

Scripture speaks of the antichrist and an antichristian power that will deceive nearly the whole world in the last days of earth's history. The Christian world feels certain that they understand the prophecies regarding the antichrist, when he will arrive on the prophetic scene, and where and how he will carry out his devilish work. Many eyes in religious circles are looking over to Jerusalem and anticipating that the "rebuilding of the temple" will provide the concrete conditions for the antichrist to arrive on the stage of action and carry out his evil work. While this popular view is generally accepted widespread throughout Christianity, it is interesting to note that the Bible indicates otherwise. Could it be that Satan has deceived the world and blinded many Christians from the reality that the antichrist and an antichristian power is already on the prophetic scene and has been actively at work for many centuries! Let's study God's Word and find out What God Says About…"The Antichrist."

TEST THE SPIRITS

1. **What does the apostle John instruct Christians to do?**

   "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but _____ _____ _____ whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." *1 John 4:1*

2. **According to Isaiah 8:20, what is the acid test for truth?**

   "To _____ _____ and to _____ _____: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." *Isaiah 8:20*

3. **What does Paul admonish believers to do regarding any religious teaching or practice?**

   "_____ _____ _____; hold fast that which is good." *1 Thessalonians 5:21*

4. What evidence does the apostle John give verifying that we are living in the last days?

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____; whereby we know that it is the last time." *1 John 2:18*

Note: *The word antichrist comes from the Greek word antichristos which means an opponent of the Messiah. Additionally, the term antichrist is made up of two words: anti and christos. Hence, anti can either mean against or in the place of christos—Christ. Therefore, according to the scriptures, the name antichrist doesn't depict one who violently opposes Christ, but one who is a subtle imposter of Christ. In John's day many antichrists were in the world indicating that the last days had already begun.*

5. From among whom does John say the antichrists departed? How does he indicate that they were false teachers?

"They went out from _____, but _____ _____ _____ _____ _____; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." *1 John 2:19*

Note: *The false teachers spoken of here as antichrists had originally professed to be Christians. The apostle John clearly indicates that, "they went out from us." The text does not reveal whether they formally withdrew their membership or whether they were disfellowshipped from the church. However, it is clear that they were no longer apart of the church and their life and teachings were in direct opposition to the truths and principles of Christianity.*

6. According to 1 John 2:22, whom does antichrists deny?

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that _____ _____ _____ _____? He is antichrist, that denieth the _____ and the _____." *1 John 2:22*

Note: *Antichrists are shrewd and work in a deceptive manner. While they don't violently oppose Christ, they introduce and teach doctrines that are contrary to the teachings of scripture. According to the apostle John, antichrists are liars. They deny that Jesus is the Christ while also denying the Father and the Son.*

7. What wicked spirit was already at work in John's day?

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of _____, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." *1 John 4:3*

Note: *According to 1 John 4:3, the apostle John indicates that the spirit of antichrist—denying that Jesus is the Christ—was already in the world and at work in his day. Therefore, this wicked spirit is not new because it was already being manifested during John's lifetime. Hence, we should be alert to the fact that this wicked spirit is present and operating in the antichrist today.*

8. How does John indicate that the believers were not defeated by the antichrists? Who is greater, God living in us or the antichrists in the world?

"_____ are of God, little children, and _____ _____ _____: because _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, than he that is in the world." *1 John 4:4*

9. According to 2 John 7, what is an antichrist also called?

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is ____ _____ and an antichrist." *2 John 7*

Note: *It's clear that antichrists are deceptive. It would do us well to always stay on guard to ensure that we are not deceived by this deceptive power.*

THE MAN OF SIN

Note: *The man of sin or the antichrist to which the apostle Paul speaks of in 2 Thessalonians was prophesied of by the prophet Daniel. He was also later prophesied of by John the Revelator. The man of sin does not stand alone, but is the head or representative of the massive apostate religious system that subtly deceives the world in the last days. This study is not designed to attack individuals or the motives of anyone within this false religious system, but to expose what this system and the head of this system represents in prophecy.*

10. Who does the apostle Paul say must be revealed before the second coming of Jesus Christ?

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and _____ _____ _____ _____ be revealed, _____ _____ _____ _____." *2 Thessalonians 2:3*

Note: *According to the apostle Paul's letter to the Thessalonian Church, the man of sin must be revealed or arrive on the prophetic scene prior to the second coming of Christ. The Thessalonian believers were to reject any letter or message purporting to come from Paul or his fellow laborers that taught that Christ's second coming was imminent. The church was not to expect Christ to return until the great apostasy spoken of in Daniel 7:25 would occur in the Christian Church and the man of sin be revealed. Historically, this occurred when the Roman papacy reigned for 1,260 years from 538 A.D. to 1798 A.D. during the Dark Ages. Christians today should anticipate the second coming of Christ when the man of sin is on the prophetic scene and is actively at work.*

11. Who does the apostle John say is lost?

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but _____ _____ _____ _____; that the scripture might be fulfilled." *John 17:12*

Note: *In John 17:12, Jesus refers to Judas Iscariot as the son of perdition. Judas was one of the original twelve disciples of Christ. Although he didn't violently oppose Christ, he was a subtle imposter as a disciple of Christ. In like manner, the man of sin, who is also called the son of perdition does not violently oppose Christ or Christianity. However, he is a subtle imposter of the Christian faith. Judas was deceptive, and his motives were not easily discerned. The man of sin is deceptive, and his motives are not easily discerned by the masses.*

12. Who does the man of sin claim to be?

[4]"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as _____ sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is _____. [5]Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" *2 Thessalonians 2:4, 5*

THE PANORAMA OF PROPHECY

Note: *In Daniel 2, God gave King Nebuchadnezzar a dream of a great image made up of four different metals (symbolized as earthly kingdoms) that rise, fall or divide from within successively. In addition, the king saw*

a stone, representing God's eternal kingdom, strike the image on its feet and break it in pieces. The four successive devaluing metals on the image represent a sweep of world history from Daniel's day until the end of the world. These earthly kingdoms will be overthrown by God's kingdom when Christ returns at His second coming. In Daniel 7, Daniel is given a vision of four great beasts of prey. These kingdoms correspond to the metals on Nebuchadnezzar's image, but adds additional details regarding the fourth kingdom, pagan Rome, which extends or morphs into papal Rome, now possessing a religious head (Daniel 2:40-43; Daniel 7:7, 8). Daniel 8 symbolizes the same kingdoms adding additional details. Incidentally, Daniel 2 provides the foundation for the prophecies of the book of Daniel. The other prophetic chapters in Daniel repeat or build on this foundation by using different symbolism and adding additional details.

13. How many different beasts did Daniel see in vision?

[2]"Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. [3]And _____ _____ _____ came up from the sea, diverse one from another." *Daniel 7:2, 3*

14. Which beast did Daniel see rise first from the sea?

"The first was like _____ _____, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it." *Daniel 7:4*

***Note:** The lion with eagle's wings, which corresponds with the head of gold on Nebuchadnezzar's image and has already been overthrown by the time we reach Daniel 8, represents ancient Babylon. The golden city of Babylon ruled the world from 605 B.C. to 539 B.C. Daniel 2:38 identifies Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, Babylon, as the first kingdom or head of gold on the image.*

15. Which beast did Daniel see rise second from the sea?

"And behold another beast, a second, like to _____ _____, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh." *Daniel 7:5*

***Note:** The bear raised up on one side with three ribs in its mouth, corresponding with the chest and arms of silver on Nebuchadnezzar's image and as the ram with two horns in Daniel 8:20, represents Medo-Persia. Medo-Persia overthrew Babylon and ruled the world from 539 B.C. to 331 B.C.*

16. Which beast did Daniel see rise third from the sea?

"After this I beheld, and lo another, like _____ _____, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it." *Daniel 7:6*

Note: *The swift moving leopard with four heads and four wings of a fowl, representing Greece, corresponds with the belly and thighs of brass on Nebuchadnezzar's image and the he goat in Daniel 8. The Kingdom of Greece, with Alexander the Great as its first king, overthrew Medo-Persia and ruled the world from 331 B.C. to 168 B.C. Daniel 8:21 identifies Greece as the third world kingdom.*

17. How does Daniel characterize the fourth beast? How does he point out a distinction between it and all the beasts before it?

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, _____ and _____, and _____ _____; and it had great _____ _____: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and _____ _____ _____ from all the beasts that were before it; and _____ _____ _____ _____." *Daniel 7:7*

Note: *The dreadful and terrible fourth beast represents pagan Rome. Its iron teeth indicates that it corresponds with the long legs of iron on Nebuchadnezzar's image in Daniel 2, and it is described as the "little horn" in Daniel 8. Incidentally, Daniel 8 uses the terminology of "little horn" to refer to both pagan and papal Rome. Pagan Rome overthrew Greece and ruled the world from 168 B.C. to 476 A.D. The Bible does not name the fourth beast, but it gives obvious clues that the iron monarchy of Rome is the fourth kingdom that ruled the world.*

Note: *Pagan Rome was not overthrown by another kingdom. It was too powerful militarily. However, eventually, pagan Rome became too large to adequately police its borders, and barbarian tribes swept down and broke up the pagan Roman Empire and divided it into ten divisions in 476 A.D. The ten divisions of Rome correspond with the ten toes on Nebuchadnezzar's image in Daniel 2. The ten divisions of Rome are as follows: Alamani (Germans), Burgundians (Swiss), Franks (French), Lombards (Italians), Saxons (English), Suevi (Portuguese), Visigoths (Spanish), Heruli, Vandals, and Ostrogoths. The Heruli, Vandals, and Ostrogoths are now extinct. They are symbolized in Daniel 7:8 as the three horns that the "little horn" plucks up by the roots.*

PAGAN ROME GIVES PAPAL ROME ITS POWER, SEAT, AND GREAT AUTHORITY

Note: *When Rome was divided in two halves—the west and east—due to becoming too large and disorganized to be managed as one Empire, Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire east to Constantinople, a city he named after himself. When Constantine left western Rome, he left his seat of authority. The Pope inherited the power, prestige, and titles of the Roman Emperors. One of these titles was Pontifex Maximus. Thus, pagan Rome gave papal Rome its "power, and his seat, and great authority" (Revelation 13:2).*

THE ANTICHRIST AND HIS SYSTEM

18. While considering the horns, what human traits does Daniel notice about this fourth beast?

"I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, and _____ _____ _____ _____ _____." *Daniel 7:8*

Note: *While considering the ten horns or ten kingdoms of the fourth beast, Daniel suddenly sees a little horn with "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things" rise among the ten horns of Western Europe and pluck up three horns or kingdoms by the roots (Daniel 7:8, 24). This power was unlike all of the other powers before it. It had a religious leader as the head of this system. It was a union of church and state in which the church controlled the state. The Pope of Rome was now Caesars successor and he had supreme authority! Papal Rome reigned for 1,260 years from 538 A.D. to 1798 A.D. in the period known in history as the Dark Ages. The papacy received a deadly wound in 1798, but its wound will be healed, and it will re-emerge as the dominant religious power in the last days.*

Note: *The little horn is new information that was not mentioned in Daniel 2. However, it is described in Daniel 8 as a "little horn." This terminology is used in chapter 8 to describe both pagan and papal Rome. Pagan Rome attacks horizontally (Daniel 8:9), while papal Rome attacks both horizontally and vertically (Daniel 8:10-12; 7:21). Papal Rome persecutes the saints of God, attacks the heavenly sanctuary, the truth, and it seeks to usurp God's authority! (Daniel 8:10-13). It has sought to change God's law and institute in its place, its own false religious day of worship—namely Sunday worship (Daniel 7:25).*

THE POPE ASCENDS TO THE PAPAL CHAIR

Note: *In 538 A.D., Emperor Justinian's decree went into effect, establishing the bishop of Rome as the head of all churches, the definer of doctrine, and*

the corrector of heretics. The Pope was now given the legal supremacy to reign and was recognized as having supreme authority. The Dark Ages began when the Pope ascended to power in 538 A.D. and ended in 1798 A.D. when the French General Berthier marched into the Vatican, took the Pope off his throne, and put him into exile where he died.

"Vigilius . . . ascended the papal chair (538 A.D.) under the military protection of Belisarius." *History of the Christian Church,* vol. 3, p. 327.

"In 1798 he (Berthier)…made his entrance into Rome, ABOLISHED THE PAPAL GOVERNMENT and established a secular one." *Encyclopedia Americana,* 1941 edition.

THE BEAST OF REVELATION 13

Note: *The first beast of Revelation 13 is identical to the little horn power of Daniel 7. This religious and political power which reigned during the Dark Ages, and received a deadly wound, will be healed in the last days. It will re-emerge on the prophetic scene and demand worship. It will be aided by the second beast of Revelation 13:11-17, and all the world will wonder after the first beast! For further study, please read Revelation 13 in its entirety.*

Many in the religious world are looking over to Jerusalem for a temple to be rebuilt and for the antichrist to arise over there. However, Bible prophecy predicts otherwise! The antichrist and antichristian power is already on the scene and is gradually regaining its power. Don't be deceived! According to prophecy, the antichrist—the Pope of Rome, arises in Western Europe and attacks the truth of the heavenly sanctuary. This apostate power has established a false sanctuary system, through the confessional box, and a false day of worship—Sunday. Instead of directing the world to confess their sins to Jesus, our great high priest in the heavenly sanctuary, it is calling the world to turn to the confessional box and confess their sins to the priest!

SUMMARY

The antichrist or antichristian power will deceive nearly the whole world in the last days of earth's history (Revelation 13:3, 8). The first beast of Revelation 13 is identical to the little horn of Daniel 7. This antichristian power ruled the world during the Dark Ages, received a deadly wound, but will re-emerge in the last days of earth's history, after its deadly wound is healed. The Pope of Rome is the antichrist and is the head of the antichristian false system of worship. Don't be deceived! Worship God!

19. Dear friend, are you willing to worship God only and reject the antichrist and his false system of worship? _____

Copyright © 2018 Pastor Brian McKinney. All rights reserved.