

Rev 13:1b-4 (NIV)

- 1) Because Satan (the dragon) is the source of power for the Antichrist (the beast), no human force will be able to withstand him.
- 2) John saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed.
- 3) The interpretation of that phrase has been much debated.
 - a) One interpretation says this represents a revival of the Roman Empire.
 - b) Others believe that it is a specific person who dies and is restored to life.
 - i) Candidates for the person of the “resurrection” are Judas Iscariot and perhaps the Emperor Nero.
 - ii) It was widely believed at the end of the first century that Nero, who had committed suicide in A.D. 68, would rise from the dead.
 - c) However, the most likely interpretation would be that the head whose fatal wound will be healed can only be the future Antichrist himself.
 - i) Whether his death is real or fake (cf. v. 14; 2 Thess 2:9) is not clear.
 - ii) It may be that the Antichrist is really killed, and God, for His own purposes, allows him to be resurrected.
 - iii) More likely, the Antichrist's alleged death and resurrection will be a counterfeit of Christ's death and resurrection, staged, as one of the "lying wonders" perpetrated by the false prophet. Paul speaks of this in >>>>>>

2 Thess 2:9-12 (NIV)

- iv) the Antichrist's resurrection will also be phony since he never really died.
 - v) Or perhaps the Antichrist will explain his extraordinary powers by claiming to be the reincarnation of the Christ spirit, as some have suggested.
 - (1) I personally find this hard to accept because this would give credence to Christ.
 - (2) In fact, in the next few verses, we will see that he will blaspheme God.
 - (3) Unlikely that he would want to give credit to Christ for anything.
- 4) Whatever actually happens, the people of the world will believe that the Antichrist, already popular because of his great powers, has also transcended death.
- 5) Since the Tribulation will be a time where the world will experience death on a scale unprecedented in human history, the Antichrist's seeming invulnerability to death will win him greater, more widespread acclaim.
- 6) As a result, the whole earth will be amazed and follow after him.

Rev 13:5-10 (NIV)

Revelation – NOTES – 2021

- 1) Satan (the dragon) works his power through the Antichrist (the beast), using him to make war against God.
- 2) This demon-possessed man will be a gifted orator, an intellectual genius, possess great charm and charisma, and have immense leadership power.
- 3) Added to those natural qualities will be of course, the hellish power of Satan.
- 4) The result will be a person of superhuman power, vast intelligence, and absolute wickedness.
- 5) He will be the personification of evil!
- 6) All of this combined will allow the Antichrist to rise to power at God's appointed time and, God will temporarily let sin run its course.
- 7) The Antichrist will possess great authority over the entire world.
- 8) He will have complete, unrestrained freedom of action and will answer to no one.
- 9) The Antichrist will share Satan's throne, just as the true Christ shares His Father's throne (cf. 3:21; 22:1,3).
- 10) Here we see the expression “All inhabitants of the earth” again.
 - a) Here it is followed by an explanatory expression — “all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world”
- 11) This astounding vision of the beast from the sea concludes with a call for spiritual understanding. “He who has an ear, let him hear”
- 12) This expression is used fifteen times in the New Testament to emphasize a particularly important truth (cf. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22; Matt 11:15; 13:9,43; Mark 4:9,23; Luke 8:8; 14:35).
- 13) At this point, the phrase introduces a proverb that concludes this passage:

10 If anyone is to go into captivity,
 into captivity he will go.
If anyone is to be killed with the sword,
 with the sword he will be killed.
Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints. NIV

- 14) The second phrase in this passage is one that is dependent upon the manuscript that the translator used.
 - a) A translation using an alternative manuscript wording is in the New American Standard Updated and others:

10 If anyone is destined for captivity,
 to captivity he goes;
if anyone kills with the sword,
 with the sword he must be killed.
Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints NASU

Revelation – NOTES – 2021

- 15) One comment I read said that this verse is quite weird in Greek, and it was no surprise that there are a plethora of variants found in the manuscripts.
- 16) It is thought that the Greek construction may be a literal rendering of a Hebrew idiom.
- 17) It seems to be a paraphrase which combines Jeremiah 15:2 and 43:11.

Jer 15:1-3 (NIV)

Jer 43:11 (NIV)

- 18) Setting the peculiarities of these verses aside, this proverb contains important practical truth for those believers alive at the time of the Antichrist's persecution.
- 19) They are to depend on God's providence and not take matters into their own hands.
- 20) Those believers destined by God's sovereign plan for captivity (imprisonment) are to accept that incarceration as God's will.
- 21) They are not to resist or fight against Antichrist.
- 22) The point here of this saying is to encourage believers to endure and remain faithful under persecution.
- 23) God's people must not retaliate against their persecutors; there is no place now, and there will be no place then, for militant, aggressive, violent believers terrorizing their persecutors.

1 Peter 4:19 (NASU)

19 Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right. NASU

- 24) Instead of reacting violently, believers must exemplify the perseverance and the faith of the saints.
- 25) They must be like the Lord Jesus Christ, who as 1 Peter 2:23 tells us.

1 Peter 2:23 (NIV)

Rev 13:11-15 (NIV)

- 1) The first beast came from the Abyss (sea). This beast comes from the earth.
- 2) The significance of the second beast coming from the earth is that in ancient times, the earth was less mysterious and foreboding than the sea.
- 3) Some view this second beast as an institution, a form of government, or an ideology.
- 4) However, the use of the Greek *allos* (another of the same kind) indicates that he, like the first beast, will be a person.
- 5) Though he has two horns like a lamb, he is no less a child of hell than the first beast.
- 6) This is obvious by the great contrast between the physical description – looks like a lamb – and the voice – spoke like a dragon.

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7) He will later be identified as the false prophet. Looking at three future passages in Revelation we see this.

Rev 16:13 (NIV)

Rev 19:20 (NIV)

Rev 20:10 (NIV)

8) If you think about previous comments, and link them together, you can see that this beast was a counterfeit Holy Spirit.

9) This completes the unholy trinity.

- a) Satan as the counterfeit god,
- b) The second beast as the Antichrist.
- c) And now, the false prophet as the counterfeit holy spirit.

10) The false prophet is in charge of the worldwide worship of the first beast, the Antichrist.

11) His mission is to “make” the entire world worship the Antichrist.

12) To do this, he is given the power of the Antichrist thru which he:

- a) performs miraculous signs
- b) causes fire to come down from heaven to earth
- c) he deceives the inhabitants of the earth
- d) orders them to set up an image in honor of the beast
- e) gives breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak
 - i) The Greek here (pneuma – spirit, breath, wind, inner life) indicates an animation of the image – not actual life (zoa or bios – life) being given to the image.
- f) has the power of life and death over the inhabitants of the earth so that “all who refused to worship the image to be killed.”

13) Then comes the infamous “mark of the beast”

Rev 13:16-18 (NIV)

- 1) Here, we enter a totalitarian state of existence for all the inhabitants of the entire earth.
- 2) Regardless of your age or social status, your rights are history – **they no longer exist.**
- 3) Just as God marked his people to save them so Satan’s beast marked his people to save them from the persecution that he would inflict upon God’s followers.
- 4) That being said, the implications for the mark had consequences.
 - a) This is directed not toward political and economic control though that is a result.
 - b) It is **directed** toward allegiance and commitment – absolute dominance and control.

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- c) Those who accepted the mark will be showing their allegiance to Satan, the Antichrist, and the false *prophet*.
 - d) To refuse the mark meant to commit oneself entirely to God, preferring death to compromising one's faith in Christ.
 - i) There are no more "pew warmers," no more "yes, I believe" and not really even know what.
 - e) One of the ramifications will be the breaking of the spiritual beliefs of God's people.
 - i) After all, this is a war being waged by Satan against them.
 - 5) We have discussed many times the situation and what we would do if we were confronted with immediate death because of our faith – would we deny Christ and live or confess him and die?
 - 6) This is that situation for the entire population of believers throughout the world at this time.
 - 7) The big difference is that the gun is directed not only at us as an individual but our families.
 - 8) If you cannot buy or sell, you cannot eat or buy food for your family.
 - 9) Here, we will be forced to choose not only life or death for ourselves but for those who depend on us.
 - 10) And it will be a choice of a possible slow and agonizing death.
 - 11) Life under totalitarian governments in our time provides a faint glimpse of what is to come.
 - 12) A man who had lived under Bulgaria's communist regime remarked:

“You cannot understand, and you cannot know that the most terrible instrument of persecution ever devised is an innocent ration card. You cannot buy and you cannot sell except according to that little, innocent card. If they please, you can be starved to death, and if they please, you can be dispossessed of everything you have; for you cannot trade, and you cannot buy and you cannot sell, without permission.”

(Cited in W. A. Criswell, Expository Sermons on Revelation [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969], 4:120-21)
 - 13) The pressure to give in to the worship of the Antichrist will be far worse than anything ever experienced in human history.
 - 14) Life will be virtually unlivable, so the people are forced to bow to the demonized king, not prompted merely by religious deception, but also by economic necessity.
(from The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Copyright © Moody Press and John MacArthur, Jr., 1983-2005.)
 - 15) Now, to one of the most widely discussed portions of the entire book of Revelation – verse 18 of chapter 13.
- 18 ... If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666. NIV
- 16) People have speculated as to the significance of the mark and how to calculate it probably since the first person read it.

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- 17) In Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, letters had numerical equivalents, and a myriad of schemes to associate the names of historical individuals with the number 666 have been put forth.
 - a) Nero, Caligula, Domitian, Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and a host of others have been proposed, based on some sort of convoluted mathematical rendering of the letters in their name.
- 18) In the approach we have taken in our study – the futurist approach – all speculation is futile since the Antichrist is still to come.
- 19) This means, obviously, the number 666 cannot be associated with any historical individual.
- 20) The early church writer and prominent leader Irenaeus cautioned against speculating about the identity of the person associated with the number 666 until that person arrives on the scene.
- 21) Having said all that, there is, as brought out by several commentators, something we can see clearly if we address the number as symbolic.
- 22) John says – “for it is man’s number.”
- 23) Seven, the number of perfection, is God's number.
- 24) Since man falls short of perfection, his number is six.
- 25) Repeating the number three times emphasizes that this is man's number, just as the thrice-repeated statement "holy, holy, holy" stresses God's absolute holiness