<sup>91</sup> Richardson, p. 156.



understood to be the end of Islam as a controlling religion; this was the date when the last caliph of the Ottoman dynasty was stripped of his position and Turkey became a republic. Even today, it is estimated that there are 1.6 billion Muslims in the world, which makes it the largest faith group in the world.<sup>92</sup> Today we hear much of ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) or ISIL (the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant<sup>93</sup>), which in 2014 declared itself to be a worldwide caliphate!<sup>94</sup> It does not take much imagination to see that a revival of the Islamic caliphate (along with its Sharia or Islamic Law) is looming on the horizon.

## THE BEAST OF REVELATION 13

We've looked at the four beasts of Daniel's vision, yet John describes only one beast that has seven heads – how do these fit together, or do they? It's important to understand the context for each of these: Daniel lived during the time of Babylonia and the subsequent Media-Persia control, with that region being the controlling center of these dominant kingdoms; John, on the other hand, was on the Isle of Patmos under the rule of Rome, and was writing to the seven assemblies in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey); Daniel lived during the sixth century BC, and John during the first century AD. The beasts of Daniel looked forward to what was coming, while John's seven-headed beast looks both backwards and forwards. Other Scriptures provide us with the insight that we need in order to better understand John's beast. Revelation 17:9-10 tells us about the seven heads of a very similar red beast: "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."

---

<sup>92</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_religious\\_populations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_religious_populations); <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-21443313>

<sup>93</sup> *The Levant* is not easily defined with great accuracy, but it is generally thought to include Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, and Turkey; those countries along the eastern Mediterranean. Despite Israel being included in the Levant, it obviously would not be a part of ISIL. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levant>

<sup>94</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic\\_State\\_of\\_Iraq\\_and\\_the\\_Levant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_State_of_Iraq_and_the_Levant)

The seven heads are likened to **both** seven mountains and seven kings (in the Greek, there is no sharp separation between verses nine and ten).<sup>95</sup> If we understand the *kings* to be the ruling monarchs of a particular kingdom (such as Pharaoh being king of Egypt) rather than individual personalities within a period of rule, then we can identify what is being said here. We are told that five of the seven kings or rulers have fallen – i.e., they have ceased to exist as dominant world powers. From John’s perspective, looking at history these would be Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece. Although none of these was a dominant world power any longer (they were *fallen*), each continued to exist, whether in name or through heritage. We are also told that *one is*; there was a present world power in place at the time that John was given the Revelation and that was, of course, Rome. Even though Rome does not fit the profile of Daniel’s fourth beast, it was in existence as the world power at this time but not so much in the region of Babylon, which is the center for Daniel’s vision. Then there is the world power that is *not yet come*, and this is where the fourth beast of Daniel fits in. With the fall of the eastern Roman Empire (basically modern-day Turkey) to the Islamic Caliphate in 1453, the fourth beast of Daniel’s vision gained control over the area to which John was addressing the Revelation (they already controlled the region of ancient Babylon); as John wrote the Revelation, this empire was *not yet come*.

What is significant and fascinating is that John’s beast comes out of the waters of humanity, yet it also reflects the many world powers that have existed throughout time. During one of Satan’s attempts to destroy Jesus’ work on earth, he showed Him all of the kingdoms of the earth and their splendor, and offered all of these to Jesus if He would simply bow before him (Matthew 4:8-9); we notice that Jesus never disputed Satan’s right to give the control of these kingdoms to whomever he chose. All of the kingdoms of this world, past and present, have operated, and are operating, under the guidance and control of Satan; he is the *prince of the*

---

<sup>95</sup> Stephanus 1550 NT.

*power of the air* who is working through everyone in this world who is not fully and faithfully committed to the Lord (Ephesians 2:2; Matthew 12:30). Assyria, for example, may well have devastated Egypt in her rise to power, yet Satan was actively at work through both of them. Nevertheless, Jehovah presides over all, and even Satan's role as the ruler (*prince*) of this world has some limitations: "For promotion [being lifted up or exalted] *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God *is* the judge [governs or rules]: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Psalm 75:6-7).<sup>96</sup> God orchestrates the big picture according to His plan, and it is under that general oversight that Satan functions as the controlling power in this world. Despite Satan's defeat at the cross of Christ, he continues his destructive activities in the world today with the ferocity of a critically wounded lion (1 Peter 5:8). John sees in this beast the common body (the spirit of antichrist) that has expressed itself through all of the world powers that have been, the one that was existing (Rome), and the one that was yet to come (the Islamic Caliphate). John said that *antichrist shall come* (1 John 2:18), and here he sees the beast coming out of the sea representing the Antichrist who will come in all of Satan's fullness, bearing the full expression of everything that is against God – that which has been present in all of the world powers that have ever been, will find its ultimate expression in him.

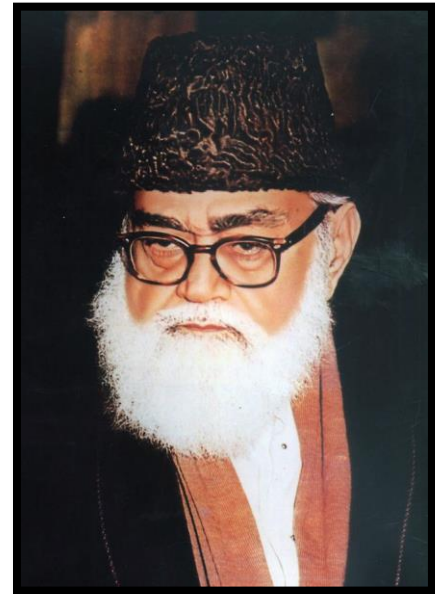
John adds that this beast with seven heads will also have ten horns, which are said to be ten kings who will come, for they have not yet received kingdoms (Revelation 17:12). Since the fourth beast of Daniel 7 also has ten horns (v.7), it is evident that these ten kings will arise out of this final dominating kingdom (the Islamic Caliphate) and will receive power (*crowns*) for a short time (Revelation 13:1; 17:12). We've noted that the Islamic Caliphate, which found its most recent expression through the Ottoman Empire, was dissolved in 1924; with the close of World War I, Turkey, the seat of the Ottoman Empire, became a republic, and the caliph lost his Islamic rule over this area. It's not that Islam, as a religion,

---

<sup>96</sup> Strong's Online.

disappeared – far from it; rather, it was the governing and military application of Islam that was curbed. Individual nations with a predominantly Muslim population still enforce many of their Islamic traditions, but there is always a watchful eye from other nations that can impact their economic prosperity if they are not careful; therefore, the true face of Islam is frequently hidden behind a mask of tolerance for the western human rights agenda.

However, despite the placid face of Islam that is painted by our western media, one of its most renowned scholars today has said: “The goal of Islam is to rule the entire world and submit all of mankind to the faith of Islam. Any nation or power that gets in the way of that goal, Islam will fight and destroy.”<sup>97</sup> Nevertheless, we must recognize that Nebuchadnezzar’s image had feet and toes of iron and clay, indicating that this last kingdom would end up being a divided movement. In his article, *Islamism’s Likely Doom*, Daniel Pipes of the Middle East Forum wrote: “Should the fissiparous [factional] tendency hold, the Islamist movement is doomed ... to be no more than a civilizational threat inflicting immense damage but never prevailing”;<sup>98</sup> the following year he noted that “in recent years, the Islamist movement has gravely fractured.”<sup>99</sup> Today there is much fighting that is taking place between Muslims of differing views on Islam (Sunni [elect their caliph; the majority of Muslims<sup>100</sup>] vs. Shia [caliphs are appointed by Allah]), politics (monarchy vs. republic), tactics (work from within vs. aggressive jihad),



Mawlana Sayid Abul Ala Mawdudi

<sup>97</sup> Mawlana Sayid Abul Ala Mawdudi, as quoted by Joel Richardson in *The Islamic Antichrist*, p. 144.

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.danielpipes.org/13124/islamism-doom>

<sup>99</sup> <http://www.danielpipes.org/15220/cair-terror-group>

<sup>100</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunni\\_Islam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunni_Islam)

etc. However, as Pipes also admits, “trends can quickly turn around,”<sup>101</sup> and the arrival of the Islamic Mahdi (the Messiah of Islam and the Antichrist of the Bible) could be that very means for the revival of an Islamic Caliphate – a movement that, although for now seems fraught with division and infighting, could be turned into a united front in a moment.



**2. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. (Revelation 13)**

John provides us with a description of the beast that he saw rising up out of the sea. The beast displays similarities to three animals, and, as you will recall, each of these animals was also a part of one of the visions of Daniel (Daniel 7:4-6). Applying the parallels from Nebuchadnezzar’s dream to Daniel’s vision, we said that the lion (the first beast) was Babylon, the second (a bear) was Media-Persia, and the third (a leopard) was Greece. Consider the characteristics of these animals: 1) the lion is known for its self-control while on a hunt, its strength, and is called the king of the beasts (possessing formidable authority) – the beast that John sees has the *mouth of a lion*. The words of this beast will exude authority, power, and great self-control, which, for many, will appear to be wisdom, but will, in fact, be smooth words of deception. 2) The bear is very protective of that which is its own, and will strike with a blind fury when provoked – this beast will strike out mercilessly against those who are not supportive of him (the *feet ... of a bear*). 3) The leopard is stealthy, likes to be up in the trees (it is a prolific climber), and, of all of the big cats, is the most difficult to spot – so this beast will come in quietly and subtly, and its true nature (Satan) will be indiscernible to many. It is noteworthy that the whole beast is like unto a leopard, and, with its seven heads

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.danielpipes.org/13124/islamism-doom>



representing past, present, and future kingdoms, we can understand that each of these kingdoms has a common source, and that each camouflaged their true identity – the great red dragon, Satan, was the controlling influence in each case. These traits are reminiscent of the three kingdoms from Daniel’s vision; “As concerning the rest of the beasts [the lion, the bear, and the leopard], they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season [to an appointed time] and time [the passage of time]” (Daniel 7:12).<sup>102</sup> Despite the activities of the fourth beast to destroy and overwhelm every aspect of life (Daniel 7:7), the influence of the three previous kingdoms will not be entirely removed, and, consequently, they are evident in the beast that John observes ascending out of the sea (that constantly changing body of humanity). Here is one arising who is the embodiment of all that has come before: the pinnacle of the spirit of antichrist that has been present in the world since Adam sinned, and, whatever form it takes, it will always have the same source – Satan.

When God created Adam and Eve, He gave them dominion over all that was in the earth; “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it [a command to be dominant in the world]: and have dominion over [a command to rule over] the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28).<sup>103</sup> One condition was placed upon this, and that was that “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17). Adam willfully disobeyed the command of the Lord, and so physical death entered into the world; however, more importantly for our discussion, Adam and Eve immediately died spiritually – their relationship with their Creator was severed. They had submitted themselves to the devil and he now held dominion over them and all of the earth. There in the Garden of Eden, the

---

<sup>102</sup> BDB.

<sup>103</sup> Strong’s Online.

Lord implemented blood sacrifices for the covering of sin; He shed the blood of animals in order to provide Adam and Eve with coverings (Genesis 3:21) so that, through faith in the covering for sin that He had made, they could once again have fellowship with Him. Despite the Lord's provision of salvation for individuals, Satan's position in this world was not changed; he is still *the prince of the power of the air* and the enemy of all who are righteous (Ephesians 2:2).

Satan, the force behind all that has ever presented itself as being antichrist, is becoming increasingly active as his time on earth draws to a close. We have seen that he received the promised death-blow when Christ died on Calvary (Genesis 3:15), we have learned that he is in a state of great anger and has declared war on everyone who is faithfully living for the Lord (Revelation 12:17), and, even though he knows that he will never prevail against the kingdom of God, he is doing his utmost to decimate the Lord's flock on earth (Acts 20:29). The Antichrist will arise and present himself with all benevolence, but will do so in the power of the devil; "and no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14).

John tells us that the dragon (Satan) gives to this beast (the Antichrist) his (the dragon's) power, his throne (*seat*), and *great authority*. The Antichrist will operate under the power of Satan, he will sit upon the throne of Satan, and he will exercise Satan's authority over all of mankind. Even when he comes in as a great benefactor to bring peace to the earth, the Antichrist is functioning as the mouthpiece of the devil. If we understand that the last world power will be a revived Islamic Caliphate, and Antichrist will be the Muslim Mahdi leading it, then we can begin to see the destruction that will take place under his rule – especially against those who are faithfully living for the Lord. Consider the words of some renowned Islamic scholars: 1) from the eighth century: "Allah commands the believers [Muslims] to fight the disbelievers, the closest in area to the Islamic state, then the farthest ... whenever Muslims overcame a community, they moved to the next one, and then the next one, crushing

the tyrannical evil doers.”<sup>104</sup> 2) The fourteenth-century scholar, Ibn Khaldun, stated: “In the Muslim community, the holy war {jihad} is a religious duty, because of the universalism of the [Muslim] mission and [the obligation to] convert everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force” (square brackets in the original).<sup>105</sup> 3) Mohamed Said Ramadan Al-Bouti, an Egyptian scholar who died in 2013, wrote: “The Holy War [Islamic jihad], as it is known in Islamic jurisprudence, is basically an offensive war” (square brackets in the original).<sup>106</sup> Couple these pointed comments with ISIS identifying itself as a worldwide caliphate, and it becomes very evident that, although Islamic rule was dealt an apparent death-blow with the treaties of World War I, the possibility of its re-birth seems imminent.

With the opening of the first seal, John saw a rider on a white horse to whom a *crown*, or authority, was given (Revelation 6:2). We identified this rider as the Antichrist, and noted that he was given authority (as opposed to earning it); now we learn that the Antichrist will be equipped with all that he needs by the *dragon*, the serpent, the devil, or Satan (Revelation 12:9) – the crown that he is given comes from Satan! Antichrist’s rule will be the culmination of all of the great kingdoms of the earth throughout history; in his war against those who are faithful to the Lord (members of the kingdom of God upon earth), he will be exercising Satan’s ultimate assault to wipe God’s kingdom from the face of the earth so that he might claim it as his own. Antichrist will come onto the scene as the one who will bring peace and safety to a tumultuous world – he will come in apparent purity (riding upon a white horse), and will appear to be an angel of light to many, but Jesus warned, “Take heed [a command to be continually aware and watchful] that no man deceive you [should lead you astray]” (Matthew 24:4).<sup>107</sup> Antichrist will present himself as the promised Messiah and will speak with *the mouth of a lion*

<sup>104</sup> Ibn Kathir, as quoted by Joel Richardson in The Islamic Antichrist, p. 142.

<sup>105</sup> Richardson, p. 143.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

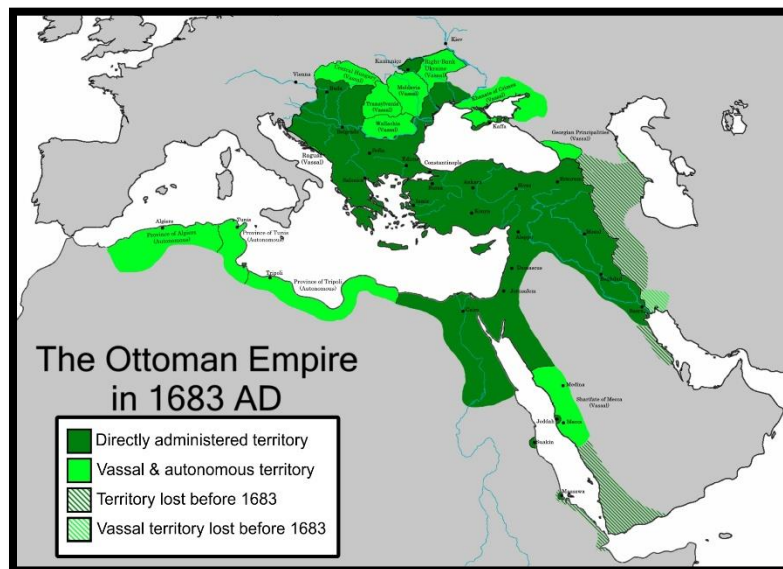
– with great authority and power (i.e., he will be very persuasive). In that day, our defense will be that we have learned to be Biblically discerning under the guidance of the Spirit of God; we will know the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15), and have learned how to weigh everything that comes our way against the Standard that God has given to us (1 John 4:1). Why did Jesus issue the command to *take heed*? He tells us that many will come claiming to have a message of truth, some even professing to be the Messiah (like the Antichrist), and they will lead many away from the truth of God (Matthew 24:5, 11). Jesus’ warning is given so that we might be prepared to avoid those who bring a message of “hope” that leads away from Christ (Romans 16:17-18); do not be mistaken, the Ecumenical tongue will always bring a message of compromise that leads away from Christ – it is our responsibility to know the Word of God so that we are able to discern the ploys of the enemy! The Muslims are willing participants in Ecumenical activities – they join with the pope of Rome and Rick Warren, to identify two. “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before [have foreknowledge], beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge [or understanding] of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen” (2 Peter 3:17-18). Peter echoes the Lord’s words that we must be diligent and aware lest we be led astray; our perpetual assignment is to grow in our understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ, which can only come about through our study of the Word of God.



**3. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 4. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? (Revelation 13)**

Here is something unique that happens to the beast that will serve to make the world even more enamored with him: one of its heads appears to be killed. Interestingly, we are told that five of these *heads* are fallen (Revelation 17:10), yet, clearly, that does not compare in significance with this one *head* that is mortally wounded – there is a difference. Each of the five fallen kingdoms was defeated by a subsequent kingdom, and the kingdom that *now is* (Rome) suffered the same fate. Therefore, this mortally-wounded *head* must be the final kingdom – the Islamic Caliphate.

Following Muhammed's example of aggressive expansion of Islamic control, the domination by subsequent leaders of Islam spread very quickly in all directions from their modest beginnings in the region of Medina on the Arabian Peninsula. By the eighth century, Islamic rule extended as far east as India, included all of what we now call the Middle East (excepting most of modern Turkey, which was the final stronghold of the Roman Empire), all of northern Africa, and most of Portugal, Spain and southwestern France.<sup>108</sup> It was during this time that they slowly ate away at the eastern flank of the Roman Empire, gaining control of all of the area to the east of Anatolia (Asia Minor, or modern Turkey). In 1453,



the last of the Roman Empire fell to the Islamic Caliphate, and Asia Minor came under its control. However, after being defeated in World War I, the Islamic Caliphate (the Ottoman Empire) signed the Treaty of Lausanne, which very specifically limited their

<sup>108</sup> <http://explorethemed.com/RiseIslam.asp>



territory to what is now called Turkey; all other regions that were formerly under their control were given their independence, either completely or under the jurisdictional control of France or Britain.<sup>109</sup> At the same time, a political movement within Turkey sought to secularize and modernize the country and it became known as the Republic of Turkey on October 29, 1923.<sup>110</sup> Through constitutional reformation, the new president of Turkey abolished the institution of the caliphate;<sup>111</sup> the Islamic Caliphate was rendered officially dead – the mortal wound had been inflicted.

Nevertheless, John writes that its death-blow is healed. We are beginning to see and hear of this very real possibility; Islam is spreading rapidly around the world and is today's fastest growing religion.<sup>112</sup> It's already been noted that ISIL (or ISIS) has declared itself to be a *worldwide caliphate*,<sup>113</sup> but the continual Muslim infighting will keep this from becoming a reality – for now! However, we must be alert, for this is not just an unfounded boast made by a rogue, terrorist organization. Mawlana Abul Ala Mawdudi, the founder of the Pakistani Islamic fundamentalist movement, is quoted as saying: "Islam is a revolutionary faith that comes to destroy any government made by man. ... The goal of Islam is to rule the entire world and submit all of mankind to the faith of Islam. Any nation or power in this world that tries to get in the way of that goal, Islam will fight and destroy."<sup>114</sup> It seems fairly certain that an aggressive Islamic Caliphate is looming on the horizon. However, even though Muslims might still be in a state of disarray and mingling with the people of the world (the feet and toes of iron and clay – Daniel 2:43), the arrival of their highly anticipated Mahdi (their Messiah, our Antichrist) will change this in a moment; he will arise and go forward conquering (Revelation 6:2). The present-day ISIS may have little success in establishing their

---

<sup>109</sup> [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Treaty\\_of\\_Lausanne](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Treaty_of_Lausanne)

<sup>110</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkey#Republic\\_of\\_Turkey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkey#Republic_of_Turkey)

<sup>111</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caliphate>

<sup>112</sup> <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/islam-fastest-growing-religion-overtake-6986333>

<sup>113</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worldwide\\_caliphate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worldwide_caliphate)

<sup>114</sup> Mark A. Gabriel, *Islam and Terrorism*, p. 77-8.

caliphate, but it should be a warning of what is coming; the deadly wound of 1924 will be healed and Islamic rule will flow across the world under the guise of peace and safety.

You might be wondering why I consider the Islamic Caliphate to be the context for the rise of Antichrist since this would require the Antichrist to be a Muslim. The identity of the Antichrist, even ethnically, has been the subject of much speculation through the years. God's promise to Abraham was that "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3), and, from a Biblical perspective, we see this accomplished in Christ through the son of promise, Isaac. However, Abraham's first-born son, Ishmael, has many descendants today who are known as the Arabs.<sup>115</sup> As the Lord promised Abraham, Ishmael had twelve sons, and early on they inhabited the area from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea, an area that stretches right across the Arabian Peninsula (Genesis 25:18). The Lord also promised Hagar that her son would be "a wild man; his hand *will be* against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of [in front of, or to the east of] all his brethren [not brothers, but wider relatives]" (Genesis 16:12).<sup>116</sup> The wilderness of the Arabian Peninsula seemed well suited for the descendants of Ishmael who proved to be a wild, nomadic people and protective of their own; today, many Bedouin tribes still maintain the lifestyle of their ancient ancestors. Within Islamic tradition, Ishmael is considered to be a prophet, and Muhammed to be one of his descendants<sup>117</sup>; therefore, Muhammed is also a descendant of Abraham. Both the Jews and Arabs look back to Abraham as being their forefather; Jesus, the promised Messiah, came through the line of Isaac, whereas the Islamic Messiah (the Mahdi) will come through the line of Ishmael.

---

<sup>115</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ishmaelites>

<sup>116</sup> BDB.

<sup>117</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ishmael\\_in\\_Islam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ishmael_in_Islam)

Who is this Islamic Mahdi? He is the central figure in Islamic eschatology and bears the name *al-Mahdi*, which means the guided one.<sup>118</sup> Although the term *Messiah* bears a distinctly Jewish/Christian flavor, in essence the Mahdi is the *messiah* of Islam. Shia scholars write that “for the ultimate salvation of mankind he [the Mahdi] is the Pole Star of hope on which the gaze of humanity is fixed ....”<sup>119</sup> The Mahdi will “establish right and justice in the world and eliminate evil and corruption ... he will ... set up a **new world order** based on justice, righteousness, and virtue ...” (emphasis added).<sup>120</sup> Although Muslims consider the writings of the Bible to have been thoroughly corrupted by the Jews and Christians, there are certain passages that their scholars do accept as being accurate, and one of these is Revelation 6:1-2, which describes the rider upon a white horse. Within their understanding, this is none other than their long anticipated *al-Mahdi*.<sup>121</sup> Therefore, it is obvious that the Islamic savior (the Mahdi) is none other than the Antichrist of Scripture; he will come onto the world scene and establish a New World Order of “justice, righteousness, and virtue” according to Islamic sharia law.

Since all of the world powers of history have promoted the spirit of antichrist, and, according to Daniel, the last world power will be “dreadful and terrible,” the Islamic description of the rule of their savior is particularly fitting to that of the Antichrist. Daniel tells us that one of the rulers who will come out of, or be aligned with this last power, will make “war with the saints,” and will prevail against them (Daniel 7:21; Revelation 13:7), which provides a glimpse into the “justice, righteousness, and virtue” that will be imposed under the Mahdi. Truly, he will go forth *conquering* until everyone is brought into submission to his authority, which he has received from the devil himself (Revelation 6:2; 13:2). Once again, the child of God will face a choice: will he remain faithful to the Lord Who paid the price for his sins, or will he rationalize

---

<sup>118</sup> Richardson, p. 21.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, p. 22, quoting from The Awaited Savior, by Ayatollah Baqir al-Sadr and Ayatollah Murtada Mutahhari.

<sup>120</sup> Richardson, p. 24.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, p. 29.

that Allah and Jehovah are the same, and that the Mahdi (a descendant of Abraham) must, therefore, be God's messenger for the day.

The healing of the wounded head (restoration of the Islamic Caliphate, a government based upon Islamic law) will come in such a way that all of the world will be filled with amazement and will follow the Antichrist. However, the world is not only enthralled by the Antichrist but will readily acclaim and extend reverence to the source of the Antichrist's power – the devil! The world will *worship* both Satan and the Antichrist, acknowledging that there is no one *like unto the beast*, and there isn't anyone who can fight against him. We might consider this description to be utterly ridiculous within our enlightened society, and be inclined to dismiss it as an impossibility. Before we do that, let's consider Paul's words to the Thessalonians.

Evidently there were some who had come to the Thessalonian Christians proclaiming that Christ had already come (2 Thessalonians 2:2), which brought them great distress (*shaken in mind*). Paul, in what follows, seeks to allay their fears and set their minds at ease regarding this matter. He begins with a warning: "Let no man [*no one should*] deceive [*completely deceive*] you by any means: for [this reason] *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first [*unless the apostasy comes first*], and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition [destruction]; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God [a god], or that is worshipped; so that he as God [a god] sitteth [is seated] in the temple of God [the God], shewing himself [claiming of himself] that he is God [a god]" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).<sup>122</sup> Perhaps a word of explanation regarding god or God in this passage; in Greek the word is *theos*, which generally means a deity (whether a god, goddess, man, or Almighty God), but when it is accompanied by a definite article, then it is THE GOD, and can only refer to Almighty God.<sup>123</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> Friberg Lexicon; Stephanus 1550 NT; [https://www.ntgreek.org/learn\\_nt\\_greek/subj-purpose.htm](https://www.ntgreek.org/learn_nt_greek/subj-purpose.htm).

<sup>123</sup> Strong's Online.

Unfortunately, the translators of the KJV did not make this distinction evident in this passage.

At this point, it is interesting to bring in Paul's clarification of the *temple of God* to the Corinthians: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God [although *theos* appears in the Greek without a definite article, the context identifies this as referring to **the** God], and *that* the Spirit of [the] God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of [the] God, him shall [the] God destroy; for the temple of [the] God is holy, which *temple* ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).<sup>124</sup> In essence, Paul is saying that everyone who has placed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, has the Spirit of **the** God dwelling in him, and, consequently, he is the temple of **the** God! From this passage in 2 Thessalonians, it is generally thought that the Jews will build their third temple, and that it will be this temple that the Antichrist will occupy. However, it is equally likely that the spirit of the Antichrist, through his powerful rhetoric and wonderful signs, will fill the heart of someone who has been born into God's kingdom. Jesus warned: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24); there will be those who are numbered among the chosen of God in Christ who will fall for the deception of the Antichrist – the spirit of Antichrist will occupy the hearts of some of those who have been washed by the blood of Christ; in other words, he, the Antichrist, will be *a god* sitting in the temple of *the God* (those born of the Spirit are the temple of the God), making it appear that he is, indeed, God's man for the hour. What deception!

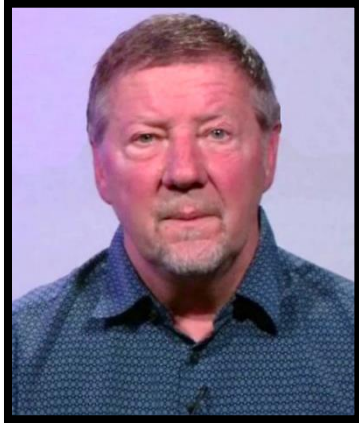
Notice that, as Paul sets out to assure the Thessalonians that they have not missed the return of Christ, he clarifies for them that certain things must take place before Christ will return; there will be signs that Christ's coming is nigh, just as Jesus told His disciples. The first thing that Paul tells us is that before Christ returns, there will be a time of apostasy

---

<sup>124</sup> Stephanus 1550 NT.



(*falling away*). Extremely popular within Evangelicalism today (particularly among the charismatics) is the notion that we are on the brink of a massive revival. “‘I’m going to send a Third Great Awakening to America,’ Dutch Sheets ... said he heard the Lord tell him a couple of decades ago.”<sup>125</sup> Robert D. Pace declares: “the Lord showed me that ... the coming revival will not include a social reformation in America ... I most definitely foresee America experiencing a wondrous, even unprecedented, revival!”<sup>126</sup> The



Dutch Sheets

trick that is used by many proponents of this kind of thinking is to say that they *heard the Lord* or *the Lord showed me*; this, in their minds, places a greater credibility upon what they are saying, and, since no one wants to appear to be contradicting what the Lord has said, there is a broader acceptance of their “prophecy” among those who do not exercise spiritual discernment. However, too frequently such prophets will either abuse or ignore much of the Word of God. In fact, these are the *false prophets* of whom Jesus warned us to be aware, lest we should be taken in by their lies and led away from the truth (Matthew 24:11, 24-25). It only takes a brief consideration of the gospel that is held by these *false prophets* to see that they do not hold to the true Gospel of the Scriptures; although proclaiming a coming revival, they are, in fact, a part of the apostasy that Paul told the Thessalonians would come before the Lord returns. Jesus asked the question: “... when [*ara*, requiring a negative response to the question being asked] the Son of man cometh [speaking of when He comes to establish His kingdom on earth], shall he find [the] faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8); there will be no faith in Him because prior to coming to establish His kingdom, He has come in the clouds and harvested the earth of all who were His (all of the faithful were removed and no one will

<sup>125</sup> <http://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2015/June/Memo-to-the-American-Church-Next-Moves-Yours>

<sup>126</sup> <https://revelationcentral.com/two-anointings-and-the-coming-revival-in-america/>

replace them).<sup>127</sup> Nevertheless, Paul assures us that “...at this present time also there is a remnant [a small number] according to the election of grace [those who are found to be *in Christ* – Ephesians 1:4]” (Romans 11:5).<sup>128</sup> Indeed, when Christ comes in the clouds to receive His faithful ones who are living on earth at that time, they will be few in number (*a remnant*); when we hear of massive conversions, we must exercise godly discernment and apply the test of the Scriptures to those who make such claims.

The second event that must take place before Christ will come again is that the *man of sin*, or the *son of perdition*, is to be revealed. Who is this *son of perdition*? When Jesus spoke with God the Father just before His crucifixion, He referred to Judas Iscariot as the *son of perdition* (John 17:12), he was the one into whom Satan entered during the last meal that Jesus ate with His disciples (John 13:27), and he went out to betray the Son of God into the hands of the religious rulers. Therefore, the *son of perdition*, who will come onto the scene before the Lord returns, will be one into whom Satan has entered in order to orchestrate events according to his plans – he will be the personification of evil (the *man of sin*) behind a mask of angelic goodness. We have already noted that the beast that rises out of the sea (the Antichrist) will receive the power and authority of Satan – he will be filled with Satan and will be his man to do his bidding. Paul’s assurance to the Thessalonians is that the return of the Lord of glory for His saints will not come before the Antichrist is unveiled.

Paul then goes on to describe the Antichrist: *who opposeth* (*who is opposing*). *Opposeth* is a participle, a word that, despite appearing to be a verb, functions as an adjective.<sup>129</sup> The Antichrist is the one who will stand against God and in opposition to all that is Biblical and holy. The devil is called our *adversary* (1 Peter 5:8), the one against whom we must stand in faithfulness to the Lord (Ephesians 6:13); the Antichrist, as his human

---

<sup>127</sup> Stephanus 1550 NT; Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Strong’s Online; [https://www.ntgreek.org/learn\\_nt\\_greek/participles.htm](https://www.ntgreek.org/learn_nt_greek/participles.htm)

advocate, will exude the same adversarial traits as the devil toward those who are a part of God's kingdom on earth (Revelation 12:17). He will present himself as being a messenger of truth and peace (riding a white horse), but we, through Biblical discernment, will recognize that his power comes from Satan. It is this one, who will stand against all that is righteous and true (the faithful remnant), who will be revealed before the Lord comes.

We then read that he *exalteth himself* – also a participle, and used in parallel with *opposeth*; literally: *being overly proud*.<sup>130</sup> Although the KJV makes it sound like the Antichrist will raise himself up in pride, the Greek word is in the passive mood; this one who will display excessive pride will do so because of what Satan has done for him – the devil has given him **his** (Satan's) power and authority. Even though Satan's power is minimal before God, it is well beyond that of mankind; consequently, Antichrist will be swollen with pride because he, as a human being, is capable of so much more than the rest of humanity. His pride will be over and above anything that is a god or an object of worship;<sup>131</sup> in his pride, he will consider himself to be worthy of adulation and worship by the rest of mankind. He will portray himself as being a god (*shewing himself that he is God*); Jesus said that the false prophets will come showing “great signs and wonders” so that they will be able to deceive many, and even those who are in Christ need to be alert lest they, too, should be caught in his deception (Matthew 24:24). This one, who will desire to be revered by all, will be known on earth **before** the Lord comes to catch away those who are His; he will be accepted and worshipped as a god among us.

Paul goes on: “And now ye know [have understood] what withholdeth [the restraining] that he might be revealed [until he is revealed] in his time” (2 Thessalonians 2:6).<sup>132</sup> In essence, Paul is reminding the Thessalonians that, from his previous discussions with them, they

---

<sup>130</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

understood that restraints were in place so that the Antichrist (the *son of perdition*) would be revealed at his appointed time according to God's calendar.

Now we come to a verse that is commonly interpreted in such a way so as to include a reference to the rapture: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way" (2 Thessalonians 2:7). Paul reminds us all that the spirit of antichrist (*mystery of iniquity* or lawlessness) is already working; Satan was active in the Garden of Eden, and continues to work with subtlety and deceit. The word *mystery* speaks of that which may not be obviously evident except through the enlightenment of the Lord; this *mystery of iniquity* may well wear the disguise of righteousness, but it will be centered in that which is *contrary to* (alongside of) God's Word (Romans 16:17).<sup>133</sup> Paul's reminder is that the devil is actively at work, yet the world and most professing Christians do not recognize all of his activity for what it is.

The remainder of this verse is most frequently thought to refer to the Holy Spirit. However, a literal translation could be: *only now he is holding back until he should appear out of the midst*;<sup>134</sup> Revelation 13:1 tells us that the *beast* will ascend out of the waters (the mass of humanity). This refers back to the *mystery of iniquity* that is already at work in the world; the spirit of antichrist (the working of Satan) will continue to keep things as they are (*holding back*) until the Antichrist is brought out from amongst us (is revealed); i.e., Satan is trying to hinder the unfolding of end-time events – namely, that moment when Jesus breaks the first seal and the *son of perdition* will be made known (Revelation 6:1-2). This *mystery of iniquity* is already at work among us, but there will come a day when Satan's holding things as they are will come to an end, and the Antichrist will become known to all who have eyes to see. In the meantime, Satan will keep his chosen one veiled pending that moment when Jesus opens the first seal and he will be revealed to draw the world into his net of "hope

---

<sup>133</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>134</sup> Stephanus 1550 NT; Friberg Lexicon.

and peace”; Paul told the Thessalonians that “when they [the world at large] shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them ...” (1 Thessalonians 5:3). Satan is seeking to lure as many out of the kingdom of God as possible; he lost the war at Calvary, but his determination is to draw many of God’s children into apostasy, for he knows that they are then his forever (1 Peter 5:8; Hebrews 6:4-6). Satan has no desire for the Lord to begin to unfold the end-time events (to open that first seal), for he knows that his time on earth is short (Revelation 12:12) and that when these events begin, his eternal destruction is in view; he will do his utmost to keep things as they are. Nevertheless, he does not hold any authority over the day or hour when his final demise will begin; it is God Who knows, and He will remove Satan’s restraining influence at the appropriate moment (Matthew 25:13).

This interpretation of this verse fits directly with the next one (2 Thessalonians 2:8) that tells us that at that moment (*then*) the lawless one (*Wicked*; the Antichrist) will be made fully known (*revealed*); the first seal will be opened and the rider of the white horse will make his entrance onto the world stage (Revelation 6:2). Interestingly, this *son of perdition*, the Antichrist, will not be *revealed* through his own actions; both here and in verses three and six (of 2 Thessalonians 2), *revealed* is in the passive voice, which simply means that his debut will come through the actions of another – namely, the Lord Jesus Christ as He opens the first seal.<sup>135</sup> This is a further confirmation that Satan desires to keep things as they are for as long as possible, so that he can wreak havoc in the world and lure Christians away from the Lord. As the Antichrist steps onto the world stage, the Lord will have put events into motion that will culminate in the final defeat of Satan.

Paul summarizes the work of the Antichrist in three short phrases in 2 Thessalonians 2:8: 1) he will be made known in the Lord’s time (Revelation 6:1-2), 2) the Lord will destroy (*consume*) him with the breath

---

<sup>135</sup> Strong’s Online.



of His mouth (Revelation 19:15), and 3) He shall bring an end to (*destroy*) him with the appearance (*brightness*) of His presence (*coming*) (Revelation 19:20).<sup>136</sup> Paul very quickly takes the Thessalonians from the introduction of the Antichrist to his end; just as he will be revealed in keeping with the Lord's timing, so the Lord will attend to his destruction. Having assured the Thessalonians of the ultimate end of the Antichrist, Paul then takes a moment to describe how he will come onto the world scene (2 Thessalonians 2:9). Antichrist's coming will be according to (*after*) the working of Satan (he will come in the power of the *dragon*, Satan – Revelation 13:2), and there will be *signs* and *lying* (false) *wonders*. Jesus said: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24); the culmination of the *false Christs* and *false prophets* will come in the form of the Antichrist and his assistant, the False Prophet. If the many false christs will show *signs and wonders*, how much more so will the Antichrist display marvelous things in order to deceive all people, even the elect (those who are in Christ), if they are not watchful.

However, there is more. The Antichrist will come with a fullness of deception (*all deceivableness*) of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they would not accept (*received not*) the love of the truth unto salvation (2 Thessalonians 2:10).<sup>137</sup> From this we can learn that the Antichrist will come with a feigned righteousness; he will appear to be a man of great integrity, compassion, and truthfulness, but that will be a façade of propriety covering the presence of Satan within this *son of perdition*. He will lead the world into that place of *peace and safety* (1 Thessalonians 5:3), and it will be away from the truth of God. Unless there is a love for God's truth, one cannot be born from on high. This is not a love that springs from positive circumstances, but is a deliberate choice to love (*agape*) God's Word (John 17:17) and the Lord Jesus Christ (John

---

<sup>136</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

1:1; Revelation 19:13). Remember, Jesus said, “If ye love [*agapao*] me, keep [attend carefully to] my commandments” (John 14:15), by which we can easily understand that unless we are living according to the Commands of the Word of God, we cannot say that we love the Lord, and, therefore, we certainly cannot claim the salvation that He purchased for all of mankind. The full deception of the Antichrist will be evident in those who have refused to love God’s truth, and who are, therefore, destined for destruction, even if they might appear to be fine “Christians.”

It is on account of this (*for this cause*) that God will send them (those who have refused to accept His truth) an energized (*strong*) deception to the point that they will believe **the lie** (2 Thessalonians 2:11).<sup>138</sup> *This* is a demonstrative pronoun that is used to refer back to the very specific matter of the failure of the perishing to accept a love for God’s truth; i.e., they would not believe His Word. It is because of their failure in this matter that the Lord will ensure that they are overwhelmed by the deceptive error of the Antichrist (or of the spirit of the Antichrist). Jesus made it so very clear that you are either with Him, or you are against Him (Matthew 12:30), and a refusal to accept God’s truth places you against Him. We are without excuse, for we are told that “He that saith, I know [have come to know] him [God], and keepeth not [does not attend carefully to] his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is [absolutely] not in him” (1 John 2:4).<sup>139</sup> Therefore, unless we are willingly and faithfully doing what the Lord has commanded (beginning with that framework of the Ten Commandments), His truth is not in us, and (within the context of Paul’s words to the Thessalonians) we are destined to be persuaded by the lie of the Antichrist. Once again, we are faced with the eternal importance of being attentive to what God desires of us; we are to put on that new man that is ours through faith in Christ, and live in His *righteousness and true holiness* (Ephesians 4:24). We have been saved by the grace of God for the purpose of doing the approved works of righteousness and holiness

---

<sup>138</sup> Strong’s Online; Stephanus 1550 NT.

<sup>139</sup> Strong’s Online.

that He has prepared in advance for us (Ephesians 2:10); unless we have a sincere desire to daily walk in keeping with what the Lord has prepared for us, we absolutely cannot say that we love Him. Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15); as we saw earlier, John elaborates on this and identifies the one who does not keep His commands as being a *liar*, and the destiny for all liars is the Lake of Fire: “... **all liars**, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Revelation 21:8). Clearly, it is important to be living in obedience to the Word of God; any rationalization or justification that we might have for not doing what God has commanded does not make an iota of difference in view of eternity. Our problem in taking a stand for the Lord is often twofold: 1) like Adam, we simply want to do what we want, and 2) we have a greater fear of facing the disapproval of our friends and family (whom we can see), than we do of the Lord (Whom we cannot see).

Finally, we are told that God will enable this deception so that these deluded ones might be condemned because they take pleasure in what is unrighteous (2 Thessalonians 2:12). What is *unrighteous*? Jesus clarified that what might appear to be righteousness could be iniquity (Matthew 7:21-23). Once more, we see that there are only two positions to be held regarding the Savior of mankind: everyone is either for Him, or against Him (Matthew 12:30). These will be condemned because they have believed the lie, and they believed the lie because they refused to accept a love for God’s truth; they had a preference for unrighteousness (disobedience) because they would not believe the truth. Remember that Jesus said: “If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26); i.e., unless our commitment to Him is greater than all of our other commitments in life, we are **not** His disciple. If we refuse to obey His Word on one point (James 2:10), then we have demonstrated by our choice that we have a greater commitment to what is contrary to the Lord – we do not have a love for His truth, and

so will be open to the deception of the Antichrist (or the spirit of the Antichrist that is already at work – 1 John 4:3).

The Antichrist will appear as a savior of mankind (riding a white horse), and will very quickly conquer or overcome (*nikao* [*nik-ah'-o*]) any opposition that he might face; the world will be amazed by him and will follow his every move.<sup>140</sup> However, the deception will be so great that even professing Christians will openly acclaim the devil who has given the Antichrist his great abilities and charisma. How is this possible? Ecumenical thinking has taken over among most Evangelicals (the Protestants have long been a part of this), and along with the Ecumenical mindset comes a rejection of the exclusive truth of God's Word (even if they might not admit it). It is very clear from 2 Thessalonians 2 that those who refuse to accept the narrow truth of God will be especially vulnerable to believing the lie of the Antichrist, and, in addition, God will open their minds to accepting ever greater deception (2 Thessalonians 2:11). By spurning God's truth, they have also spurned His salvation (even if they think that they have it), and that sets them up to believe a lie – in this case, it is the lie of the Antichrist. The Jews who would not accept Jesus' words, were told that their father was the devil (John 8:43-45); refusing God's truth, by default, places you in a lie and makes you a child of the devil (1 John 2:4)!

For the faithful in Christ, the time of tribulation will have just begun; in Daniel's vision, the Antichrist "made war with the saints [the holy ones], and prevailed against them" (Daniel 7:21); John confirms this: "And it was given unto him [the beast, the Antichrist] to make war with the saints, and to overcome [*nikao*] them ..." (Revelation 13:7).<sup>141</sup> John tells us that the Antichrist will be given the ability to speak great things and blasphemies against the Lord, and that he will be given authority to continue with this for 42 months. The Antichrist will have the *mouth of a lion* (Revelation 13:2), which means that he will speak with great power

---

<sup>140</sup> Strong's Online.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

and eloquence; truly, he will persuade many to follow him through his *good words and fair speeches* (Romans 16:18). The child of God must be discerning at this point, for, despite his eloquence and wonderful words, the Antichrist is enabled by the devil who will grant him authority over all of the kingdoms of the earth. This is the very same authority that the devil offered to the Lord Jesus (Luke 4:5-6); however, in the Antichrist, Satan finds a willing channel for his pernicious ways. His authority over the world will continue for 42 months; it is not Satan who limits the length of the Antichrist's rule, rather it is cut short by the Lord continuing to unfold the closing events of world history before He comes to establish His reign over the earth. The Antichrist will exercise his authority for three and a half years, whereas the Lord will come to reign over the world for one thousand years.

We are told that the Antichrist will go forth *conquering* (*nikao*), that he will target the saints of God, and will *overcome* (*nikao*) them (Revelation 6:2; 13:7).<sup>142</sup> He will have authority over every segment of the world's population: every (*all*) family group (*kindreds*), language (*tongues*), and nation (*nations*); i.e., he will control the activities of all peoples.<sup>143</sup> All who are on the earth whose names have not been written into the Lamb's Book of Life, will bow before the Antichrist (Revelation 13:8) – whether in worship, as those who have been persuaded of his benevolence, or in compliance, as those who realize that they have no other way to avoid his persecution. However, all of those whose names have been written into the Book of Life (and have not been blotted out – Revelation 3:5) will not follow the Antichrist, and, consequently, will be subject to his wrath. We looked in depth at the Book of Life in our study of Revelation 3:5, so, suffice it to say at this point that there are two criteria for having your name in the Book of Life: 1) you have placed your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of your soul – that puts your name into the Book of Life, **and** 2) you have, ever since that time, lived in faithful obedience

---

<sup>142</sup> Strong's Online.

<sup>143</sup> Stephanus 1550 NT; Friberg Lexicon.



to the Word of God, which keeps your name in the Book of Life (you will recall that your name can be removed from the Book of Life through faithlessness). Regarding the former, John explained that “Whosoever [everyone who] believeth [present tense, active voice – the *whosoever* exercises his will to be continually persuaded] that Jesus is the Christ is born [perfect tense, passive voice – the *whosoever* who is believing has been saved by God] of God.” (1 John 5:1a).<sup>144</sup> It is important to see that it is the individual who is exercising his will to believe (the active voice means that the *whosoever* is doing the believing – no one is doing it for him), and that the resulting salvation (and placement of his name into the Book of Life) is the work of God (the passive voice of *born* confirms that this is not the work of the *whosoever*). In addition, the perfect tense used for the word *born* affirms the Scriptures that teach that being born of God can happen only once (Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-29; 2 Peter 2:20-21) – it describes an action that has been completed, and the results of that action are ongoing.<sup>145</sup>

Salvation through the sacrifice of Christ was in place from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8); it was the commitment of God (the Father, the Word, and the Spirit) to pay the price for man’s sins before he had been created. The promise that God made to Satan in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15) was **not** the implementation of a backup plan or a plan B – that **was** the plan! This is why, all through the OT, the sacrifices made in faith were accounted as being acceptable to God; the Sacrifice that they foreshadowed was a surety in the mind of God. This provides us with the basis for a correct understanding of Paul’s words to the Ephesians: “According as he [God] hath chosen us in him [Jesus Christ] before the foundation of the world ...” (Ephesians 1:4a). It is as we are *in Christ* that we are numbered among the elect (*chosen*) of God, which is why we are warned to guard against a heart of faithlessness that will result in our apostasy from God (Hebrews 3:12) – we are *in Christ* by faith, and

---

<sup>144</sup> Strong’s Online.

<sup>145</sup> [https://www.ntgreek.org/learn\\_nt\\_greek/verbs1.htm](https://www.ntgreek.org/learn_nt_greek/verbs1.htm).

we remain *in Christ* by living in faithful obedience to Him (John 14:15). Jesus made it very clear that “ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name’s sake: but he that shall endure [*hupomeno* – remain faithful through trials] unto the end, the same [a demonstrative pronoun in the Greek that means *this one!*] shall be saved” (Mark 13:13).<sup>146</sup> Our salvation, which begins with an act of God’s infinite grace, is predicated upon our continuing in faithful obedience to the Lord unto the end (either our death or His return).

John caps this exposure of the Antichrist (the beast) with these familiar words: “If any man have an ear, let him hear” (Revelation 13:9); whoever has an ear, or understanding, take heed (*let him hear*)!<sup>147</sup> With the Scriptures, it is never sufficient to understand the thrust of a passage with the mind, it must always result in action; in other words, we cannot rightfully claim to understand the Word of God unless we are living in obedience to it on a daily basis. Therefore, what we have just learned about the Antichrist must result in our being alert to the events around us as we anticipate his appearance, and we must be aware of the price that we will have to pay in order to remain faithful to the Lord. For us, it is critical that we know the Word of God so that we can properly weigh what is taking place around us, and avoid being taken in by the deception that is so prevalent even now (1 John 4:3).

## THE ANTICHRIST’S HORSEMEN



3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. 4. And there went out another horse *that was red*: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. (Revelation 6).

---

<sup>146</sup> Strong’s Online.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

You'll recall that when we looked at the opening of the first seal, we saw a rider on a white horse who was equipped with a bow. We noted that even though he will be involved in warfare, his use of the bow places him outside of the fray – he will not be as personally engaged in the fighting as someone with a sword would be.

As the Lord opens the second seal, the second living creature calls on John to *come*, and commands him to *see* (which includes the idea of understanding).<sup>148</sup> John sees *another* (*allos*) horse; it is another of the same kind – it is very similar to the white horse that carried the Antichrist.<sup>149</sup> However, this horse is *red* – fiery red (*purrhos* [*poor-hros*']), and is the same color (*purrhos*) as the dragon (Satan) who stood



before the *woman* in Revelation 12:3, hoping to destroy the Savior of mankind when He was born.<sup>150</sup> The first horse, bearing Satan's false-christ, is white (the Antichrist comes feigning a spirit of righteousness); by contrast, the second horse comes in the color of the dragon himself – no disguise! To this one it is given to remove (*take*) peace from the earth. The Antichrist comes with a great display of benevolence, and

all the world will hail him as the one who will bring peace and safety to mankind; this second rider comes to remove that peace from the earth. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them ..." (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Within freemasonry, the motto for those attaining the 33<sup>rd</sup> degree status is the Latin phrase *ordo ab chao*, which means order out of chaos.<sup>151</sup> This is not just a philosophical slogan; it is a strategy for control that is being used throughout the world today. It's application is really quite simple for

<sup>148</sup> Strong's Online.

<sup>149</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>150</sup> Strong's Online.

<sup>151</sup> <http://freemasoninformation.com/2016/10/ordo-ab-chao-symbols-and-symbolism/>

those who wield great power: first, create a chaotic situation, then provide the people with the choice between increased chaos or new laws that will restore order, and, finally, implement the will of the people (namely, the proposed new laws that will erode their freedoms and strengthen the perpetrators' control over the people). This has been used over and over to establish laws that would never be accepted under normal conditions. For example, consider the infamous ISIS terrorist group presently fighting for its life in Syria. From the beginning, this group has been backed by US/western intelligence groups in an effort to destabilize the Middle East, permit US military involvement, and protect US interests in the region (both oil and Israel).<sup>152</sup> Despite ISIS becoming an American disaster (it turned against American journalists), the US government has exploited this “at home [in order] to foment a manufactured domestic threat, [which has been] used to justify the unprecedented expansion of invasive domestic surveillance.”<sup>153</sup> This is one small illustration of the *ordo ab chao* principle in action; I believe the COVID-19 virus to be another. It has been used to create fear within the people of the whole world, and the proof of their success is evident when you see thousands lining up to get an injection of a substance that has never been fully tested. We have seen personal freedoms quashed, but I would propose that this was only a test-run to see how the masses would respond to the fear and the imposed restrictions. Governments and the media have created sufficient alarm in the minds of citizens so that they readily embrace a greater infringement upon their personal rights and freedoms in order to be “protected” from a threat created by global leaders. Modern media, as a key element of the plan, spreads propaganda (lies) in order to mold the mind of Joe Public into accepting the changes that are “necessary” for his “protection.”

The rider of the red horse will be unleashed into the world to bring chaos and reduce the number of those who might oppose the growing

---

<sup>152</sup> <http://www.globalresearch.ca/twenty-six-things-about-the-islamic-state-isil-that-obama-does-not-want-you-to-know-about/5414735>

<sup>153</sup> <http://www.globalresearch.ca/america-created-al-qaeda-and-the-isis-terror-group/5402881>

control of the Antichrist. In other words, the primary target of the killings will be those who refuse to accept the rule of the Antichrist – more specifically, the faithful of the kingdom of God on earth. It is all part of the plan that Satan has used for millennia in order to subdue the multitudes and increase his control over the world (fewer Christians means that he holds a greater majority within the world). As this agent of the Antichrist goes forth and removes peace from the world, the people, through a carefully crafted fear, turn against one another and will even kill each other; the Antichrist does not need a sword, for his enthusiasts will carry out his warfare for him. Jesus spoke of a time coming when “the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son [child]; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death” (Mark 13:12);<sup>154</sup> under this second horseman, death will be inflicted by those who are close by, either directly or indirectly. As a result, no one will feel safe, and will quickly welcome laws that will further restrict their freedom and place them under even greater scrutiny (for a feigned *safety*) – the mark of the beast will be a means of identifying those who are not supportive of the Antichrist. Out of the chaos that he creates, will come an order according to Antichrist’s design – *ordo ab chao*.

The rider of this horse is given a *great sword*. The Greek word translated as *sword* is *machaira* (*makh'-ahee-rah*), which is used for a knife or a small sword.<sup>155</sup> This is distinctly different from the large sword that would be used by trained soldiers (*rhomphaia* – [*hrom-fah'-yah*]).<sup>156</sup> If we consider the context, we can see that the reason that this is a small sword is because the people, robbed of their peace, will be killing each other; this is not a full-scale war launched against the people by the rider of the red horse, rather, it is the Antichrist working through those who

---

<sup>154</sup> Strong’s Online.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.



support his cause to eliminate those who do not. The sword may be small, but the impact that it will have will be great.

We are not told who it is who gives this *sword* to the rider of the fiery-red horse, but the context would seem to indicate that it would be the Antichrist – the rider of the white horse who goes out *conquering*. This will be one means that the Antichrist will use to *conquer* and bring the whole world into submission. We saw that the Antichrist will be equipped with a bow – he will be waging war but will be somewhat removed from the main fray; the rider of this second horse is one way that he will achieve his dominance without “getting his hands dirty.”



**5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. 6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. (Revelation 6).**

The Lord Jesus opens the third seal and John sees a rider of a black horse holding a crossbeam (*pair of balances*).<sup>157</sup> The *crossbeam* is the rod of a balance that was used for transacting the sale of goods by weight. As the Lord spoke to Ezekiel concerning His message for the people of Judah, He said: “Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread [food supply] in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment [horror]: That they may want [lack] bread and water, and be astonished [appalled] one with another, and consume



<sup>157</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

[languish] away for their iniquity” (Ezekiel 4:16-17).<sup>158</sup> The thrust of what the Lord is saying is that there will be a severe shortage of food and water in Jerusalem and everything will be rationed. Since the rider of this black horse is carrying a set of scales, the indication is that, during this time, food will be scarce.

As John sees the black horse and its rider, he hears an unidentified voice coming from the middle of the four living creatures. Whether the voice is instructing the rider of the black horse or providing John with an explanation of what will transpire with this horseman, we are not told. However, within the context, it seems that the instructions are being given to the one who is sitting on this black horse. The depth of the famine that will come is such that a *measure* (*choenix* [*khoy'-nix*] – slightly more than a liter and considered to be sufficient for one person for a day) of wheat will go for a *penny* (*denarion* – roughly equivalent to a day's wages).<sup>159</sup> Clearly, this is an extreme famine! Barley, a less expensive grain, is priced at a third of that of wheat. To get an idea of what this would be today in Canada using October 2016's rates, a liter of wheat would cost about 12.5 cents and barley about 10.5 cents;<sup>160</sup> as of September 2016, the average wage for Canadians stands at about \$93 per day – **this** is the price for a liter of wheat or three liters of barley during the famine brought by the rider of the black horse.<sup>161</sup> Additional instruction is given with regard to the olive oil and the wine, and this is why I believe that this declaration is for the horseman – he is not to act unjustly (*hurt not*); the balance that this rider carries signifies fairness in trade and limited resources, and this is to be the case with the liquid measures as well. In the midst of a famine that will be orchestrated by the Antichrist, there will be an emphasis upon fair trade – an appearance of justice during a time of misery that will see the

---

<sup>158</sup> BDB.

<sup>159</sup> Strong's Online; Friberg Lexicon.

<sup>160</sup> This is based upon: 1) Wheat at \$162.16/tonne, 36.744 bushels/tonne, and 1 liter equal to .0283776 bushels; 2) Barley at \$169.60/tonne, 45.93 bushels/tonne.

<sup>161</sup> <http://careers.workopolis.com/advice/how-much-money-are-we-earning-the-average-canadian-wages-right-now/>

decimation of the poor. Today we see China and the wealthy “global elites” buying massive amounts of farmland in the US (and probably elsewhere) – perhaps to “control the worlds food production?”<sup>162</sup>



**7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. 8. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. (Revelation 6).**

As the Lord opens the fourth seal, John sees a horse that is pale green or yellowish green, a color that is used to describe someone who is not well, perhaps even deathly pale.<sup>163</sup> Consider what has transpired so far: the Antichrist has arrived and has set out to bring all of the world under



his control, people have become paranoid and start killing one another (with no repercussions – it is part of the plan), and a severe famine grips the earth so that food prices become too high for the average person to keep himself alive. In this situation, deathly pale will be a common color for most people.

The name of the one on this sickly-colored horse is *Death* (*thanatos*), which does not refer to simply dying (which is *apothnesko* [*ap-oth-nace'-ko*]), but rather to the particularly destructive power of death, perhaps a pestilence.<sup>164</sup> Even though death, itself, is a result of sin (Romans 6:23), the death that this rider represents is not just the result of the “natural” cause of sin. This should not be surprising in

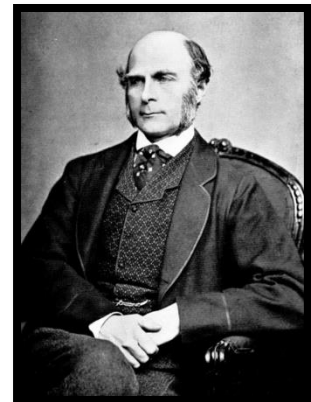
<sup>162</sup> <https://conservativedailypost.com/why-is-bill-gates-and-china-buying-americas-farmland/>

<sup>163</sup> Friberg Lexicon; Strong's Online.

<sup>164</sup> Friberg Lexicon.

light of the two previous horsemen who have brought widespread killing and famine into the world. The death that will spread across the world will be the work of the *man of sin*, the *son of perdition* (destruction), the Antichrist who receives his power from Satan (2 Thessalonians 2:3; Revelation 13:2), and he will use the promise of death as a means to solidify his control over the masses; interestingly, this is exactly the same weapon that Islamic leaders have wielded in the past to achieve compliance from those whom they conquer. The companion of Death is Hades (the place of the unrighteous dead; *Hell*) – right there to attend to the human destruction that will be taking place. To them (Death and Hades) is given the ability and authority to visit one quarter of the world's population! Once again, it is Satan who equips them so that they can carry out his destructive plans – he is still the *prince of the power of the air* (Ephesians 2:2). Decimation of the world's population will come by means of the sword (the red horseman), with famine (the black horseman), with death (*thanatos*), and by the wild beasts of the earth. Considering that the world's population currently stands at an estimated 7.4 billion, Satan, through the working of Antichrist and his henchmen, will eliminate some 1.8 billion people!

Such a dramatic devastation of the world's population might seem to be overstated if it were not for the fact that such a decimation of the masses has been the desire of those within some powerful circles of society going back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1883, Francis Galton coined the term *eugenics* to describe the perceived need to encourage favorable human traits and to discourage less desirable qualities;<sup>165</sup> the term is derived from the Greek *eugenes*, meaning good birth.<sup>166</sup> Galton, who was a cousin to Charles Darwin, based his eugenic theories on the need for the population to evolve ever upward,



Francis Galton

<sup>165</sup> F. William Engdahl, *Seeds of Destruction*, p.75.

<sup>166</sup> [http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?l=e&p=26&allowed\\_in\\_frame=0](http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?l=e&p=26&allowed_in_frame=0)

and so it was theorized that there was a need to encourage the birth rate among desirables (the elite of society) and eliminate reproduction by those who were inferior.<sup>167</sup> The presumption was that the wealthy, influential, and well-educated would produce desirable children, while the poor and illiterate would continue to produce generations that would be a drain on the “wealth passing through the hands of the few” who were seeking to develop a superior race of people.<sup>168</sup> Despite this (eugenics) being a pseudo-science (although concerted efforts were made for it to appear to be scientific, it is strictly a philosophy), it quickly became an academic discipline in many US colleges and universities (not surprisingly since these were the havens of the well-educated elite). In 1913, the Rockefeller Foundation was established as a means for John D. Rockefeller, Sr. to stash the wealth that he had amassed through Standard Oil so that it would be exempt from the new income tax laws that were passed in the US. The Foundation was established to “promote the wellbeing of mankind throughout the world”;<sup>169</sup> over a century later, its website still states that its purpose is: “Promoting the well-being of humanity throughout the world.”<sup>170</sup> As noble as that sounds, its real intent is to work to reduce the population of those whom it deems to be inferior,



Familiar names linked to eugenics.

and, thereby, achieve the *well-being* of the elite; one of the Foundation’s earliest grants was made in 1923 for the study of birth control techniques.<sup>171</sup> However, the Rockefellers did not embark on this pathway alone; Andrew Carnegie (of Carnegie Hall), who made his fortunes in the steel industry, E.H. Harriman (railroad magnate), J.P. Morgan (banking), J.H. Kellogg (Kellogg’s cereal), and Clarence

<sup>167</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis\\_Galton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Galton)

<sup>168</sup> Engdahl, p. 74.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/>

<sup>171</sup> Engdahl, p. 74.



Gamble (Procter & Gamble) were all financial supporters of the eugenics research that was being carried on in the US and Britain, which included the forced sterilization of “inferiors.”<sup>172</sup> Adolph Hitler was very appreciative of the work that the Americans had done in the area of eugenics; the Rockefeller Foundation steadily funded German research in this field going back as early as 1922, and many of Hitler’s henchmen, who carried out his atrocities during World War II, had been trained by, and their “research” funded by, the American elite.<sup>173</sup>

In 1952, John D. Rockefeller III founded the Population Council for the express purpose of studying the dangers of over population.<sup>174</sup> Because of the negative press that it had gained through Hitler’s extermination programs, the term *eugenics* had been largely abandoned in favor of the more acceptable term *genetics*. However, the agenda of those who continued to

finance and promote the philosophy of eugenics (or genetics) did not change. The same year as the Population Council began,



Margaret Sanger, Planned Parenthood supported by the Rockefeller Foundation

Margaret Sanger took her Planned Parenthood operations worldwide largely through the financial support of the Rockefeller Foundation.<sup>175</sup> Through the strategic use of its great wealth, the Rockefeller Foundation has gained control over the drug companies, the media, and medical training schools so that everything that reaches the public is carefully crafted and formulated so as to comply with their goal to drastically

<sup>172</sup> Engdahl, p. 72.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, p. 79-84.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, p. 85

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, p. 92.

reduce the world population and solidify their control over the world.<sup>176</sup> In essence, what is taking place through the philanthropy of the Rockefeller Foundation (and many others with a similar agenda) is the preparation for the coming of the Antichrist and his horsemen of Revelation 6.



A new look to the eugenics agenda.

This fourth horseman brings together all that the previous two set into motion: it began with the removal of *peace*, which led to people killing one another, it continued with a severe famine that would only permit the wealthy to have sufficient food, and it ends with a quarter of the world's population being eliminated. This fits with the modern agenda of the Rockefeller Foundation, and, interestingly, also with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which has as one of its mandates to combat infectious diseases through drug development and by getting as many as possible of the world's children vaccinated.<sup>177</sup> During an interview with Dr. Sanjay Gupta of CNN, Bill Gates specifically identified two benefits of vaccines as “reducing sickness, [and] reducing the population growth”; he spoke of success as reducing by one-half the 9 million children who die of infectious diseases every year, yet in the same sentence spoke of reducing the population.<sup>178</sup> The correlation seems to be very clear. In another talk, Gates also said that if we do a really great job with new vaccines, health care, and reproductive health services, we could reduce the present population figure by 10-15%.<sup>179</sup> Does he not realize that he is placing a direct connection between vaccines and population reduction, or does he not care because he knows that there is nothing that the average person can do about it anyway? This is another

<sup>176</sup> <http://www.nwo-news.com/2016/05/02/rockefeller-foundation-eugenics-agenda-is-nothing-short-of-the-mass-depopulation-of-planet-earth/>

<sup>177</sup> <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/>

<sup>178</sup> [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2qhw6i\\_vaccination-to-reduce-population-bill-gates-admits\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2qhw6i_vaccination-to-reduce-population-bill-gates-admits_news)

<sup>179</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WQtRI7A064>

case that plays right into the hands of the coming Antichrist and his fourth horseman.

## SUMMARY

We have identified the Antichrist as being the rider of the white horse in Revelation 6 as well as the beast rising out of the sea in Revelation 13. These are two very different projections of the same person. In the former, Antichrist will appear to be benevolent, bearing great authority and bringing peace and security at a time when it is most desired; he will come with the promise of a New World Order of justice, righteousness and virtue. However, this will prove to be a fading façade covering the beast (a leopard skin camouflaging his true nature); he will blaspheme the God of heaven, the angelic hosts of heaven, the saints who are now with the Lord in heaven, and he will launch an attack against God's children here on earth (Revelation 13:6-7). Both the benevolent and blasphemous actions of the Antichrist will be powered by Satan (Revelation 13:2, 7) – we must not be amazed at this! "... Satan, himself, is transformed into [disguises himself as] an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers [*diakonos*] also be transformed [*are being transformed* by Satan (passive voice)] as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Corinthians 11:14-15).<sup>180</sup> If Satan can appear to be an angel of God (for God is light – 1 John 1:5), then it is no great thing for him to enable the Antichrist (his *diakonos*) to give the impression of being righteous. Jesus warned, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before" (Matthew 24:24-25). To be forewarned is to be forearmed; therefore, we must be alert to the deceptions of Satan, and we must spend our days studying the Word of God so that we will recognize the deception

---

<sup>180</sup> Friberg Lexicon; Strong's Online; Stephanus 1550 NT.

when it comes (Antichrist, when he comes), lest we, too, should be caught in the lies of the devil.