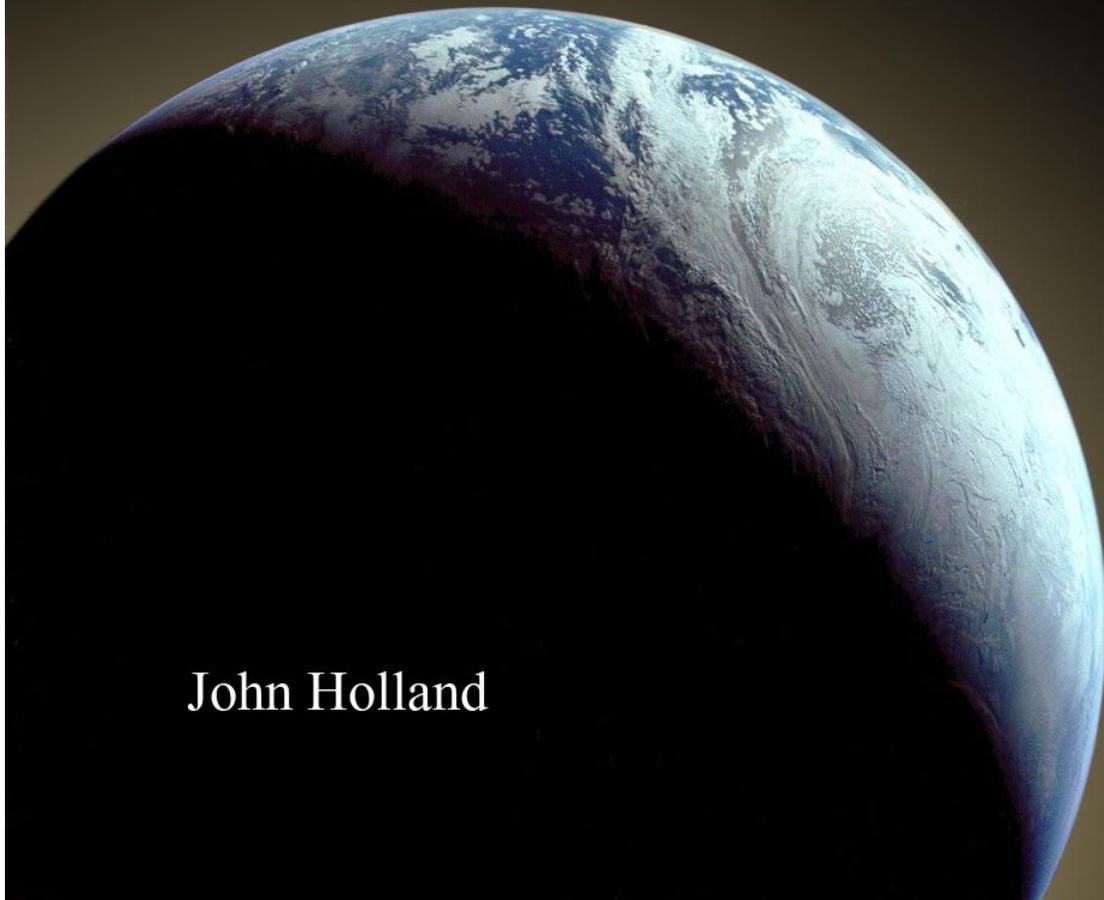


GOD'S ULTIMATE VICTORY
OVER ANTICHRIST AND SATAN

John Holland



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Published by COVENANT MINISTRIES INC.
P.O. Box 975, Warrnambool
Victoria. 3280 AUSTRALIA
Email: contact@covenanttruth.com.au

ISBN 978 0 9875493 1 0
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GOD'S ULTIMATE VICTORY OVER ANTICHRIST AND SATAN

Using Antichrist and his spirit, Satan is endeavouring to destroy all religions and world governments, and to subject the whole world to his control.

Unbeknown to most of the world's inhabitants, Antichrist has already contaminated all religions, and gained monetary control of the whole world, thereby giving Satan a covert dominance over all world governments and institutions.

Without divine intervention Satan would succeed, but we are assured in 'Revelation' that ***"the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful."*** [Rev 17:14].

Author John Holland.

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THE KINGDOM OF ANTICHRIST

This chapter describes the emergence of Satan, Antichrist, and the False Prophet, and their strategy to cast down the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and replace it with their own world kingdom.

PREPARATION TO STUDY THE KINGDOM OF ANTICHRIST

Descriptions of Antichrist and his kingdom in Old Testament prophecies and “The Revelation,” are for the most part couched in figurative language. For this reason it becomes necessary to see and understand how figurative language is used in the Scriptures.

The Use of Symbols and Types

Symbols and types are an example of figurative language, and when their meaning is brought to light, our understanding is greatly enhanced. To prepare us to understand the prophecies concerning the operation of Antichrist and his kingdom, we will begin by explaining symbols and types, and give examples of the ways in which each is used.

Symbols

A symbol is the use of one thing to represent another. As we compare the characteristics of one with the other, we gain more insight into the attributes of the thing being symbolised. For instance --

Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit who ministers to us as in healing and revealing truth. Oil was used to heal wounds and as a fuel for lamps that produce light (which in turn is a symbol for truth).

Leaven, because it eventually infiltrates the whole loaf, is a symbol of sin or false doctrine, which has the capacity to take over a person’s life, or infiltrate a whole fellowship. Paul warned the Corinthian Church, *“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you... Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?”* [1 Cor 5:1, 6].

Tares are a symbol of false or apostate Christians because they are ‘look-alike’ weeds in a field of wheat. In the parable of the wheat and the tares, Jesus explained, *“the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.”* [Mt 13:38].

Types

A type is a symbolic representation of something or someone in the future. Here are some examples:

Aaron, appointed by God as Israel’s first High Priest, is a type of Christ, appointed by God to be our High Priest.

David, as a shepherd and a king, is also a type of Christ, our Shepherd and King. Because David is a symbolic type of Christ, his name is sometimes used in Scriptures as an alternative name for Christ. E.g. *“David [Christ] My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them.”* [Ezek 37:23] (Written centuries after David had died).

Manna, as bread from heaven, is a type of the life of Jesus in us as “the living bread.” ***“I am the living bread which came down from heaven.”*** [John 6:51].

Babylon The Babylonian religion rejected God, worshiping pagan deities, and initiating idolatrous religious rites and practices. As the root of all false religion, **Babylon is a type of Antichrist’s kingdom** which is referred to as ***“Babylon the great.”*** in “Revelation.”

This will be made clear later in our study in the section relating to God’s judgment of ***“Babylon the great.”***

The Use of Parallelism in Old Testament Prophecies

A parallel prophesy is one that has an obvious meaning relating to the historical circumstances of the Israelites, but also has a future prophetic application to spiritual Israel, which is the Church. The use of symbols and types in parallel prophecies often provide the key to interpreting “Revelation.”

Some Old Testament prophecies relating to the fall of Babylon the nation, have a parallel application to the fall of ***“Babylon the great”*** or the kingdom of Antichrist. This is illustrated in the following readings.

The Fall of Babylon

In the following Old Testament account of the fall of Babylon, Jeremiah portrays her as a burnt mountain – as an exalted empire overtaken by God’s judgment and cast down forever.

***“Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain,
Who destroys all the earth,” says the LORD.
“And I will stretch out My hand against you,
Roll you down from the rocks,
And make you a burnt mountain.
They shall not take from you a stone for a corner
Nor a stone for a foundation,
But you shall be desolate forever,” says the LORD.”*** [Jer 51:25-26].

In Revelation Chapter 8, the second trumpet prophecy also describes a burning mountain, this time being cast into the sea.

“Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.” [Rev 8:8].

Because of Jeremiah’s parallel prophecy, we understand that the ***“great mountain burning with fire”*** in Revelation, is a symbolic reference to “Babylon the great,” or the kingdom of Antichrist, also destined to be cast down forever.

Warning to Come out of Babylon

The prophetic warning to the children of Israel in captivity to flee from Babylon to escape God’s judgment on her is echoed in a similar warning in Revelation.

Old Testament

***“Flee from the midst of Babylon,
And every one save his life!”***

*Do not be cut off in her iniquity,
For this is the time of the LORD'S vengeance;
He shall recompense her.*" [Jer 51:6].

The Revelation

"And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!"..."Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities." [Rev 18:2 & 4-6].

THE KINGDOM OF ANTICHRIST

INTRODUCTION TO THE KINGDOM OF ANTICHRIST

A Counterfeit Trinity and Doctrine

Satan has created a counterfeit trinity and kingdom that opposes the Holy Trinity and the Kingdom of God.

God is counterfeited by Satan, Christ by Antichrist, and the Holy Spirit by the spirit of Antichrist, who is also called "the False Prophet." We may have a better understanding of the nature of the kingdom of Antichrist by comparing the roles of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, with those of Satan, Antichrist, and the spirit of Antichrist.

God Compared to Satan

God is the supreme ruler of the universe. King Jehoshaphat prayed, "*O LORD God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?*" [2 Chron 20:5-7]. If God were to exert His power, He is absolutely invincible.

However, the Scriptures tell us that "*righteousness and justice are the foundation of (His) throne.*" [Ps 89:14]. People are in God's kingdom because they have chosen to submit to His will. Similarly, people are in Satan's kingdom because they have chosen to believe his lies and accept his ways. God's integrity and justice must acknowledge Satan's right to have dominion over those who have submitted to him. Because the world as a whole is disposed to evil rather than righteousness, it is to this point still under Satan's control. Jesus called Satan the ruler of the world. "*Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.*" [John 12:31-32].

The whole world is embroiled in a climactic spiritual war, in which God is establishing the kingdom of Jesus Christ in righteousness and love, whilst Satan vehemently opposes Him by endeavouring to extend his kingdom of darkness until all mankind is under his control.

Christ Compared to Antichrist

God sent Jesus Christ into the world to bear the punishment for the sins of mankind by His sacrificial death on the cross. "*He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood,*

the forgiveness of sins.” [Col 1:13-14]. He was sent to establish the Church as a kingdom of believers bearing His image of love, obedience and righteousness. Because Christ’s atoning sacrifice has removed every legal claim of Satan against mankind, God has paved the way to wrest the control of the world from Satan, and establish in its place the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The nature of Antichrist’s opposition to Christ is brought out when we examine the meaning of his name. In the original Greek, the prefix ‘anti’ has two meanings. The first is ‘against,’ suggesting direct opposition. The second is ‘instead of’ or replacing with a substitute. By combining these two meanings we see that Antichrist is against, or opposes Christ by creating a counterfeit church with apostate doctrines, in the place of the true church that has the true doctrine of Christ.

The following pages will unfold how Antichrist’s false church and doctrines are created in such a way that their likeness to the true Church and doctrines of Christ will cause many to accept them as being genuine. Jesus warned that ***“...false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand.”*** [Matt 24:24-25].

In the parable of the wheat and the tares Jesus warned us that Antichrist would implant false ‘look alike’ Christians amongst the true believers.

A landowner sowed good seed, but at the time of harvest it was discovered that there were tares amongst the wheat. Tares are a weed that looks so similar to the wheat that it is not detected until the harvest, when its black seeds appear. This is Jesus’ explanation of the parable. ***“He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire.”*** [Matt 13:37-42].

It is important to see that Antichrist is not a person who is to appear at the end of the age. Antichrist is a major spirit being, or Satanic ‘prince,’ who has been empowered by him and entrusted with the task of establishing his kingdom on earth. Antichrist uses human agents through whom he can carry out his work. In John’s letters to the Church, the apostle warned that there were already many antichrists, or many people who had submitted to Antichrist, and were at his disposal in opposing the church, or kingdom of Christ. ***“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.”*** [1 John 2:18 (KJV)].

Most people expect that Antichrist, as a person, will appear at the close of the age, pointing to this reading from 2 Thessalonians as their reference.

“Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” [2 Thess 2:3-4].

We shall see in Chapter 2 how the ***“man of sin”*** relates to the papacy of the Catholic Church, and is not Antichrist himself.

The Holy Spirit Compared to the Spirit of Antichrist

The Holy Spirit was sent by God to be the Lord’s representative to the Church, to empower her, and to guide her into His and the Lord’s will for her. He indwells Christians

individually, so that He might be their guide and teacher. He is God's instrument in refining them and recreating them in the image of Jesus Christ.

The spirit of Antichrist is Satan's counterfeit of the Holy Spirit, charged with the task of negating the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and drawing people into his own kingdom. The following are some of the ways the spirit of Antichrist does this.

The spirit of Antichrist manifests false miracles and healings with lying signs and wonders, which people assume to be the work of the Holy Spirit. This evokes false worship which is unwittingly directed to Satan, who initiated them.

The spirit of Antichrist opposes the gospel truth through false prophets and teachers, who introduce deceptive teachings and false doctrines. For instance the New Age philosophy that man is self sufficient and self dependant, promotes deification of man and worship of the created rather than the Creator.

The spirit of Antichrist uses false prophets and teachers to disclaim Christ's divinity. In many false religions and sects Jesus is declared to be merely another prophet. ***"By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world."*** [1 John 4:2-3].

People are deceived into thinking that it is the same god that is worshipped by all religions, and that non-Christian religions are just adopting different ways of worshipping God. People who are worshipping false gods are in fact worshipping Satan. The truth of Christ's second coming is clouded by false millennial theories.

If we persist in believing the false doctrines of Antichrist, a doorway is opened for Satan to impart a demonic spirit that is generally known as a spirit of Antichrist, which can indwell us, and make it easier for Antichrist to impart his deceptions and lawlessness. The spirit of Antichrist establishes itself in heretical institutions, and even the Church is not immune from its intrusion.

SATAN IS EXPOSED IN THE TWELFTH CHAPTER OF REVELATION

Satan's Attack on the Church

Revelation 12 opens with a cryptic vision of a woman, initially symbolising Israel, and then spiritual Israel, or the Church. She has a garland of twelve stars, representing the twelve tribes of Israel. The woman was about to give birth. ***"And the dragon [Satan] stood before the woman [Israel] who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child [Jesus] as soon as it was born."*** [Rev 12:4]. Satan's plans were thwarted when Joseph was warned by an angel to take the infant Jesus to Egypt to escape Herod's command to destroy all infants in Bethlehem. After Jesus was crucified, Satan could not hold Him in death, and so he was resurrected and ***"was caught up to God and His throne."*** [Rev 12:5].

When Spiritual Israel, or the Church, came into existence, she immediately became a target of Satan, who attempted to destroy her by violence and persecution. However God protected the Church by dispersing her amongst the Gentile nations, where her activities were not as easily pinpointed.

When the redemption of mankind was accomplished by Christ's sacrificial death on the cross, Satan was defeated and stripped of all legal right or grounds to accuse mankind before

God. ***“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out...”*** [Rev 12:7-9].

There was a proclamation of victory, presented for the benefit of all generations of God’s children. ***“Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”***[Rev 12: 10-11].

The twelfth chapter of Revelation ends with a dire warning that now Satan is cast down to the earth, he is so enraged with the Church that he will make war with her offspring continually. ***“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”*** [Rev 12:12].

Having failed to destroy the newly formed Church by direct persecution, Satan embarked on a new stratagem of deception by counterfeit, in which the Church and its doctrines are counterfeited by a false church with false doctrines. The agents that Satan has used to create these counterfeiting deceptions are Antichrist and the spirit of the Antichrist, or the False Prophet.

THE EMERGENCE OF ANTICHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM

Chapters Thirteen Seventeen and Eighteen of Revelation, and the seventh chapter of Daniel provide us with a picture of the emergence and fall of Antichrist and his kingdom. Within the overall picture, there are further visions that highlight various aspects of the working of Antichrist and his spirit, and the kingdom they are creating.

The First Beast – From Revelation 13

In Revelation 13, Antichrist is depicted as a beast rising out of the sea, which is a symbol of the turbulent nations of the world, and growing in his earthly influence through successive world empires. Although the beast represents Antichrist in his fullness, it is the emergence and influence of his kingdom on the religious and secular world that becomes the main topic.

“Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon [Satan] gave him [Antichrist] his power, his throne, and great authority.” [Rev 13:1-2].

The word ‘rising,’ is in the continuous tense, indicating the gradual emergence and development of Antichrist’s religious and secular kingdom. The beast, which is a symbol of Antichrist, is pictured with seven heads and ten horns with crowns on them. Heads symbolise authority, and seven, completeness. This tells us that Satan has endowed Antichrist with complete worldly authority. The horns are symbols of power, and crowns kingship, telling us that there are ten kings associated with the beast.

A parallel prophecy in Daniel 7 also describes a vision of beasts rising out of the sea. When we compare the description of the beast in Revelation with those in Daniel’s vision, we discover that the visions are complementary, and that the animal parts in Revelation 13 refer to kingdoms of the world.

“And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings...” “And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear...” “After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard...” [Dan 7:2-6].

“Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings [or kingdoms] which arise out of the earth.” [Dan 7:17].

The lion represented **Babylon**, the bear **Medo-Persia**, and the leopard the **Greek Empire**. Whereas Revelation 13 describes only one beast, having the combined characteristics of Daniel's first three kingdoms, Daniel proceeds further to describe a fourth beast, which represents the **Roman Empire**.

“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.” [Dan 7:7-8].

The fourth beast, or Roman Empire, had ten horns. Revelation 17 tells us that *“the ten horns which you saw are ten kings...”* [Rev 17:12-13]. Ten is a symbol of completeness of divine order, showing us that the completeness of the worldly power of the ten kings was ordained and controlled by God. In Daniel's vision, the 'little horn' represents Antichrist and his kingdom emerging from amongst the ten kings. The union of antichrist with the ten kings will be explained further in Chapter 3.

Combining the vision of Daniel with that of Revelation 13, we see Antichrist's kingdom rising and imparting his satanic characteristics to the four great kingdoms. The idolatries and paganism of Babylon, the Persian worship of multiple gods, and the humanism of the Greek Empire, were combined and manifested in their fullness in the Roman Empire. The final result of Antichrist's influence was that Rome became the home of the Harlot, the centrepiece of Antichrist's religious kingdom.

Daniel reveals a further facet of Antichrist's kingdom when he states, *“And there, in this horn, [the little horn] were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.”* [Dan 7:8]. In this case the *“little horn,”* refers to Antichrist's religious kingdom, and the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking pompous words relate to the Roman Catholic Church, and the Pope as her head.

This reading is paralleled in Revelation, where the beast, or Antichrist, is described in a similar manner, with *“a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.”*

“And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.” [Rev 13:5-6]. In biblical symbology forty two months, (3 ½ years, or 1260 days in Rev 11:3), is a symbolic number representing an indefinite time of tribulation, initiated and ended in God's timing.

The blasphemies perpetrated by the papacy and the Catholic Church against God, heaven, and the Church, will be enlarged on in Chapter 2, in the descriptions of “the Mother of Harlots,” and “Babylon the Great.”

Earlier we are told that one of the heads of the first beast appeared to be mortally wounded but made a remarkable recovery. ***“And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed.”*** [Rev 13:3].

Heads symbolise authority, indicating that the authority of the Catholic Church suffered a severe setback. This setback points to the Reformation triggered by Martin Luther in the Sixteenth Century, which threatened to divest the Catholic Church of her doctrinal authority. The Catholic Church responded by initiating the Counter Reformation, in which Renaissance architects, artists, and sculptors, were commissioned to create magnificent cathedrals and works of art that glorified the Catholic Church and the papacy. The Counter Reformation did so much to overcome the distrust created by the Reformation, that even now the Catholic Church is widely regarded as the world’s leading religious authority.

The Second Beast

“Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” [Rev 13:11-13].

Whereas John saw the first beast emerge from the sea, or the turbulence of the warring nations of the world, he saw another beast emerging from the more settled religious climate of the earth. In this case the religion that had settled and now dominated the earth was that of Rome. After she had conquered the nations of the world and had taken on the pagan idolatries of the nations she had conquered, the religion of Rome provided the foundation from which the Harlot and Antichrist’s religious kingdom emerged.

The second beast is called the **“False Prophet,”** in Revelation 16:13, 19:20, and 20:10, and in 1 John 4:3 he is referred to as ***“the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”***

Although the second beast has a separate identity, it operates in the presence of (or in union with) the first beast, or Antichrist. The False Prophet, or spirit of Antichrist, exercises all the authority of Antichrist as they work together to bring the whole world under Satan’s control. The Holy Spirit as an individual identity works in harmony with Christ in establishing His kingdom on earth. Similarly, the second beast as the spirit of Antichrist, works in union with Antichrist in establishing his world kingdom.

We are told that the spirit of Antichrist, or the false prophet, ***“causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.”*** [Rev 13:13-14].

In accord with the title “the False Prophet,” the spirit of Antichrist uses deceit and deception to convince people that the false church he has created is of God. He has used his power to compel people to make an image to the beast. An image is a visible representation, and the Roman Catholic Church is the visible representation of Antichrist’s work. It personifies the nature of the beast in that it reflects his surreptitious opposition to Christ’s Church, through idolatry, blasphemies, and lying counterfeits. It should be noted that Protestant churches have not been immune from the influence of the spirit of Antichrist, and that they too have been infiltrated with his contamination.

The reading goes on to say that the spirit of Antichrist was given power to breathe spiritual life into the image: ***“He was granted power to give breath [spiritual life] to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.”*** [Rev 13:15].

The image Antichrist has created by his spirit is not an impotent and neutral worldly institution. It has been endowed with enormous power to influence world affairs. In opposing Christ’s true Church, the spirit of Antichrist has used his power of deception to condemn true believers, and have them tortured or put to death. Millions of Christians were martyred in the Inquisition because they opposed the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and refused to disavow their beliefs.

To idolise or worship the image, or the INSTITUTION of the Catholic Church and its doctrines, is to unknowingly worship Antichrist its originator.

In his vision, John saw that the second beast ***“had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.”*** The two horns show us that the spirit of Antichrist has two power bases or areas of operation. We will see that Antichrist’s kingdom has a religious, and a worldly or secular component. The operation of the spirit of Antichrist is not limited to just bringing the Church under Antichrist’s control, but the whole world. In both religious and worldly realms the spirit of Antichrist appears benign and conciliatory, using people under his control to speak of world peace and social justice, but the actions he engenders are in accord with the nature of the dragon, or Satan.

The next part of John’s vision focuses on the spirit of Antichrist’s activity in the worldly realm of Antichrist’s kingdom, where his influence is so invasive that ***“all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*** [Rev 13:8]. The vehicle the spirit of Antichrist uses to bring the whole world under Antichrist’s subjection is the captivating influence of money.

The Mark and Image of the Beast

When we carefully study the reading below, we shall see that the spirit of Antichrist uses the captivating power of money to bring all mankind under Satan’s bondage, and that the implanted mark of the beast signifies that bondage.

“And he causeth [prepares or conditions] all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive [literally-- that he might give them] a mark in their right hand [signifying all that they do], or in their foreheads [all that they think]: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or [or alternatively] the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.” [Rev 13:16-17. (KJV)].

This reading says that ***“no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark.”*** A common misconception is that at the end of the age Antichrist, as a person controlling the world, will force people to receive a literal identifying mark on their hand or forehead. Without the mark being displayed at shopping outlets, people will be prohibited from buying or selling. However, when we examine the literal meaning of some of the words and phrases used in the reading, the true interpretation comes to light. i.e. ***Buying and selling so conditions a man that it becomes an inevitable consequence that he cannot buy or sell without having received the mark of bondage.*** The following analysis of the reading will confirm that this explanation is the correct one. It will also show that **all** have received the mark, and that it has to be **overcome**.

God invests those who are totally surrendered to Him with an invisible mark or seal on their foreheads, signifying that they belong to Him. E.g. ***“Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb***

standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads". [Rev 14:1-2]. In the same way, "*the mark of the beast*" is not a literal physical mark, but a figurative mark of bondage, signifying that the recipients are under Antichrist's control.

The reading says that the spirit of Antichrist "*causes all*"... "*to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads.*" The words "*causes all*" make more sense when an alternative meaning, "*conditions all,*" (from '*Strong's Greek/Hebrew Dictionary*') is used. Man is conditioned by the enslaving influence of buying and selling until he comes under the control of Antichrist. The literal translation of the words "*to receive*" is actually '*that he may give.*' The spirit of Antichrist conditions all, through the process of buying and selling, so that he might give them a spiritual 'mark,' signifying their bondage to him.

The word "*all*" is universal, meaning that all mankind has been conditioned to be given the mark. It is not so much something to avoid, because **all** have received the mark through the influence of buying and selling. Buying and selling is not the thing to be condemned, but the bondage and dependence it engenders. Our responsibility as Christians is to overcome, or get the victory over the influence of the mark. In Revelation, John records a vision of victorious saints who had gotten the victory over the mark, the image, and the name of the beast. "*And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.*" [Rev 15:2].

Satan uses the power of money to enslave mankind, so that unwittingly man is turned away from God and brought under his control. The continual practice of buying and selling engenders traits like covetousness, self-reliance and self-sufficiency, idolatry, avarice, worldliness, overriding ambition, dissatisfaction, and fear of the lack of provision. These traits have turned mankind from trusting God in meeting their needs, to seeking their security from the world and its financial supports, the very areas that are under Satan's control.

The mark is "*on their right hand,*" signifying a controlling influence on all that they do, and "*on their foreheads,*" or on their mental outlook.

The Name of the Beast

Notice from the reading that when Antichrist conditions all, it is not just so he can place a mark on our hand or forehead. It is so that he can give us "*the mark,*" OR "*the name of the beast,*" OR "*the number of his name.*" It is so that he can impart some of his traits to us, according to our openness in various areas.

In the bible, a name often relates to the attributes of a person. In receiving the name of the beast, a person takes on board some of the attributes of Antichrist. Persons bearing the name of Antichrist go their own way rather than submitting to Jesus as Saviour and Lord. They cater to their own carnal natures, engaging in lawless self works, and obeying the lusts of the flesh and the world. Such persons reject the faithfulness and power of God, and do not trust Him to meet their needs. Instead, in self dependence, they put their trust in their own ability, and the things of the world.

The Number of the Name of the Beast

The number of the beast is equated with his name, and so in the reading it is called "*the name or the number of his name.*" The reading then allots a symbolic number to the name. "*Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.*"

In biblical numerology, six is the number of man, because he was created on the sixth day. The phrase, “***number of a man,***” can be translated just as correctly as “***number of man,***” which creates an important distinction. The translation then becomes, “... ***the number of the beast, for IT IS THE NUMBER OF MAN:...***” Symbolically, six taken to the third dimension is the fullness of man.

The embracing of the fullness of man’s potential is the basis of the New Age philosophy called **humanism**. Our first notion of humanism may be that it is a rather harmless new age philosophy that promotes the abilities of man and his capacity to do all things by his own ability and efforts. But when we study it more closely we see its origin in Antichrist, and how strongly its man centred philosophy opposes Christianity and the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The ‘Collins English Dictionary’ definition of humanism reads: “*the denial of any power or moral value superior to that of humanity; the rejection of religion in favour of belief in the advancement of humanity by its own efforts.*”

Humanism is not neutral in its attitude to Christianity. It actively opposes the observance of Christian practice and ethics in our public institutions, endeavouring to bring about a Godless environment. The philosophy of humanism has pervaded every aspect of our society. When we look at the nature of man’s pursuits in areas like education, science, sport and recreation, entertainment, politics, and business, we see that they are man centred and glorify man and his abilities. The Christian viewpoint that we need God to guide us and meet our needs has been replaced with the philosophy that we can do all things without reference to God. Efforts have been made to prohibit formal prayer, and Christian teaching or ministry in public institutions. The acceptance of the humanistic philosophy and the Godless society it has promoted has done much to bring about the prophesied “falling away,” and the advancement of Antichrist’s kingdom.

Clearly Satan’s ploy in using the power of money to promote man’s self sufficiency, and turn his heart away from God has been very successful. Before leaving the earth Jesus remarked, “***I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.***” [John 14:30-31]. The majority of mankind have turned away from trusting God to meet every need, and have put their trust in man and the institutions that he controls. The glorification of man and the things he has created rather than God the Creator, is probably the most prevalent and yet unrecognised form of idolatry.

THE HARLOT -- THE CENTREPIECE OF ANTICHRIST'S RELIGIOUS KINGDOM

In Revelation, the symbolic title "Mother of Harlots," fitly describes the religious component of Antichrist's world wide kingdom that has deceived and captivated the inhabitants of the world.

UNVEILING THE GREAT HARLOT

Following the Thirteenth Chapter of Revelation there is a parenthesis, or break of three chapters, before returning to the topic of the disclosure of Antichrist and his kingdom. The emergence and fall of Antichrist's kingdom is further portrayed in the seventeenth to the nineteenth chapters of Revelation, where the language is particularly figurative.

We have concluded that the two horns of the beast represent two power bases, or components in Antichrist's kingdom through which he exercises his influence and power. One is religious, and the other secular or worldly, where trade and commerce, and the power of money, are the tools he uses to hold the nations of the world in captivity.

REVELATION 17

The Seventeenth Chapter of Revelation begins by describing the harlot, the centrepiece of Antichrist's religious kingdom.

"Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, 'Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." [Rev 17: 1-3].

The beast is the same beast of Revelation 13, who has been identified as Antichrist. The fact that the woman is sitting on the beast indicates that the harlot is being supported by the power of Antichrist.

The "*great harlot*" is a symbolic name for the counterfeit church and religion that Antichrist has created. Harlotry is a symbol of unfaithfulness to God, as in worshipping false idols and embracing false doctrines. "*Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them.*" [Judg 2:17].

We are told that the harlot "*sits on many waters.*" The "*many waters*" symbolise the nations of the world, indicating that her influence is so profound and world-wide, that kings, or world leaders, and all inhabitants are captivated by her influence.

The Revelation of the Harlot

One of the clues we are given to discover her identity is, "*Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains [Strong's -- alternatively, 'hills'] on which the woman sits.*" [Rev 17:9]. The seven mountains or hills, is a reference to the seven hills that surround Rome, telling us that the harlot's world influence is centred in Rome. The false church with its mysteries and false doctrines Antichrist has created is the Roman Catholic Church.

PLEASE NOTE: The following disclosures of the apostasies existing in the Catholic Church are not a criticism of the millions of devout Christians in her midst, but are a revelation of the anti-Christian elements in the Catholic institution itself.

John continues with his prophetic revelation of the harlot:

“The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” [Rev 17: 4-5].

John, as a prophet and the author of Revelation, was taken in the Spirit into “*the wilderness,*” which symbolises spiritual dryness and deadness, the essential climate for religious apostasy. The fact that the harlot is arrayed “*in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls,*” remind us of the regalia of the pontiff and his cardinals, and of the prodigious worldly wealth of the Catholic Church.

MYSTERY

The first part of the harlot’s title, “**MYSTERY,**” is evidenced by the many mysterious doctrines, liturgies, sacraments, and rituals, adopted by the Catholic Church. These elements have been incorporated into church services to create an aura of mystical spirituality that extends the senses beyond natural comprehension. The celebration of **Mass** is the clearest illustration.

The original Eucharist initiated by Christ was a simple ceremony of remembrance, where eating bread, a symbol of His body, and drinking wine, a symbol of His blood, reminds us of His sacrificial death for all mankind.

“...the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” [1 Cor 11:23-25].

The Catholic Church has changed the Eucharist from a simple commemoration of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, to a mystical realism in which Christ is present, and His actual body and blood are presented as sacrificial offerings. The Council of Trent (1545-63) declared that *“The same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, is present and offered in an unbloody manner.”* Two things should be noted.

1. In the observation of Mass, the simple remembrance ceremony has been changed into an actual participation in Christ’s sacrifice. The Catholic Church says, *‘In the Mass, no less than on Calvary, Jesus really offers His life to His heavenly Father...--’* The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism. And again, *‘...the Eucharistic celebration is the centre of the assembly of the faithful over which the priest presides. Hence, priests teach the faithful to offer the divine victim to God the Father in the sacrifice of the Mass...’* Vatican 11 - Pope Paul VI December 7th 1965.

There is no escaping the fact that by partaking in the Eucharistic celebration of the Catholic Mass, Jesus is being crucified again and again, and that His body and blood are being offered repeatedly. This blasphemy is refuted by Paul when he declared that Christ was crucified ONCE, and did not have to offer Himself repeatedly. ***“... not that He should offer Himself often... but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by***

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