

FELLOWSHIP NOTES ~ Sunday, December 6th, 2020



Part 4: "The Interlude Continues"

Revelation 13:1 – 16:9

Prayer Requests for our Synchronized Lights & Live Nativity Outreach Dec. 12th – 13th:

1. For spiritual fruit of salvation and discipleship to result from this outreach
2. For every volunteer position to be filled and for the strength of everyone involved
3. For the tech team under the leadership of Tyler Hixson
4. For the weather not to be a problem
5. For safety on the roads around our property and for everyone who will be on our property
6. That many would stop in our Prayer Lane to give us the opportunity to pray for them
7. For many personal connections to be made with the people of our area
8. For the many logistical details to be handled by the oversight of Lisa Jones
9. For many people to attend one of our Christmas Eve Services as a result of being invited
10. For God to do "immeasurable more than all we can ask or imagine" (Eph. 2:20) through this outreach

Introduction

In chapters 12 & 13 we are introduced to seven important characters or groups of people during the end-time events of the tribulation. As Armageddon looms on the horizon, these key players of the apocalyptic drama assume their prophetic positions. The end is now in view. Satan is going to do his best to prevent Christ from setting up His earthly kingdom by setting up his own under the Antichrist.

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| 1.) Israel (the woman – Rev. 12:1-2) | 4.) Michael (Rev. 12:7) |
| 2.) Satan (The dragon – Rev. 12:2-4) | 5.) Believing Israel (Seed of the Woman – Rev. 12:13-17) |
| 3.) Christ (the man-child – Rev. 12:5) | |

The Rise of the Antichrist (13:1-10)

Verse 1: 1.) Ten Horns = Ten world _____
2.) Seven Heads = 7 world _____
3.) Ten Crowns = 10 divisions of the last world _____ (Antichrist's)

Key: the description of the beast represents both a _____ (government) and a _____ (Dan. 7:25; 8:24-25; 11:36-45; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

"Blasphemy" = to claim God-like powers; to claim to be God, or to identify God with lesser persons or objects.

Verses 5-6: The Antichrist will have a three-and-a-half-year window of time (the last half of the Tribulation) to exercise authority during which he will publicly blaspheme:

- 1.) _____
- 2.) The _____ of God
- 3.) The _____ of God
- 4.) Those who live in _____

Verse 7: There will be a worldwide slaughter of God's people by the Antichrist (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-17; 11:7; 17:6; Dan. 7:25).

Verses 8-10: The world's population will be divided: those who are saved (whose names are written in God's book) and will refuse to worship the Antichrist, and those who are spiritually lost and who will bow in full surrender to the Antichrist.

Taken as a whole, the first ten verses of Revelation 13 predict a future world government which from God's viewpoint will be a continuation of the ancient Roman Empire expanded to cover the entire world. Satan will be behind this empire with the Antichrist as his representative.

The Rise of the False Prophet (13:11-18)

Verse 11: The "beast" described here is later called "the false prophet" in Rev. 16:13; 19:20 and 20:10.

Verses 12-14: The false prophet's mission will be to cause the inhabitants of earth to worship the Antichrist... or die. His miracles will be the result of supernatural power from Satan. The idol he will build for worship will be placed in the new (yet-to-be-built) temple in Jerusalem and will be connected with the abomination of desolation.

Daniel 9:27b "And the abomination of desolation will be on a wing of the temple..."

Matthew 24:15 "So when you see the abomination that causes desolation, spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place..."

Verses 15-18: Though everyone who doesn't worship the Antichrist will be sentenced to death, not all believers will be killed. Some will survive until Christ returns and will enter His millennial kingdom as living people – including many Jews (Isaiah 65:20-23; Matt. 25:31-40; Rev. 12:6-7).

Reasons for the Antichrist's Mark:

1. To counterfeit the mark God will give to the 144,000 believing Jews.
2. To extend favor to those who support the world government.
3. To identify and eliminate opposition to the world government.
4. To track and control commerce.
5. To force people to stop worshiping God.
6. To force people to worship the Antichrist.
7. To permanently tie people to the kingdom of the Antichrist.

Comparison of Trinities

HOLY: God the Father
God the Son (Jesus)
God the Holy Spirit

UNHOLY: Satan
Antichrist
False Prophet

Summary

This sobering passage is not intended to be the source of fruitless speculation about its details. Rather, it stands as a warning to the unbelieving world. It challenges believers to lead careful, godly lives and to reach out to a world headed for certain destruction.

For Next Sunday:

Read and study Revelation chapters 16:10 – 19:21 using the study notes found in the *40 Days Through Revelation* book. Don't have one? You can purchase one in Fellowship Café for a donation of \$10.

For Further Study

Article: *Disturbing Trends Foreshadow a Coming Global Tyranny*

Go to www.end-times-bible-prophecy.com, - click on the above article to receive a free e-book by author Britt Gillette, 7 Signs of the End Times

In the Tower at the Welcome Center:

Article: *What is the Mark of the Beast?*

Previous message notes

In Fellowship Café:

Workbook: Heaven

Booklet: Heaven: Biblical Answers to Common Questions

Book: Heaven

Message Supplement – The Antichrist

A great deal has been written about the prefix *anti* in connection with the Antichrist. It can mean either “against” (in opposition to) or “instead of” (in place of). Is he the great enemy of Christ, or is he a false Christ? If he is the enemy of Christ and the head of a Gentile world government, then he is most likely to be a Gentile himself. If he is a false messiah who is accepted by the Jews, then it would stand to reason that he would be Jewish.

The one called *antichristos* (antichrist) denies the existence of Christ, whereas *pseudochristos* (false Christ) affirms himself to be Christ. The biblical picture is that he is *both*. Initially, he presents himself as the “savior” of Israel by making a covenant to protect her (Daniel 9:27). In this manner, he appears to be her long-awaited Messiah. But in reality, he is against all that the messianic prophecies foretell about the true Messiah.

Other titles for the Antichrist include “the man of lawlessness” and “the man doomed to destruction” (2 Thessalonians 2:3), “the lawless one” (2 Thessalonians 2:8), a little horn (Daniel 7:8), “the ruler who will come” (Daniel 9:26), and the king [who] will do as he pleases” (Daniel 11:36).

THE ANTICHRIST'S NATIONALITY

The New Testament does not clearly state whether the Antichrist is a Jew or a Gentile. Most prophecy scholars believe he will be a Gentile for these reasons:

1. He leads the European union of Gentile nations (Daniel 7:8-24).
2. His covenant with Israel promises Gentile protection for Israel (Daniel 9:27).
3. His rule is part of the “times of the Gentiles” and their domination over Israel (Luke 21:24).

These passages make it clear that the Antichrist will lead the Western powers, but they do not specifically designate him as a Gentile. He could possibly be of Jewish origin or nationality and still be a European or American Jew who leads the final form taken by the one-world government of the last days. Daniel 11:37, which says he will not regard the “God of his fathers” (KJV), can also be translated “gods of his fathers” (NIV). This makes his background inconclusive. The exegesis of Daniel 11:37 usually focuses on the Antichrist’s atheistic beliefs, regardless of whether he is a Jew or Gentile.

Both the books of Daniel and Revelation associate the Antichrist with a confederation of ten European nations that correspond in some way to the old Roman Empire. We see this confederation symbolized by the ten toes of the great statue in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, as described in Daniel 2:31-45. This confederation is also symbolized in Daniel 7:19-28 and Revelation 13:1-9 by the ten horns on the beast.

In Daniel’s prophecies, the Antichrist is always associated with the final phase of the Roman Empire (the fourth kingdom). In Revelation 17:9, he is identified with a city that sits on “seven hills” (frequently interpreted as Rome). Daniel 9:25-27 states that he will come from among the people who will destroy the Second Temple—that is, the Romans.

With our world’s current emphasis on international oneness and our need for a human leader who can guarantee a peaceful coexistence between nations, we can easily imagine a powerful world ruler coming on the scene in the immediate future.

THE ANTICHRIST’S GENIUS AND POWER

The antichrist will be the most incredible political leader the world has ever known. On the surface he will appear to be the epitome of human genius and power. Arthur W. Pink (p. 77) writes, “Satan has had full opportunity afforded him to study fallen human nature.... The devil knows full well how to dazzle people by the attraction of power....He knows how to gratify the craving for knowledge....He can delight the ear with music and the eye with entrancing beauty....He knows how to exalt people to dizzy heights of worldly greatness and fame, and how to control that greatness so that it may be employed against God and His people.”

Note the following list of the characteristics of the Antichrist as described in Scripture:

1. intellectual genius (Daniel 7:20)
2. oratorical genius (Daniel 7:20)
3. political genius (Daniel 11:21)
4. commercial genius (Daniel 8:25)
5. military genius (Daniel 8:24)
6. administrative genius (Revelation 13:1-2)
7. religious genius (2 Thessalonians 2:4)

Perhaps the most telling of his characteristics is depicted in Daniel 11:21, which tells us that he will come to power and “seize it through intrigue” (“flatteries,” KJV). Here is a *master of deception*, empowered by the “father of lies.” Many believe he will be Satan incarnate—thus his miraculous recovery in Revelation 13:3.

A simple survey of the characteristics of the Antichrist confirms that he is both a false Christ (pseudochristos) and against Christ (antichristos). He masquerades as an angel of light only to plunge the world into spiritual darkness. Like Satan, he is a destroyer, not a builder. Promising peace, he pushes the world into war. In every conceivable way, he is just like Satan, who indwells and empowers him.

IS THE ANTICHRIST ALIVE TODAY?

Satan has battled the church at every turn throughout its long history, waiting for the right moment to indwell the right person—the Antichrist—as his final masterpiece.

Guessing whether certain contemporary figures might be the Antichrist, however, has always proven futile. Viewing the future through eyes of the present led to some fantastic yet incorrect speculations in the twentieth century alone. Tragically, people guessing dates and selecting possibilities for the Antichrist are claiming to know more than the writers of Scripture.

The apostle Paul comments on this in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2, where he tells us that the “coming of our Lord Jesus” will not happen “until the rebellion occurs” and the “man of lawlessness is revealed.” Next, he tells us that “you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time” (verse 6). Only after the rapture of the church will the identity of the Antichrist be revealed. In other words, you don’t want to know who he is. If you ever do figure out who he is, you have been left behind!

Satan must prepare a man to be his crowning achievement in every generation, so we should not be surprised that several candidates have appeared on the horizon of human history only to vanish away. Satan must wait on God’s timing, so he is already defeated before he ever begins his final assault on God. He can’t make his move until God releases the restraining power of the Holy Spirit indwelling the church. Therefore, the Spirit is the agent and the church is the means by which God restrains Satan’s diabolical plan until the Father calls us home to heaven.

TEN KEYS TO THE ANTICHRIST’S IDENTITY

The Bible gives us at least ten keys to identifying the Antichrist when he does come to power. They provide enough details to give a general idea of who he will be when Satan inspires him to make his move onto the world scene. These clues also make it clear that only one person in history will fit this description. Many prototypes have come and gone, but there will be only one Antichrist.

1. He will rise to power in the last days: (Daniel 8:19,23).
2. He will rule the whole world: (Revelation 13:7).
3. His headquarters will be in Rome: (Revelation 17:8-9).
4. He is intelligent and persuasive: (Daniel 7:20).
5. He will rule by international consent: (Revelation 17:12-13).
6. He will rule by deception: (Daniel 8:24-25).
7. He will control the global economy: (Revelation 13:16-17).
8. He will make a peace treaty with Israel: (Daniel 9:27).
9. He will break the treaty and invade Israel: (Daniel 9:26).
10. He will claim to be God: (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

The general picture is that of a European who rises to power over the Western world. Whether he is Jewish or Gentile is not entirely clear. What is clear, however, is that he will control the last great bastion of Gentile world power. From his base in the West, he will extend his control over the entire world. He will administrate the world government and the global economy, assisted by the leader of the world religion (Revelation 13:11-18). Only time will reveal his true identity.

Growth Groups Study Guide

Getting Started

Group Discussion: What do you think – is the Antichrist alive today? Why or why not?

Read the Message Supplement about the Antichrist and discuss your thoughts.

Digging Deeper

1. Let's see what the Bible says about the "Book of Life" (Also called the "Lamb's Book of Life). Read the following verses, write down/discuss what you learn and your conclusions.

Philippians 4:3 -

Revelation 3:5 -

Revelation 13:8 -

Revelation 20:12-14 -

Revelation 21:27 -

Conclusions:

2. What similarities are there between the Holy Trinity and the Unholy Trinity? Why do you suppose there are several similarities given the fact that these represent the opposite extremes of holiness and evil?
3. What do verses 11-18 of Revelation 13 teach us about the False Prophet?
4. What does the mark of the beast represent? Can anything be known about it with certainty today?

Wrapping Up

Sunday morning, we wrapped up with 1 Peter 4:7. Why do you believe God led Peter to write what he did in this verse in relation to end time events?

Spend time praying for our Synchronized Lights Outreach this coming weekend.



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