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The Revelation of Jesus Christ

"What a Big Mouth You Have!"

13:5-10

More than one hundred passages of Scripture describe the origin, nationality, character, career, kingdom, and final doom of the antichrist.

Of his many titles, names, and designations, these are the top five:

1. The little horn - Daniel 7:8.
2. The prince who is to come - Daniel 9:26.
3. The one who makes desolate - Daniel 9:27.
4. The man of lawlessness - Second Thessalonians 2:3.
5. The beast out of the sea - Revelation 13 & 17.

Other than Jesus he is the most prominent figure in Bible prophecy.

The title antichrist is found only five times in the New Testament and all of them are in the writings of John.

Anti as a prefix means *against, opposed to, instead of, or in place of*. He will be all those - against Christ, opposed to Christ, setting himself up instead of Christ and in place of Christ.

We talk about the president of the United States as having an administration. It describes how that person ran or will run the country during their time holding the highest office in our nation.

We're in the section of the Revelation that introduces us to the coming world leader. He's the man we call the antichrist. Beginning with verses five through ten we see his administration during his time of governing.

Revelation 13:5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

John doesn't say it but I think it is implied that it is the dragon, Satan, who gives the antichrist "a mouth speaking great things." We saw in our last study how the antichrist will be energized by Satan.

The antichrist will do all three things Satan unsuccessfully tempted Jesus to do in Matthew four:

1. He will perform miracles to serve himself.
2. He will worship Satan.
3. He will put on a show for the world to wonder after.

Those "great things" he speaks will be "blasphemies." Describing the same man and his words, the prophet Daniel said,

Daniel 7:25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High...

Remember, it will be no secret that God is pouring out His wrath upon a Christ-rejecting planet. The Gospel will have been taken to every person on the earth. The 144,000 Jewish evangelists, who cannot be harmed, will be preaching. Angels will be declaring God's messages from the atmosphere. And the two witnesses - perhaps Elijah and

Moses - will have been on the earth performing miracles for three and one half years.

The antichrist will have captured and killed the two witnesses. Their subsequent resurrection is embarrassing to his administration. But at some point he is assassinated only to himself rise from the dead. It gives credibility to his boastings and blasphemies against God.

He will be given “authority to continue for forty-two months.” God has prescribed the term of his administration. Forty-two months is three and one half years. This is the last half of the seven year Tribulation.

Revelation 13:6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

Anything and everything coming out of “his mouth” is blasphemy against God. What is blasphemy?

In the Bible you read about the blasphemy of (or against) the Holy Spirit. It is called the unpardonable sin. Since the Holy Spirit’s ministry is to reveal Jesus Christ to a person’s heart, if that person continually rejects Jesus he blasphemes the Holy Spirit. If that person dies having willfully rejected Jesus he or she is dead in trespasses and sins. They are lost forever; their sin unpardonable after death. The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is the continued, obstinate rejection of the Gospel.

Blaspheming God is speaking boastfully or pridefully against Him. It is ignoring the clear revelation of God and Who He is in favor of a humanistic emphasis.

The antichrist has a three-point plan for blasphemy:

1. First, he will “blaspheme [God’s] name.” God’s name means His nature and character. The antichrist will deride the nature and the character of God. He might point out the judgments of God as indications God is wrathful and to be resisted.

2. Second, he will blaspheme God's "tabernacle." This seems like a reference to his act of entering the holy of holies in the Tribulation Temple and defiling it with his presence.
3. Third, the antichrist will blaspheme "those who dwell in Heaven." As mentioned earlier, it will be obvious there is a conflict between those dwelling on the earth and those whose dwelling is in Heaven. I get the sense that Milton captured when he had Satan say, "Better to rule in Hell than serve in Heaven." The antichrist won't deny there is a God; he will defy Him and call upon those who dwell upon the earth to do the same.

Revelation 13:7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

For a time the antichrist will seem to succeed in his war against God because God's earthly people will be "overcome."

One thing to remember is that martyrdom is never a defeat. It is the ultimate victory of faith in the face of opposition.

The antichrist's reach will be global. Other than the Jews we read about earlier in the Revelation who are supernaturally protected out in the Judean wilderness, every other believer on the earth will be a target of the antichrist and his agents.

Revelation 13:8 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.

As we will see a little later in this chapter, at some point mid-trib those who dwell on the earth will be given a choice: Worship antichrist or be cut-off from society (at best) or killed (at worst). The antichrist will hijack the world's economic system by which everyone buys and sells. You will no longer be able to conduct any transactions without swearing your personal allegiance to him.

I try to be careful to not say that the current barcode, RFID technology is the economic system of the Revelation. Nevertheless you can see how such a system could be implemented overnight and how eventually we would all have microchips implanted or even tattoos that would allow us to conduct all business.

That system is not the mark of the beast. He hijacks it and it is swearing allegiance to him that constitutes defection from God.

John mentioned “the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” The translation follows the order of the Greek writing. Most scholars will tell you that the phrase “from the foundation of the world” describes to the writing of the names in the book of life rather than to the slaying of Jesus on the Cross.

It’s an important distinction because it tells us that everyone’s name is written in this book in eternity past. Every person conceived is listed. Because God anticipated Jesus dying for the sins of the human race and providing an adequate atonement for everyone, He could include every name. When someone dies having rejected Jesus, their name is blotted out of the book of life.

When the book is opened at the Great White Throne Judgment, the folks standing there are nonbelievers whose names cannot be found. Sad beyond words! Their names were once listed and could still have remained in the book of life; but they chose to reject God’s offer of eternal life and are lost forever.

Revelation 13:9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

We recognize this phrase from earlier in the book but immediately notice a difference. In the opening chapters it read, “he that has an ear to ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” The dropping of the Spirit and the churches is one more indication that the church is not on the earth at this time.

It’s not definitive proof the rapture will occur before the Tribulation begins. But it is consistent with a pretribulation rapture of the church.

You must account for the fact that the church is not mentioned after chapter four and until the Second Coming of Jesus in chapter nineteen. We are obviously missing in action from the events transpiring on the earth during the entire seven years.

Will “anyone have an ear?” Yes. The Great Tribulation is a time during which many multitudes are saved. Most will be martyred, but they will be saved.

Revelation 13:10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

This is a chant of victory. You can almost hear it on the lips of the Tribulation martyrs. As the agents of the antichrist capture them, and sentence them, and execute them, you can hear them say to their persecutors, “He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword.”

It doesn’t sound as gracious as the words of Stephen, the first martyr. Remember he asked the Lord to forgive those who were stoning him.

In the Great Tribulation, by the time these believers are being martyred, it will be too late for their persecutors to be saved. The agents of the antichrist will have already sworn their irrevocable allegiance to him. Once they take his mark they cannot be saved.

The martyrs are thus sentencing their persecutors even as their persecutors are carrying out the antichrist’s sentence upon them. Read in that light their words are not mean spirited or vindictive. They are victorious. They are a simple and chilling revelation of the truth of the matter.

Thus John adds, “here is the patience and faith of the saints.” Their “patience” is the certainty that Jesus is coming back. Their “faith” is their faithfulness to live accordingly and to accept whatever earthly fate befalls them in light of their eternal future.

Tribulation saints will be overcome but they will simultaneously be overcomers. God allows us to be overcome. Think Job and you will agree. Sorrow... sickness... and suffering are allowed to overcome us.

In them we become overcomers. Through patience and faith we look past our circumstances to Christ.

That is the real message of the Revelation. As interesting as it is to discuss the antichrist and his mark, we are missing the mark if we do not come away from the book with a renewed peace in our hearts that all things are working together for the good.