

The Antichrist Chapter 10 ANTICHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE

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Transcript

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The scope of the Apocalypse is indicated by its place in the Sacred Canon. Coming as it does right at the close of the Scriptures, we should naturally expect to find it outlining the last chapters of the world's history. Such is indeed the case. The Revelation is mainly devoted to a description of the judgments which God will yet send upon the earth. It furnishes by far the most complete description of the conditions which are to obtain during the Tribulation period. It treats at greatest length with the character and career of the Antichrist, who will be the "Rod" in the hands of an angry God to chastise recreant Israel and apostate Christendom. All of this is, of course, preparatory to the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, which will exist during the last of earth's dispensations. It is impossible to understand the Apocalypse without a thorough acquaintance with the books that precede it. The more familiar we are with the first sixty-five books of the Bible, the better prepared are we for the study of its sixty-sixth. There is little that is really new in the Revelation. Its varied contents are largely an amplification of what is to be found in the preceding scriptures. Each of its figures and symbols are explained if not on its own pages, then somewhere within the compass of the written Word. For Scripture is ever self-interpreting. Most of our difficulties with the Revelation grow out of our ignorance and lack of acquaintance with the earlier books. Daniel and Zechariah especially should be examined minutely, for they shed much light upon the various and prophecies of the Patmos seer. The Apocalypse not only reveals much concerning the person and work of the Man of Sin, but it describes his doom, as it also announces the complete overthrow of the Trinity of Evil. This, no doubt, accounts for much of the prejudice which obtains against the study and reading of this book. It is indeed remarkable that this is the only book in the Bible connected with which there is a distinct promise given to those who read and hear read its prophecy (Rev. 1:3). And yet how very rarely it is read from the pulpits of those churches which are reputed as orthodox! Surely the great Enemy is responsible for this. It seems that Satan fears and hates above every book in the Bible this one which tells of his being ultimately cast into the Lake of Fire. But "we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 2:11). Then let him not keep us from the prayerful and careful perusal of this prophecy which tells of those things "which must shortly come to pass." 1. We turn first to the sixth chapter of the Revelation, where a fourfold view is presented of the Son of Perdition. Just as at the beginning of the New Testament the Holy Spirit has given us a fourfold delineation of Christ in the Gospels, so at the commencement of His description of the

judgments of God on the earth He has furnished us with a fourfold picture of Christ's great opponent. We believe that the contents of the first four of the "seals" describe four aspects of the Antichrist's character, and also outline four stages in his career. First, he is seen aping the Christ of God as the Righteous One. The "white horse" on which he is seated, speaking of righteousness. Just as we are told in 2 Corinthians 11:14 that "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light," and "therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness," so the Antichrist will pose as the friend of law and order. Second, he is seen mimicking the Christ of God as the mighty Warrior. Just as the Lord Jesus at His return will make a footstool of His enemies, and trample in fury all who defy Him (Isa. 63:3), so the Man of Sin shall slay all who dare to oppose him. Third, he is seen imitating Christ as the Bread of Life, for the third seal views him as the Food-controller. Fourth, he is seen with his mask off, depicted as one whose name is Death and Hades, that is, as the Destroyer of men's bodies and souls. Let us see how the identity of this Rider of the various colored horses is established. In Revelation 6:2 we are told, "And I saw, and behold a white 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." Notice first, that he is here viewed as seated upon a "white horse." This is in imitation of the Christ of God, who, at the time of His second advent to the earth, will also appear seated upon "a white horse" (Rev. 19:11). Second, it is said that "a crown was given unto him." This at once serves to connect him with the first Beast—the Antichrist—of Revelation 13, for of him it is written, "And they worshipped the Dragon which gave power unto the Beast" (v. 4). Again; in Revelation 6:4 we are told, "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." Notice first, the last clause—"There was given unto him a great sword." This stamps him plainly as the pseudo christ, for of the true Christ it is written, "Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword" (Rev. 19:15). Second, it is said "power was given to him to take peace from the earth." So, too, of the first Beast of Revelation 13 we read, "And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and all nations" (v. 7). In the third seal he is viewed as the Food-controller, weighing out the necessities of life at famine prices. This, no doubt, corresponds with what we read of in Revelation 13:17. Finally, in the fourth seal he is named "Death and Hell." This double title removes all doubt as to who is in view. When God remonstrates with Israel for having made the seven-years treaty, He does so in the following language: "And your covenant with Death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with Hell shall not stand" (Isa. 28:18). Thus the Riders of the four horses of Revelation 6 are not four different persons, but one person presented in a fourfold way, as the Lord Jesus is in the four Gospels. Before we pass from Revelation 6 a few words should be added by way of amplification of our remarks above, namely, that in the first part of Revelation 6 we have outlined four stages in the Antichrist's career. The preparation of the Man Christ Jesus for His public ministry—the long years spent quietly at Nazareth—are passed over by the four Evangelists. So here in Revelation 6 the early days of the Man of Sin—in his "little horn" character—are not noticed. Under the first seal he is viewed as seated on a white horse, having a bow. The color of the horse and the fact that no arrow is seen attached to the bow, suggests bloodless victories, for he goes forth "conquering and to conquer." This first seal at once conducts us to the time when the Prince of Darkness poses as the Christ of God and presents himself to the Jews for their acceptance. He does not come out in his true satanic character, rather does he simulate the Prince of Peace. The first seal is parallel with Daniel 11:21,23, where we learn that he will gain the kingdom by flatteries and political diplomacy. But not for long will he fill this pacific role. War is in his heart (Ps. 55:21), and nothing short of universal dominion will satisfy his proud ambitions. As God has plainly warned, at the very time when men shall be saying, Peace and safety, "then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. 5:3). It is to this the second seal brings us. Here the

Antichrist is seen no longer upon a white horse, but upon a red horse. And in perfect accord with this, it is added, "And power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth...and there was given to him a great sword" (v. 4). Little wonder that he is called "the Destroyer of the Gentiles" (Jer. 4:7). At the time of his overthrow it will be exclaimed, "Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof?" (Isa. 14:17,18). Jeremiah 25:29 throws light upon this "great sword" which is given to him—"For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts" (read verses 15 to 33). In the third seal he is portrayed as the Harbinger of famine conditions. This is intimated by the change of the color of the horse: for "black" in connection with famine see Jeremiah 14:1,2 and Lamentations 5:10. The symbolic significance of the "black" horse is intensified by the figure of the "pair of balances in his hand" (compare Hosea 12:7, Amos 8:4-6). What follows describes the wheat being doled out at famine prices. But it is added, "See thou hurt not the oil and the wine." This intimates that the famine is by no means universal: yea, it suggests that side by side with abject suffering there is abundance and luxury. We therefore regard this third seal as denoting the Antichrist's persecution of the godly Jews which, from other scriptures we learn, will be the fiercest during the last three and one half years of his career. Revelation 13:17 makes it known that they who will not be suffered to buy or sell are the ones who refuse to receive his mark. These, of course, are the faithful remnant of the Jews. But they who do render allegiance to the Beast will not want—"oil and wine" shall be their portion. The fourth seal, plainly conducts us to the end of Antichrist's course. The fact that he is named Death and that we are told Hades (that which receives the soul) followed with him, makes known the awful doom which shall overtake this Son of Perdition and all his blinded followers—see Revelation 19:20,21. 2. The next allusion to the Antichrist is found in Revelation 9:11 where he is given a threefold appellation, namely, King over the locusts, The Angel of the Abyss, and the Destroyer. A few remarks upon the context are required if we are to expound, even briefly, the significance of these three titles. The majority of pre-millennial commentators are agreed upon the identity of the personage named in Revelation 9:11, though there is considerable difference of opinion among them concerning the meaning of the context. We can here only offer a few remarks on the preceding verses according to our present light and submit the reasons for our conclusions. The immediate context takes us back to the opening verse of Revelation 9 where a "star" is seen falling from heaven unto the earth, unto whom is given the key to the Bottomless Pit. This we believe refers to Lucifer, or "Day-star" (see Isaiah 14:12 margin). The reference, we think, is not to his original fall, but to what is described in Revelation 12:9. The fact that the key of the Abyss is given to him is in keeping with the fact that during the Tribulation period God allows him free rein and suffers him to do his worst. The R. V. correctly renders verses one and two as follows—"And there was given to him the key of the Pit of the Abyss. And he opened the Pit of the Abyss," etc., or, as it may literally be rendered, "the well of the Bottomless Pit." This expression occurs nowhere else in Scripture. The "well of the Bottomless Pit" is to be distinguished from the Bottomless Pit itself, mentioned in Revelation 9:11; 11:7; 17:8, 20:3. What the distinction is we shall presently suggest. Out of the well of the Bottomless Pit issued a smoke, so great that the sun and the air were darkened (v. 2), and out of the smoke came "locusts upon the earth." We regard these locusts as identical with the creatures referred to in the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2:1-11). By noticing what is said of them in Joel 2 and Revelation 9 it is at once apparent that they are no ordinary locusts. Joel says of them, "A great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it" (Joel 2:2). It is said, "When they fall upon the sword they shall not be wounded" (Joel 2:8). The fact that they issue from the Pit also denotes that they are supernatural beings. In the description furnished in Revelation 9 they seem to be a kind of infernal cherubim, for "the horse" (v. 7), the "man" (v. 7), the "lion"

(v. 8), and "the scorpion" (v. 19) are combined in them. Their number is given as two hundred thousand thousand. Who, then, are these infernal beings? No commentator that we are acquainted with has attempted an answer. It is therefore with diffidence that we suggest, without being dogmatic, that they are, most likely, fallen angels now imprisoned in Tartarus. We give three reasons which, in our judgment, point to this conclusion. First, we know from 2 Peter 2:4 that the angels which sinned were "cast down to Tartarus," and in Revelation 9:2,3 we are told there "arose a smoke out of the Pit...and there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth." Now, as pointed out, these infernal locusts issue from the well of the Pit," an expression occurring nowhere else in Scripture, and only the locusts are said to come from there. So also the term Tartarus is found nowhere but in 2 Peter 2:4. It seems likely, then, that the well of the Pit may be only another name for Tartarus (with which only fallen angels are connected), just as the Lake of Fire is only another name for Gehenna. Who else could these locusts be but the fallen angels? To say we do not know may savor of humility, but shall the writer be deemed presumptuous because he has sought to furnish an answer by comparing scripture with scripture? In the second place, it is surely significant that the "king" of these "locusts" is termed in Revelation 9:11 "the angel of the Bottomless Pit"! A title which is nowhere else given to him. Just as Christ, the Angel of the Covenant (Mal. 3:1—cf Isaiah 63:9, etc.) is, again and again, termed an angel in the Apocalypse (see Revelation 8:3, 10:1, etc.), so the Antichrist is here denominated "the Angel of the Bottomless Pit." And just as we learn from Matthew 25:31 that "the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him" (cf Matthew 24:31), so when the Son of Perdition is manifested, all the unholy angels will be with him! In the third place, let the language of 2 Peter 2:4 be carefully examined: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to Tartarus, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." It is to the last clause we wish to direct attention. Let it be compared with the 9th verse of the same chapter—"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." Wicked human beings are said to be reserved "unto the Day of Judgment to be punished." But this is not what is said of the angels that sinned, though, of course, eternal punishment awaits them as we learn from Matthew 25:41. 2 Peter 2:4 simply says they are "reserved unto judgment," and we believe this means that God is holding them in Tartarus until His time comes for Him to use them as one of His instruments of judgment upon an ungodly world. The time when God will thus use them is stated in Jude 6—it will be in "the judgment of the great day" (compare Revelation 6:17 for "the great day"). Confirmatory of this, observe that in Joel 2:11 the Lord calls the supernatural locusts "His army," then employed to inflict sore punishments on apostate Israel. If our interpretation of 2 Peter 2:4 be correct, namely, that it makes no reference to the future punishment of the fallen angels, this explains why the Lord in Matthew 25:41 when referring to future punishment was careful to mention them specifically. Returning now to Revelation 9:11 the Antichrist is here termed the "King over" the locusts. Let the reader pay careful attention to what is predicted of these infernal beings in Joel 2 and here in Revelation 9, and let him remember they number no less than two hundred millions, and then see if it does not throw new light on Revelation 13:4, where concerning the Antichrist the question is asked, "Who is able to make war with him?!" How utterly futile to engage in conflict one who commands an army of two hundred millions, none of whom are subject to death! In the second place, he is here termed "the Angel of the Bottomless Pit," a title peculiarly appropriate as the leader of the fallen angels; and, as well, a title which denotes the superhuman nature of the Son of Perdition. In the third place, we are here told that his name "in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon." This title serves to establish beyond a shadow of doubt the identity of this "King" of the infernal locusts, this Angel of the Bottomless Pit. The Hebrew and the Greek names signify the same thing in English—the Destroyer. It is the Destroyer of the Gentiles of Jeremiah 4:7, translated "Spoiler" in Isaiah 16:4 and Jeremiah 6:24. Suitable name is this for the one who

is the great opponent of the Savior. "Destroyer" is close akin to "Death" in Revelation 6:8. The reason why his name is given here in both Hebrew and Greek is because he will be connected with and be the destroyer of both Jews and Gentiles! But why give the Hebrew name first? Because the order in judgment, as in grace, is "the Jew first"—see Romans 2:9 and 1:16 for each, respectively. 3. "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the Bottomless Pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them" (Rev. 11:7). This is the first time in the Revelation that the Antichrist is seen in his character of "the Beast." The last scripture which we have examined serves at once to identify him. He is termed "the Angel of the Bottomless Pit," because in a peculiar sense the Abyss is his home. There he has been during all the centuries of this Christian era. In Acts 1:23 (cf chapter 3, Section 3) the Pit is called "his own place." Here the Beast is shown ascending out of the Bottomless Pit. What, then, is the Abyss? It appears to be the special abode of infernal creatures. As we have seen, out of its well issue the fallen angels. From it comes the Beast. And in it Satan himself is incarcerated for the thousand years (Rev. 20:3). The Abyss is quite distinct from Hades in which the souls of lost human beings are now being tormented; as it must also be distinguished from Gehenna or the Lake of Fire in which all the lost shall suffer for ever and ever. 4. We come now to Revelation 13. A lengthy paper might readily be devoted to its exposition, but as we have had occasion to refer to its contents so frequently in earlier chapters, we shall here be as brief as possible. The contents of this chapter center around two "Beasts." As to which of them represent the Antichrist there is a difference of opinion. The majority of those who have written upon the subject regard the first Beast as the Man of Sin, and with them we are in hearty accord. We shall devote our next chapter to a setting forth of some of the many proofs that the first Beast is the Antichrist. Here we shall take the point for granted. "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" (v. 1). There is here, as frequently in Scripture, a double reference. Two objects quite distinct though intimately connected are in view. We believe that this Beast which arises from the sea points to the Roman Empire revived and in its final form, that is, resuscitated and confederated under the form of ten kingdoms. In Daniel 7:3 we read, "And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." These four great beasts are interpreted in the verses which follow as four kingdoms. In Daniel 7:7 we are told this fourth Beast (the Roman Empire) "had ten horns." So the Beast of Revelation 13:1 also has ten horns. Each of the successive Beasts or kingdoms of Daniel 7 retained the territory of the previous one, though enlarging on it. In the symbolic description there furnished the first Beast is likened unto "a lion" (v. 4); the second to "a bear" (v. 5); the third to "a leopard" (v. 6). So also in Revelation 13 the Beast there is "like unto a leopard," has feet like "a bear," and has the mouth of "a lion" (v. 2). Thus we learn that the Roman Empire in its final form will include within its borders the territory controlled by the earlier Empires and will also perpetuate the dominant characteristics of the ancient Babylonians, Medo-Persians, and Grecians. But it is very clear from what follows in Revelation 13 that there is something more than the Empire here in view. In vv. 3-8 it is a person that is before us. We are satisfied that this same person is also described, symbolically, in the opening verses. As is frequently the case in the prophetic scriptures, the king and his kingdom are here inseparably united. Revelation 13:1,2 portrays both the Empire and its last Emperor. One of the proofs for this is found in Daniel 9:26,27, where (as we have shown in Chapter 9) the Antichrist is denominated "the prince" of that people who destroyed Jerusalem in A. D. 70. We shall therefore interpret here according to this principle. "And I saw . . . a Beast rise up out of the sea." In Scripture, the troubled "sea" is frequently a figure of restless humanity away from God. The Antichrist will come upon the scene at a time of unprecedented social disturbance and governmental upheaval. He will appear at a crisis in the history of the world. From other prophetic scriptures we gather that, following the removal of the Church from this earth, and some time before

Daniel's seventieth week begins, there will be a complete overthrow of law and order, both civil and political. All Divine restraint being removed, lawlessness will prevail. We have no doubt that Satan will designedly bring this about. It will create a situation beyond the diplomatic skill of earth's statesmen. This will provide the desired opportunity for the coming Superman, who will be a diplomatic genius. Just as many leaders today are satisfied that a League of Nations would be the best device for preserving peace, so in the day to come the Man of Sin will satisfy the world that this is the only solution to the baffling problems then confronting the Powers of earth. Thus will the Antichrist resurrect the old Roman Empire at a time of universal confusion and tumult. He will himself be the acknowledged head or Emperor, the last of the Caesars. Hence the double significance of this figure—"a Beast rising out of the sea." Out of a state of anarchy will come forth this might Despot, who will speedily arrogate to himself all authority, both Divine and human; and in the end it will be seen that he embodies a lawlessness even worse and more fatal than that out of which he sprang. A Beast indeed will he soon appear to be. Pregnant with meaning is this title. Having rejected God's "Lamb;" a Beast shall be the world's ruler. This will be God's reply to the satanic teaching of Evolution now so popular almost everywhere. The leaders of modern thought insist on the bestial origin of man, and so a Beast shall yet lead the majority of his generation to Perdition! "Having seven heads and ten horns." It is most significant that identically the same features are attributed to the Dragon in Revelation 12:3. He, too, is there said to have "seven heads and ten horns." This clearly implies his satanic origin: he will be a human replica of the Devil himself. As wrote the late G. H. Pember (from whom we have borrowed a number of valuable points), the Beast will be "the effulgence of the Antigod's glory, and the very image of his substance." We take it that the "seven heads" are symbolic of full intelligence, and the "ten horns" speak of imperial dominion. "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" (v. 2). Like the Beast rising up out of the sea of the previous verse, we believe the terms of this second verse have a double significance. First, as intimated above, they denote that the Empire will include the territory and preserve the dominant features of the earlier Empires. Second, they supply a figurative description of the Emperor himself. The Antichrist will combine in his personality the characteristics of the leopard (beauty and subtlety), of the bear (strength and cruelty), and of the lion (boldness and ferocity). "And the Dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority" (v. 2). This is the Devil's travesty of what God the Father will yet do to His Son:—"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him" (Dan. 7:13,14). "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" (v. 3). It is clear from a number of scriptures that during the early part of the second half of Daniel's seventieth week the Antichrist will be slain by the sword—cf. Isaiah 14:18,19; 37:7; Ezekiel 21:25 R. V.; Zechariah 11:17: see our comments on these in the closing portion of Chapter 6. It is equally clear that this wound of death will be healed (Rev. 13:4) and that the Beast shall again live (Rev. 13:14). Satan will be permitted to bring his son from the dead. This is no wild speculation of ours but a view which has been propounded by quite a number of devout students. In his "Coming Prince," Sir Robert Anderson said, "The language of Revelation 13:3,12 suggests that there will be some impious travesty of the resurrection of our Lord." It is useless to reason about it: we simply believe the record of Scripture upon it. The raising of the Beast from the dead will remove whatever doubt men may have entertained concerning his supernatural character. "All the world wondered after him" is the statement which immediately follows the reference to the healing of his wound of death. "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?" (v. 4). This cry of the world, "Who is like unto the

Beast?" is a travesty of the song of Moses. When celebrating Jehovah's overthrow of their enemies at the Red Sea, Israel sang, "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the Gods! Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders!" (Ex. 15:11). The additional exclamation, "Who is able to make war with him?" is evoked by the vast army of infernal creatures at his command, and by his own triumph over death in battle. "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies" (v. 5). This the one great distinguishing mark of the Antichrist—cf. Psalm 52:1-4; Isaiah 14:13,14; Daniel 7:11,20; 11:36; 2 Thessalonians 2:4, etc. But not for long will he be suffered to continue his God-defying course. Another forty-two months and his career shall be ended. This number—here designedly used by the Holy Spirit, rather than three and one half years or twelve hundred and sixty days—is a very significant one. Its factors are 6 and 7, which stand for man and completeness. It is man in his fallen condition, here the Man of Sin, fully manifested. Forty-two stands for intensified apostasy. Thus Numbers 33 gives the various stopping places of unbelieving Israel in the wilderness as forty-two in number. Judges 12:6 tells us that the number of the apostate Ephraimites which fell before the Gileadites were 42 thousand. See also 2 Kings 2:4 and 10:14. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all they that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain" (vv. 7,8, R. V.). The "saints" here mentioned are the godly Jewish remnant who will refuse to worship the Beast. Those "overcome" are they who disobeyed the command of Christ recorded in Matthew 24:16; those who obey will be preserved by God—see Revelation 12:6. Note how election is seen here: only they whose names were written from the foundation of the world in the book of life will be preserved from the unpardonable sin of worshipping the Antichrist—cf. Matthew 24:22,24. "And I beheld another Beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon" (v. 11). This brings before us the second Beast, called in Revelation 19:20 the False Prophet. He is the third person of the Trinity of Evil. As there is to be an Antichrist who will both counterfeit and oppose the Christ of God, so there will be an Anti-spirit who will simulate and oppose the Spirit of God. Just as the great work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ, so the one aim of the Anti-spirit will be to magnify the false christ (see Revelation 13:12). Just as the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was visibly attended by "cloven tongues like as of fire" (Acts 2:3), so we read of the Anti-spirit that "he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men" (v. 13). And just as it is the Holy Spirit who now quickens dead sinners into newness of life, so of the Anti-spirit we are told, "He had power to give life unto the image of the Beast" (v. 15). 5. "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb" (Rev. 14:9,10). This looks back to what we read of in the closing verses of the preceding chapter. "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name" (Rev. 13:16,17). This "mark" will be the official sign of allegiance to the Emperor stamped either upon the hand or forehead of his loyal subjects. It will be the satanic travesty of the "seal" which the angel will stamp on the foreheads of God's servants (Rev. 7:13). This "mark" on the persons of the subjects of the Beast will be, we believe, the name of the Devil, (cf. Revelation 13:4), as the seal on the foreheads of God's servants is defined in Revelation 14:1 as "having their Father's name written on their foreheads." Here in Revelation 14:9-11 we have one of the most solemn warnings in all the Bible. An angel from heaven will announce the terrible punishment which shall be visited upon those who honor the Beast. It is

set over against the threats of the Beast and the False Prophet, who will terrify men by the sentence of physical death for all who defy them. But here God, by His angel, declares that all who heed the Beast and his coadjutor will share their awful doom. This no doubt will strengthen the faith and patience of the saints, and enable them to endure unto the end. 6. "And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry, to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Rev. 14:19,20). The "Vine of the earth" refers, we believe, to the Man of Sin at the head of apostate Israel. This appellation points one more contrast. In John 15, we find the Lord Jesus saying, "I am the true Vine, ye are the branches." The true Vine, then, consists of the Christ of God and His people in fellowship with Him. Over against this is "the vine of the earth," which is the Antichrist and those allied to him, particularly, renegade Israel. In Deuteronomy 32 there is a reference to the "Vine of the earth" —"For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their Vine is of the vine of Sodom, and their clusters are bitter" (Deut. 32:31,32). That this is speaking of apostate Israel is clear from Deuteronomy 32:28 —"For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them." That the passage is speaking of apostate Israel in the days of the Antichrist appears from Deuteronomy 32:35 —"To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things which shall come upon them make haste" (Deut. 32:35). 7. In Revelation 15:2 there is a brief allusion to the Beast, in connection with the godly Remnant: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the Beast, and over his image, and over his mask, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass having the harps of God," etc. The reference is to those who had been slain by the Antichrist because they had refused to render him any honor or worship. The same company is seen again in Revelation 20:4. 8. Revelation 16 describes the "vial" judgments which are executed just before the end of the Tribulation. The Beast is noticed several times in the chapter. In v.2 we read, "And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the Beast, and upon them which worshipped his image" (v. 2). This is a foretaste of the grievous torments awaiting the worshippers of the Beast. Again in v.10 we read, "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the Beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness and they gnawed their tongues for pain." Here the Beast himself receives intimation of the doom awaiting him. In vv. 13 and 14 we are told, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet. For they are the sprites of demons, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Here we behold, in symbolic guise, each of the persons in the Evil Trinity. The figure of the "frog" is very suggestive. Frogs are creatures which love the darkness rather than the light: they wallow in the mire and filth: their croaking is heard in the dusk of twilight and by night. Thus they are an apt symbol of the persons in the Trinity of Evil. Their very form suggests inflation by pride. The reference here in Revelation 16:13,14 indicates the superhuman character of the False Prophet as well as of the Beast and the Dragon. 9. Revelation 17 calls for a lengthy exposition, so we must defer to a later chapter the consideration of its details. The central figures in it are "the great whore" and the Beast. While freely granting that, historically, the great whore has received its fulfillment in the Roman Catholic system, and while allowing that it will yet represent the whole of apostate Christendom, nevertheless, we believe that the ultimate reference is to apostate Israel. Here in Revelation 17 the "woman" is first seen sitting upon the scarlet colored Beast—the Antichrist in his imperial glory (Rev. 17:3); but later we see him suffering his ten kings to destroy her (Rev. 17:16). This accords perfectly with the dual relation of Antichrist to Israel: first

posing as their Benefactor (here seen in Revelation 17:3 supporting her), later standing forth as her great Enemy. The eighth verse (see our comments on it in Chapter 3, Section III, 6) is one of the scriptures which show that Antichrist is a re-incarnation of Judas. 10. Revelation 19:19,20 describes the end of Antichrist's career. We need not enlarge now upon these verses for we have already commented on them in Chapter 7. The final reference to the Antichrist is in Revelation 20:10 where we read of the Devil being cast into the Lake of Fire where the Beast and the False Prophet are, to be, with them, tormented for ever and ever.

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