

The SCROLL
of REVELATION
given to the
Apostle JOHN

explained by
a servant of God

PART SIX:
Close-ups:
Witnesses, Dragon, and Beast

(11:2-13:18)
February, 2003

Close-up :
Three and One-half Years
(11:2b-3, 12:6, 12:14, 13:5)

Chapters 11-13 tell us the **time and political framework** of the entire scroll of Revelation. Though technically set in the midst of describing the sixth and seventh trumpets, the events of these chapters talk of a period of three and one half years. And I believe that from chapters 6 to 19, that is essentially all the time that is used up.

Why three and one half years? The answer to this goes back to the Book of Daniel, and his fascinating prediction in chapter 9:24-27. There he talks of 490 years of specific history for the Jewish people. It is clear by comparing his prophecy with subsequent events that 483 of these years have already been fulfilled. He leaves open, however, a seven-year period at the end of all history (9:27), which will take mankind to the consummation of all things. It is in the middle of that seven year period that the *abomination of desolation* triggers the final horrors of planet earth. Jesus gave His approval to that very interpretation in Matthew 24:15, “When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place...” then shall be incomparable tribulation. Yes, in Jesus’ day, the abomination was *still future*, although previews of it are acted out in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes (much more about him, to come). Revelation gives us the details of what Jesus and Daniel prophesied.

Close-up :
The Two Witnesses (11:3-14)

Prophets of God (11:3-12). Has the world then recently come to a measure of peace in the first half of Daniel’s seven years? Has the conquering prince of the first seal brought, along with his destruction, some measure of hope by his conquests, and subsequent deal with Israel? Does a stable Middle East seem possible at last? If so, this is only half of the truth, and for only half of the “week”. The rest of the story is recorded in the chapters before us. Evil. War. And during this three and one half years, called here “42 months,” the *Truth* is being preached also, by some very unpopular preachers. It is Zechariah who first sees these two witnesses. Let’s not let the imagination run too wild with them. They are two men, brought back to earth. They are probably men who never died to begin with, as Enoch and Elijah. They have been standing before the Lord these many aeons of time (11:4, and Zechariah 4:14), waiting to do this one job, then die, then be caught up to the Lord again. In the midst of a world gone mad with *pleasure* on one hand, having succumbed to the antichrist’s security package, and then mad with *chaos* as his rule continues, these two men tell the truth as it is about the “beast”, about God, and the plan of salvation .

They prophesy the **entire tribulation period (11:3)**, working great miracles alongside the false prophet’s signs and wonders **(11:5,6)**. John connects them solidly to Zechariah’s prophecy **(11:4)**. They are indestructible for as long as they need to be **(11:5)**. But eventually even these great saints are killed by antichrist **(11:7)**, and left to die **(11:8)**.

Note in passing **the name given** to the city where their death will be dramatized: Sodom and Egypt **(11:8)**! Now that’s rather shocking in the light of God’s future plans for Israel and Jerusalem. First, we know it is Jerusalem of which John speaks because that is where “our Lord was crucified” **(11:8)**. It *is* a “great city” by any measure, since it has been around for thousands of years and still thrives. Taken by David over 3000 years ago from the Jebusites, it has

been the hope of every true Jew from the time of its being made the capital of Judah and then of all Israel. To this day, using Zechariah's terms (Zechariah 12:1-3) , it is a "burdensome stone" to the world, yet a city incredible in its religious and political importance. Three major religions claim it. Nations love it and hate it with a passion. Oh, a great city!

But **spiritually, says John, it is called Sodom and Egypt!** If these are "spiritual" titles, they must be given *by the Spirit*. It is God Who sees fallen and Christ-rejecting Jerusalem as worthy, like Sodom and Egypt , of destruction. Yes, it was Ezekiel, filled with that Spirit of God, who compared the wicked Jerusalem of his day to *wicked Sodom* of a former day (Ezekiel 16:46-47). His conclusion: Jerusalem was worse! The same prophet, chapter 23, speaks of the harlotry of Judah while in her younger days *in Egypt*. She who should have known the most, loved God the least, and is therefore worthy of these great judgments she shall incur.

So **utterly rejected** will the prophets be by the men of this world, including the Jews of Jerusalem, that upon their death TV cameras will capture their dead bodies around the clock for three and one half days (**11:9**). The world will be utterly delighted, even throwing parties over the fact that these men are now dead (**11:10**). Interesting that there is such revelry in the midst of tribulation days. The hardness of men's hearts knows no bounds. They actually love and serve antichrist to the bitter end, regardless of the mess he is causing in the world.

Then the prophets are resurrected, as was their Lord (**11:11**). It seems that this too is televised ("their enemies saw them"), and is followed by a killer earthquake (**11:12-13**). There is actually some repenting going on after this wild series of events, all of which seem to be a part of the "2nd woe" or 6th trumpet (**11:14**).

There follows quickly **trumpet seven, aka woe three (11:15-19)**. In 10:7, after John receives a revelation he cannot share , an angel makes it clear that the sounding of the **7th trumpet** will be the end of the "mysteries" of God. After that, revelation will flow freely between God and man. No more secrets to be dug into.

The seventh trumpet, or third woe, is closely related to the sixth seal, and the seventh bowl. It is important to continue to see the interrelatedness of these manifestations. There is constant repetition, constant intensification. All seven trumpets are in the latter stages of the six seals. So we are actually ending the story *again* as in chapter 6. Note the similarities between seals, trumpets, and bowls at this juncture, alongside Matthew 24:

Olivet Discourse Matthew 24	SEAL 6, Rev. 6	TRUMPET 7 (woe 3) Rev. 11	BOWL 7 Rev. 16
	12: earthquake	19: earthquake	18: earthquake
29: sun, moon, stars	12-13: sun, moon, stars		
29: powers of heavens shaken	14: sky recedes Earth rolls up Mountains/islands flee		20: mountains/islands gone
		19: lightning, noises, thunder, hail	18, 21: lightning, noises, thunder, hail
30: tribes of earth mourn	15: kings hide from wrath	18: wrath	19: wrath
30: Son of man comes on clouds	16: the Lamb	18: God reigns	

More details of the “very end”:

(11:15), The announcement. The world belongs to Jesus. He must reign now. Then (I Corinthians 15:24) He delivers the Kingdom to the Father, reigning with Him forever.

(11:16-17), *The response in Heaven* is from, among others, the 24 elders. They are seen in a similar situation in 19:4 as the same announcement is made couched in marital terminology. The event is one: Jesus is coming. *The response on earth (11:18)* is a bit different as the nations are absolutely enraged. Chapter 19 speaks of this human factor also. Then there is *the response “under the earth”*. This is the *time of the dead*, that is, it is finally the time for saints to rise and be with Jesus, as also in chapter 19.

(11:19), The temple of God, discussed at length in Part Five, is “opened” in Heaven. But significantly, it stays there. 1000 years later (21:5) the Dwelling Place of the Father will actually *come to the new earth*.

Close-up : The Woman, Her Children, the Dragon (12:1-17)

So, Jerusalem has a **Jewish temple and a Gentile population**. God has a witness represented well by two Elijah-like prophets. What else is going on for these “one thousand two hundred and sixty days”? Chapter 12 is given to show us just that.

Review. I believe we have seen this “woman” picture before, in chapter 7 (see there). More details are given here, but the overall pattern is the same. First there is something very Jewish that appears. The woman that is clothed with the sun, moon, and stars (**12:1**) must be the same as what Joseph saw and related to his family way back in Genesis 37:9-10. This is Israel. In chapter 7 Israelites from every tribe are sealed. Later in both chapters is seen “another” group, the “rest of her offspring” who keep the commands of God (**12:17**), have the testimony of Jesus (**12:17**), and who washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb (7:14). That other child certainly matches every description of *the church* available to us. Here in chapter 12 we see more of the church’s *washing* process, and how they come out of the great Tribulation through untold suffering.

Here is the first introduction to the **source of all the Jewish and Christian trouble**: a “fiery red dragon” with seven heads and ten horns. We know that neither the woman or the dragon here are to be taken as literal, but every piece of information given is valuable. The seven heads and ten horns will be fully explained in chapter 17, and will be seen again as a part of the “beast” known as antichrist in chapter 13. But the identity of this chapter’s monster is spelled out in verse 9: This is Satan.

Though one is tempted to see **Jesus and Mary** in the beginning of this passage, the imagery will not work for the latter portion of the chapter. The woman, after giving birth (**12:2**), flees into the wilderness (**12:6**), and is seen later as the mother of others, who follow Jesus (**12:17**). This does not fit the reality of Mary’s life, but does describe Israel, who first brought Jesus into the world, then an elect people. The continued hatred of Satan for Israel through the centuries is documented history.

So Satan tries to devour Jesus, through **King Herod (12:3-4, Matthew 2:16-18)**. But the King to be is born anyway (**12:5**). That same Satan tries, during the Tribulation, to devour the Elect (**12:15**). The suffering church of verses 7-12 overcomes this assault by being faithful until

the death. No rapture is hinted at here.

Basic to the understanding of the chapter is the **fall of Satan**. It is mentioned in verse 4. One third of the angelic host is thrown to the earth. This is further explained in **12:7-9**. There is a heavenly battle between the good and evil angels. The evil ones lose and are cast out of the heavenly realm. This is what Jesus “saw” predictively (Luke 10:18). This is also what Daniel saw in his prophecy (Daniel 8:9-10). In that vision, the “little horn” aka the man of sin grows up to “the host of heaven” , and is able to bring “stars” (Biblical symbol for angels) to the ground.

So, **war in heaven**, conflict on earth. The man of sin is released from his place in the pit (chapter 13 and 17) and Satan, cast to the ground, uses him to rise to power here (**12:10-12**), having lost it in heaven. Israel is protected (**12:16**), experiencing Christ for the first time. Saints are scattered , defeated, (Daniel 7:25 and Revelation **12:11**) because they are ready to go and be with Jesus.

In the telling of the story, **behind-the-scenes truths** come out:

12:10, The accuser: Satan and his accomplices, we are told , use the mechanism of accusation against us daily. We see this working itself out in the life of Job, and know that it has a reality we must also confront. He accuses us because he himself is guilty. So when he comes to earth, his desire to hurt the people of God is foremost on his mind.

12:11, The defense of the believer: What Jesus did for us, and our constant talking about it, and our seeking first His Kingdom until the day we die, *that* is the victory!

12:12, Such hatred, stored up for such quantities of time, is lethal. Satan has more than Christians to overcome in his “short time.” He has to unravel the predetermined will of God in three and one half short years. He *knows* God has never been wrong about anything He has predicted, but in his great pride he will hope for one exception to the rule.

12:13, 14, His first task is to go after Israel, the apple of God’s eye, the heart of his plans for humanity. The special 144,000, as noted in chapter 7, are “lured” away to the wilderness, loved by Jesus, and protected by Him. They are taken to a place seemingly by airlift where they cannot be touched by Satan’s rage. How long? Three and one half years, the entire length of the Great Tribulation.

12:15-16, Desperate, frustrated, the enemy takes measures to **flood**, literally, the hiding place of the Jews. This could well be what is going on in Turkey, Iraq, and Syria, with the control of water for the Tigris-Euphrates, or some such vast water supply (see part five). But by an earthquake or another natural phenomenon supernaturally timed, water meant to flood the wilderness retreat will be diverted.

12:17, Description of the believer : Just like the Antiochus of ancient history, an angry frustrated God-hater will find someone else upon whom to vent his fury: The Church. Like the true Jew, we are those who “keep God’s commandments”, as John loved to point out in his epistle (eg I John 1:3). We are also those who have the testimony of Jesus Christ. This is no end-time faction called “tribulation saint”. This is me. This is you. This is the church of God.

Close-up :

The man of sin and his helper (13, 17:7-17, 19:17-21)

Perhaps the most obvious of the long-term background descriptions is the one regarding “**antichrist.**” It is proper so to refer to him, but John never does, in Revelation. He here calls

him **“the beast.”** In Daniel 7, he is the **“little horn ”** on the final of a series of beasts in his prophecy. That horn rises up to supplant some of the ten horns originally on that beast. It is this conquering horn that makes war against the saints and prevails against them (Daniel 8:9-12). He controls the beast of which he is a part.

But in Revelation **13:2**, the same man is described in terms of ALL the animals in Daniel’s vision. He is especially reminiscent of the ferocious **“fourth beast.”** Notice that both the revelator (**13:1**) and Daniel (Daniel 7:1-8) see ten horns, and they both see seven heads. While in Revelation the seven heads are on one creature, it takes four creatures in Daniel: The lion has one, the bear has one, the leopard has FOUR, and the fourth creature has one. Seven heads. Note also that John says the beast is *like* a lion, bear, and leopard. That is, he is like the three beasts of Daniel. Then there is the “mouth” given the beast (**13:5**), as in Daniel 7:8, 11, 20, 25. He continues 42 months (**13:5**), paralleling Daniel’s “time, times, and half a time.” (7:25). He overcomes the saints in both descriptions (Daniel 7:21, 25 and Revelation 8:24) . And he receives worship (Revelation **13:4**, Daniel 8:11). There is no question that both visions speak of the same offender.

He sits in the Temple claiming to be God, according to Paul, II Thessalonians 2:4. Daniel 8:11 discusses the way a certain prince, not necessarily the final world ruler, will take away the daily sacrifice, i. e. break the covenant with Israel, as in Daniel 9:27: “In the middle of the week (seven-year period) he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.” Then, after that man, comes one who makes desolate. It seems in that Daniel passage that the man of sin picks up where the “Prince” leaves off. We conclude from his aversion to worship rituals that from then on, worship is to be centered on Satan’s man only, much like in the days of the Roman Emperors. In Revelation **13:8, 14**, worship of the Beast is seen, and by **13:15**, it is required by law.

In Daniel 8, he is a latter-day outgrowth of **one of the 4 successors** of Alexander the Great. This means that he can only come from somewhere within the ancient Greek Empire: southeastern Europe, the Middle East, Northern Africa. A most impressive clue!

Paul knows him as **“the man of sin.”** Once more it is easy to get carried away with imagery and history, much of which can fit. But when it’s all over, this man and his partner are thrown into a lake of fire (19:20). Literal lake. Literal man. Literal partner. In Scripture it is nearly always better to take the Word as it is. A close study of Daniel and II Thessalonians reveals that only ONE man is being talked about here. His profile is laid out so clearly that no end-time saint will have any trouble recognizing him. Yes, previews have shown up in men like Hitler and any number of Popes, but one man is still to come. Let no one write him off before his time. *Everything* written of him will be fulfilled.

What of the **numbers** describing the “beast from the sea” ? (**13:1**) “Seven” and “ten”. The seven seems to be world empires and/or mountains, as in chapter 17, where the same beast is described in his relationship to Mystery Babylon (17:10). Traditionally, Christian scholarship has pointed to Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and revived Rome as the empires that have ruled mankind with their severe politicians and religious poison. A closer look at Daniel 7 reveals another possibility. We’ll look at it shortly.

Whoever the past kings/kingdoms are, this person represents them **all in one man**, one final rule. The *ten* corresponds to Daniel’s “ten toes” and the “ten horns” of the beast of Daniel 7, and the ten horns of John’s later revelation in chapter 17. There is general agreement that

there is a ten-nation confederation, perhaps akin to Common Market nations, that holds the final rule of this planet with the “beast.” (17:13)

He appears following a **falling away** from the faith, a time when the world will easily believe anyone who will save it from its mess (II Thessalonians 2:3). He is **Satan-inspired (13:2)**, as Christ was Spirit-inspired. He dies, but is resurrected, as was Christ. The world accepts him as its own, anticipating Christ’s reception when He returns. As to the **blasphemies** that are said to come out of his mouth (**13:5**), this point is underscored in Daniel 7:8, 11, 25 and 11:36-37. Paul makes note of it in II Thessalonians 2:4. His **persecutions** are successful (**13:7**), and are the reason for a great populating of heaven during this 42-month period (7:9-14). He not only has authority over the world, but over the saints! This too is borne out in Daniel, 8:24.

He will be the **object of worship**, as stated above, aided by a false prophet described in 13:11-18. All will be commanded to “make an image” of the beast, perhaps something as simple as watching him on television. Those who do not worship his image must die. Perhaps, by then, TV will have become fully interactive.

He “was” and –in John’s time, AD 90, he “is not.” (17:8) Here is the crowning mystery, explained to us by John’s accompanying angel in chapter 17. For although chapter 17 is often considered to be “all about Babylon”, a full 9 verses, and parts of 3 others, concern the beast by which Babylon is supported the very beast introduced in chapter 13.

The Revelation 17 beast is “full of names of blasphemy.” 17:3, “having 7 heads and 10 horns.” This corresponds exactly to 13:1. It is the man of sin and his domain. Notice that he supports Mystery Babylon until nearly the end, when, perhaps out of jealousy, he destroys her with fire. (17:16) He wants all worship to center on himself.

The **truly enigmatic** portions of this passage begin in 17:8. Let’s analyze .

17:8, paraphrased, could read, **“He once existed, but is not among us now.”** He will, some day, ascend out of the bottomless pit. In my opinion, this is a perfect fit with II Thessalonians 2:7: “The mystery of lawlessness is *already at work*.” Only *he who is restraining*, that is, the angel of the bottomless pit as in Revelation 9:1-2, will do so until he is taken out of the way. (See on chapter 9) Then the lawless one will be revealed! And his coming, 17: 9, is according to the working of Satan. That is, we will have to have a full-scale resurrection from the dead. God will send delusion on the world so that they truly understand the importance of this historical figure, and see him resurrected , and believe he is from God. John says it like this: “Those who dwell on earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life.” (17:8)

He was. He is not. Yet he is! He lived, he’s not with us now, but **he is waiting** somewhere, under restraint. And Paul says, the mystery of iniquity is ALREADY working. That means the person has ALREADY died. *In New Testament days, he has already died*, and is waiting to be revealed! Clear analysis of the text frustrates the notion of a modern man rising to power, being shot, and coming back to earth immediately.

13:3 mentions a **head wound** that is healed. But read more carefully. It says, “one of his heads.” This is not talking about the man of sin’s head, but one of the heads of the 7-headed beast. This is a picture. The animal is not a real animal, and the sword-wound is not a real sword wound. All are pictures. Yes, these are kings that have lived in history, and one of them dies, but not necessarily by a “sword” or bullet to the head! (In fairness, though, one of the seven rulers, Tiglath-Pileser, *did die by a sword wound*, see later)

Back to chapter 17, and the mystery unfolding: verse 10 says there are seven kin

Five of them have already “fallen”, passed on. The one that “is” (the sixth) must mean the head of the Roman Empire in John’s day. The one who has not come, the “seventh” of 17:10, refers, I believe to a Prince Daniel saw (Daniel 9) taking the world by storm in his “70 weeks” prophecy, and who may be the conquering white horse figure of seal one (Revelation 6:1). He rules over a **revived Roman Empire** for “a short time” . Perhaps the first half of the Tribulation?

Then comes the “**resurrection**”. Of someone (17:11). The beast - antichrist - man of sin - little horn is the “8th”. But he is really one of the seven. Really one of the *first five*, since in John’s day it is said that he “was”. And he will go back to perdition when he has played his role.

So who is he? Note again that the earth of these last days, including most of the professing church has fallen from the Lord and strict adherence to and belief in His Word. The world can therefore easily be deceived. A world ruler arises, and unites the earth. There is peace and safety. But then another ruler arises and takes his place. This latter ruler comes from the pit, as a resurrected King of antiquity. The world believes in him. He proceeds to suppress and wear out the church, nearly to extinction. He demands that all worship him. He is a blasphemer. He was. He is not. But he will be.

For me, **one plausible answer** to all of the above lies back in Daniel’s prophecy, chapter 11. There, a very strange construction of sentences makes one wonder what happened to Daniel’s otherwise right-on reporting of history. All the way to Daniel 11:35, from verse 21, Daniel tells the career of Antiochus Epiphanes so well that the critics call Daniel a forgery. Prophecy couldn’t be that perfect, they argue. But though the story continues in verse 36 and seems to be carrying on the same history to its finish, there are no known facts of Antiochus’ life that match with verse 36–45. In fact the text flows right on into the Great Tribulation and the end of the world! The critics conclude: The author of Daniel is not Daniel at all, but someone who lived during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes and just guessed, rather poorly, the end of his life.

Whoa! Daniel, slow down. You skipped **thousands of years** of history. Could it not be that this strange reporting is nothing more than the Spirit’s way of identifying the one who will indeed “pick up” where he “left off” in the 2nd century before Christ? Is he not waiting even now to be released, at a time when the political situation in the Middle East is similar to those ancient days?

This would all seem to fit with the **666 mystery (13:16-18)**. It must, you know, be the number of a man’s name. I quote from the “Last Trumpet” website, an article entitled “The Numeric Value of the Greek Alphabet.”

Revelation 13:18 gives us the number of the name of the Antichrist (666). There is a lot of speculation today about exactly what this means, and how to arrive at a number for a given name. When the New Testament was written, this was no mystery at all to the readers of Revelation. This is because the Greek language had no numerals. The letters of the alphabet each had a numeric value. In Greek, every word had a numeric value, which was understood by adding up the value of all the letters.

In the text of Revelation 13:18, the oldest manuscripts do not spell out the number 666, but simply have three Greek letters. The first equals 600, the second equals 60, and the third letter equals 6.

The fact that three letters were used in the oldest manuscripts, rather than spelling out the names of the numbers, as some later manuscripts do, indicates that the name of the Antichrist should be calculated by simply adding up the letters of his name in Greek. So, in reality, not only does this passage tell us the value of his name, it also illustrates the correct procedure for calculating his name .

So, I believe, it is a **Greek name** we are looking for. It is true that “Antiochus Epiphanes” does not add up to 666 by this method (although *Epiphanes* by itself is very close!), but it is quite possible that he will go by a shortened form of that name that all can understand easily.

Perhaps it is worth our while to consider also that “**Epiphanes**”, a name given to several rulers of that time, but especially meaningful to a man of sin, means “a manifestation, especially of a Divine being.” Epiphanein in the Greek means “to manifest, to show”. And in I Timothy 3:16, Paul says that God was “manifest” in the flesh (through Jesus). John in I John 3:8 says that the Son of God was “manifested”. Antichrist will want to show the world that HE, not Jesus is God manifest in the flesh. His first name, **Antiochus**, not surprisingly, means “withstander”, according to *Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary*.

How will the world know that the resurrected one is truly Antiochus, and why will they even know who Antiochus is, historically? I speculate here, but it seems to me that a media campaign can handle that quite easily on a population that has become Word-less and therefore gullible. Think of the hoaxes of men like Geraldo Rivera . Who knew of Osama Bin Laden before his “big event”? But what nation of the world does *not* know of infamous Osama now? It is possible the beast from the pit will rise on live worldwide television, and immediately take his place with the greats of earth soon thereafter. And, who will be able to make war with a resurrected King? Only the Lamb.

In II Thessalonians 2, he is called the **son of perdition**, or destruction. Daniel sees one such man given to the burning flames as his body is being destroyed (Daniel 7:11). Twice John says that this blasphemous character is going to perdition, eternal loss (Revelation 17:8, 11). We see this promise fulfilled and Daniel’s picture repeated in Revelation 19:20, where the beast is captured and cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

In thus being consigned to eternal death, after rising from the dead, Antiochus becomes a “**forerunner**” of those who are damned. All men exist forever, some as saved some as damned. Jesus and John both describe a resurrection of glory and a resurrection of damnation. But the resurrected damned are fit only for a Lake of Fire. The antichrist will be raised from the pit in a new body, thinking he is all-powerful, energized by Lucifer. But after a short strut across the stage he will go back directly to his eternal loss (17:8).

By the way, only one other man is called the “son of perdition” in Scripture. Jesus gives this title to **Judas, the betrayer**, in John 17:12. Is there a connection between the two in the spirit world? It does not seem to me now that Judas and the coming man of sin should be identified as one, but the allusion to such a one by Jesus is certainly worth looking at.

For further study of the man of sin, see notes at chapter 17.

The false prophet, 13: 11-18 Aiding and abetting the political ruler will be a **false religious ruler**, equal in authority, with great power in his words, yet seeming to be as meek as a lamb. He is a miracle worker, and uses this power from the spirit world to force all to follow the man of sin.

There seems at first glance to be **little Scriptural support** for an “assistant” world power in the last days. Perhaps only John sees this detail, we think. But then we remember that the book we study often tells the same story in two different ways. Why could this false prophet not be equal to **Babylon**, the great world religion described in chapter 17? That would mean that the religious power will ride the political power to world authority. A woman rides the

beast, a false prophet assists the beast, two ways to say the same thing.

Consider: It was **Rome's brand of religion** that supported Charlemagne, and the entire "Holy" Roman Empire of the Middle Ages. Later that same group by its silence and signing of Concordats, gave its strength to Hitler and Mussolini, hoping that their historical territory would be restored for Papa's purposes. Yes, in hopes of world recognition and acceptance, Popes and Cardinals, representatives of the false prophecy known as Romanism, rode the back of the beasts of their day. It is quite possible that this "associate dictator" is none other than the head of the harlot church, so graphically portrayed later.

If this were true, chapters **13 and 17 would be companion pieces**. The only difference in the two chapters would be that in 13, antichrist is mentioned first, followed by the religious element. In 17, the order is reversed.

Another key to understanding the co-rulers is the description of their origin. The first beast rises "out of the sea", corresponding to Daniel's very words in Daniel 7:2, where winds are stirring over the *Mediterranean* Sea out of which his animals arise. Could it be that this suggests an origin in the Pit, as opposed to kingdoms that are earth-based? The second beast arises from the earth. His power is also demonic, but is tied to the established religion of earth from the days of Nimrod. That which rises fresh from the Pit now gives added impetus to the Babylonian Mysteries here for so long.

Miscellaneous notes, chapter 13:

13:5,7, Important to see here that everything Satan does is "**given**" to him. As Jesus says to Pilate, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above." (John 19:11) The church in the Tribulation will need to keep remembering this: What is happening all around us is all a part of the plan. So be encouraged. Hang on!

13:7, The **universality** of the antichrist kingdom. We tend to think in terms of a "Revived Roman Empire", and we should. But that Roman entity will only be the base of the Kingdom. From this base, this one Satanic man will rule the *entire planet*!

13:9, a **special word to the saints** who will hear. This unique arrangement of words is used only in reference to the church. Other than in those church letters of chapters 2 and 3, this is the only place in the Book where this particular formula is used. It seems the Spirit is especially eager for God's people to understand the issue of identifying clearly the man of sin, so as not to be found in any allegiance with him (**13:8**).

13:10, This word echoes **Isaiah 33:1 and Jeremiah 15:2, and 43:11**, and seems to be a comforting message to the saints, letting them know that justice will be served the one who presently torments and kills them. "Faith and patience" are mentioned together also in Hebrews 6:12, reminding the brothers not to become lazy, but to imitate those faithful and patient saints of God who inherited the promises through continuing on with the Lord (see also 14:12). **Yes**, soon the man of sin will go into **captivity, into the pit**, for 1000 years (20:1-3). And the sword that proceeds from the mouth of Jesus (19:15) kills all those who have come against Christ and His people (19:21). Be strong! God prevails!

13:14, 15 The living and speaking image of the beast can be a statue, as historically thought. But technology of our day opens wide the door of speculation. Is this a hologram? Is this a projected image on a public square? **Is this interactive Television?** The internet? And **look again** at the construction of verse 15: It seems to say that the image *itself* will cause death to those who do not worship it (Daniel 3:5) !

13:16, Many translations follow up on the shocking interpretation of verse 15 with another **shock** here, and the Greek can support it, but does not demand it: “It” can also be the causative factor for the mark of the beast. That is, supposing for example that interactive TV is the means of worship, it can also be the method by which a person will be marked. So no need to travel anywhere or do much at all to get hooked up to the flow of the world. Turn on your set, push the right buttons and you can have all of this super hero that you want, including his very personal identification tag lasered right on to your skin. Your Visa or MasterCard will be billed , of course.

And equally certain, if you do not submit to all of this, **you will be executed**. Those monitoring your house via TV will know of your rejection. You can expect a knock on the door soon after.

Here before us then is a **wicked scenario**. Mankind has found its idol, a man who comes in with great ideas, and sweeping solutions. Israel is in the beginning at peace, Jerusalem an international city, the temple sacrifices re-established. But somewhere at the beginning of this 3 and 1/2 year period, all is changed as the daily sacrifice is taken away, the fragile situation of the Middle East is disrupted, and bombs begin to drop. Elect Jews run for cover and are air-lifted to a place of protection. The world ruler tries to kill them, but is repulsed and takes out his vengeance on the church. He is successful in killing not only many Christians but two mighty prophets of God who preach throughout this period a message of repentance. He raises a worldwide consciousness of himself through the Media and demands worship of all.

Have we all **counted the cost** lately of service to Jesus Christ?