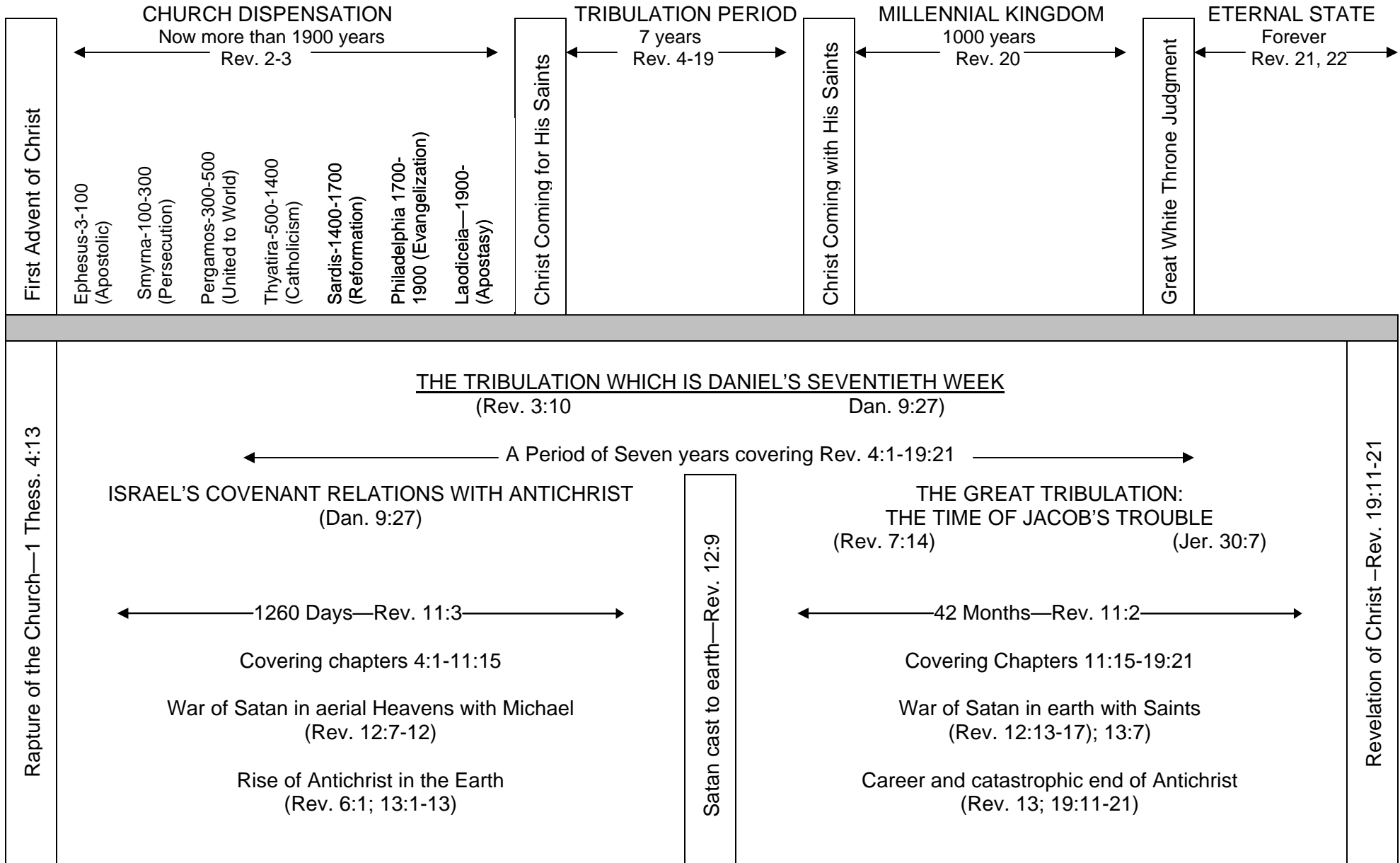


THE PLAN OF THE AGES AS REVEALED IN THE REVELATION



REVELATION CHAPTER 13

Introduction

- a) The reason for the introduction of this inset at this point
- The great tribulation now comes upon Israel
 - The Beast in his war upon Israel has been mentioned—Rev. 11:7
 - The Dragon in his persecution of Israel has been treated—Rev. 12
 - The great trinity of evil now comes prominently into view
 - The Dragon is cast into the earth in the midst of the week, and lays his plans for conquest—Rev. 12:12
 - The Beast reaches the height of his career, and breaks covenant with Israel—Dan. 9:27 with 2 Thess. 2:3-4
 - The false prophet appears to foster and promote the cause of Antichrist—Rev. 13:11; 16:13
 - The great necessity for the acquainting of the reader with this Satanic trinity has now arrived
- b) The program for organizing the nations of the earth is set forth in this inset
- The Satanic Trinity counterfeits the divine Trinity and offers to men a lie
 - The colossal organization of the nations controls the warriors and wealth of the world
- c) The treatment of the thirteenth chapter of Revelation
- The false God, the great red Dragon—Rev. 13:1a
 - The false Christ, the first Beast, Antichrist—Rev. 13: 1b-10
 - The false Spirit, the second Beast, the false Prophet—Rev. 11-18

1. The False God: the great red Dragon, Satan

- a) His identification
- As Dragon he is a formidable monster—fiery in brilliance and therefore attractive (Ezek. 28:12)
 - As Serpent he is the one who introduced all the sin and sorrow into the world (Gen. 3:1)
 - As Devil he is the slanderer and accuser of the Brethren through the centuries (Rev. 12:10)
 - As Satan he is the opposer and adversary of the Lord and his people (Zech. 3:1)
 - As Deceiver he is the one who was a liar from the beginning and the father of it (Jn. 8:44)
- b) His location
- He is located on the sand
 - This means that he is surveying something with great numbers (Rev. 20:8)—“The number of which is as the sand of the sea.”
 - He is on the sand of the sea
 - The sea stand for nations (cf. Rev. 17:15) and they are in confusion (Lk. 21:25-26)—“The waters...are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues”

- c) His observation
 - The sea of the nations is restless and agitated
 - The nations are in confusion and disorder
 - They are in perplexity with no way out of the difficulty
 - This is precisely what attracts him and provides the opportunity for which he has been looking

2. The False Christ: the first beast, the Antichrist

- a) The person of the false Christ—Rev. 13:1b-2
- b) The origination of the beast
 - He comes from out of the sea of the nations, and is therefore a man (Rev. 13:1b with 18)
 - He comes out of the Abyss, and is therefore an evil spirit energizing the man (Rev. 11:7; 17:8)
 - His rise into prominence is gradual and progressive—present tense of verb “rise up”
- c) The description of the beast
 - In character this person is a wild beast
 - The first use of the word “therion” in Rev. 6:8 indicates that it means a beast of prey
 - In dimension this beast is both a man and a kingdom
 - Man: cf. Rev. 13:18 “The number of a man”. This is the “man of sin” spoken of in 2 Thess. 2:3-4. cf. Rev. 19:19-20, “The beast and kings of the earth...cast alive into a lake of fire”
 - King: cf. Rev. 17:10-11 “and the beast...he is the eighth”. Dan. 8:9, 23--“A little horn which waxed exceeding great”, “A king of fierce countenance...shall stand up”
 - Kingdom: cf. Dan. 7:7, 17, 23—This is the revived Roman Empire.
 - “Seven heads and ten horns”—kingdom and kings
 - “These great beasts...are Four Kings”
 - “The Fourth beast shall be the Fourth Kingdom”
- d) The concentration in the beast—Rev. 13:2a
 - John reviews his appearance and notes three things
 - This beast was like a leopard, feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion
 - By comparison with Dan. 7:3-7 it will be noted that each one of these beast referred to symbolize a preceding kingdom: Greece, Medo-Persia, Babylon
 - This last beast is like all of them put together
 - Thus he sums up in this Beast and Kingdom all the brilliance of Greece, all the tremendousness of Medo-Persia and all the autocratic power of Babylon
 - Such is the great revived Roman Empire of the end-time
- e) The organization for the beast—Rev. 13:2b—The Dragon has things organized for the Antichrist
 - i) He gives him his power to produce results (dunamis)
 - This one is to come with all the power Satan has to confer upon him (2 Thess. 2:9)
 - This same word is used elsewhere in the New Testament to refer to miracles, and its sense here must be that.
 - It is therefore to be expected that he shall perform some great miraculous feats, the one in verse 3 being the outstanding one. cf. Rev.13:13-14

- ii) He gives him his throne or position (thronos)
 - A throne is the sign of position and power
 - Satan’s throne has been over the nations (Lk. 4L5-8)
 - He offered his throne to Christ and Christ rejected it
 - This throne (Rev. 12:3) now possessed by Satan is offered to Satan’s man and he accepts it
 - iii) He gives him his authority which is great (exousia) cf. 1 Jn. 5:19
 - This is the delegated right from Satan to pursue a certain course of action. In this case it must be the blasphemy of God and high-handed dominion over his empire for 42 months (Rev. 13:5)
- There is a suggestion here than Satan is still pursuing his selfish way even with his own dupes
 - He uses Antichrist as his tool, and when he is through with him he will let him go
- f) The signs of the false Christ—Rev. 13:3-4
- The wounding of one of the heads
 - i) The object of the wound
 - Kingdom—the beast is a kingdom—Rev. 17:3, 9-10 (R.V.)
 - This kingdom has seven heads and ten horns
 - The seven heads are seven mountains which are seven kings
 - Five of these kings are already fallen, and one is reigning as John writes
 - The 7th king has not yet arrived, but will doubtless be the king of the revived Roman Empire
 - And this is probably the head that is wounded
 - King—the beast is also a king
 - While it is one of the kings that is wounded, it must not be surmised that this is the wounding of a kingdom merely
 - This is the wounding of a kingdom in the sense that it is the wounding of a king
 - It is the beast that is wounded (Rev. 13:12); that is, it is a man, the king who is wounded to death
 - This is the 7th King, who dies, comes to life again, and becomes the 8th (Rev. 17:10-11)
 - ii) The nature of the wound—“as it were wounded” (A.V.)
 - R.V. “as though it had been smitten” (marg.—slain)
 - Exactly the same words in the original appear in Rev. 5:6 with relation to the Lamb—“As it had been slain”
 - The word slain implies the exercise of violence
 - Without doubt we have here the permitted imitation of the crucifixion of Christ
 - This is not strange, for this man is the imitation of Christ, thus, Antichrist
 - The description of the death wound in the Greek
 - Rev. 13:3—His deadly wound
 - Rev. 13:12—whose deadly wound
 - iii) The cure of the wound—“And his deadly wound was healed” (A.V.); “And his death-stroke was healed” (R.V.)
 - These words declare that the king of terrors has been conquered
 - This slain leader is raised to life again (Heb. 2:15)
 - The method is not suggested right here
 - It is simply asserted that it happened
 - In this there is the permitted imitation of the resurrection of Christ
 - This resurrection is not like Christ’s, namely, to walk in newness of life and die no more
 - But neither is it a mere resuscitation

- The method may be suggested in several passages of the book
 - Rev. 11:7—“The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit”—the Abyss is the place where the souls of wicked go at death
 - Rev. 17:8—“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit”—this speaks of him living, dying and rising again from dead
 - Rev. 17:11—“The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven”—this indicates that he is the seventh, he dies, and rises again and thus becomes the 8th
- iv) The wondering after the beast
- The extent of the wondering—“All the world” (A.V.)—“whole earth” (R.V.)
 - The language of the text does not leave one in doubt about the extent
 - It is not merely the revived Roman Empire
 - The original is “the whole earth”
 - So far as I can see there is no reason to reduce the conception of these words
 - Here is an event that is known the world over
 - The nature of the wondering—“wondered”
 - This was in the nature of marvelling, admiring, agreeable surprise
 - The sad fact is that the world is caught with delusion
 - This one who has come after the working of Satan (2 Thess. 2:9) appears to be the Christ, and is received as such (Jn. 5:43)
 - This miracle of resurrection completely deludes the people
 - All the wisdom of men goes for naught and they believe “the lie” (2 Thess. 2:11)
 - The result of the wondering—“after the beast”
 - The word “after” means more than “at”
 - It signifies that the world of men follow Antichrist
 - A miracle of resurrection is the thing that captures them (cf. Jn. 12:9, 19—the case of Lazarus)
 - The king of terrors has been conquered (Heb. 2:15) and the people follow the false Messiah, expecting to enter into the same experience at his hand
- v) The worship of the dragon—Rev. 13:4—“And they worshipped the Dragon”
- This was the great ambition of the Dragon in the beginning (Isa. 14:14)—“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds”—seeking adoration
 - This is what he sought to get from Christ at the temptation (Mt. 4:8-10)
 - This is his purpose in counterfeiting the Christ
 - He is using Antichrist as his tool
- vi) The worship of the Beast—Rev. 13:4—“And they worshipped the beast”
- People give him the position of God in their lives
 - They worship him
 - He exalts himself above all that is called God or worshipped, and seats himself in the temple of God displaying himself as God (2 Thess. 2:4), and people adore him as very God
 - This is blasphemy and idolatry of the basest kind
 - People declare his person is so supernatural—“Who is like unto the beast”
 - This is laying emphasis by means of a rhetorical question
 - The answer is that no other one in all the world is like this beast
 - He is divine and supernatural in his person
 - He died and rose again
 - People point to his power as a leader in war—“Who is able to make war with him?”
 - This question is like the above
 - If he is a creature who suffered a death wound, and yet came forth from death, what folly to make war against him
 - He is invincible

- vii) The speech of the false Christ—Rev. 13:5-6
 - The nature of his speech—Rev. 13:5—two things are asserted of it
 - Great things—this must mean great things in the sense of science, philosophy, human wisdom (cf. Dan. 7:8, 20, 25)
 - Here is one to whom the Devil has communicated his great wisdom (Ezek. 28:12)
 - If indwelt by a demon from the pit, it is altogether possible that some of it may be attributed to that
 - Nevertheless, here is one who is superman in wisdom and learning of the endtime
 - Blasphemies—from this one there comes that cold, dispassionate, calm affirmation of untruth about God and the things of God
 - These will be welcome by a Christ rejecting world, for they have received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, but believe the lie that they might be damned (2Thess. 2:10-12)
- viii) The period of his speech—Rev. 13:5b
 - Duration—this is specifically limited to 42 months
 - This agrees with the words of Rev. 11:2-3, 7
 - This is the final 3 ½ years of the tribulation week
 - It is that period in which the Antichrist breaks covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27) and moves from the height of his career to his final doom
 - Purpose—“to continue” or Greek “to do”
 - This not only includes his speech but all that he is authorized to do as the tool of Satan
 - While he will instigate the greatest persecution ever known against the people of God and Israel especially, the truth is his most dangerous enemy
 - And blasphemy is the most deadly weapon he has against it
- ix) The object of his speech—Rev. 13:6
 - Ultimately Satan and his Messiah are against God
 - All other personalities are simply means to an end
 - Two objects, therefore, fall within the reach of Antichrist
 - The name of God
 - Name usually stands for person and possessions
 - In this case, since it is impossible for him to attack God with force, he assails the truth of his name
 - This undoubtedly extends to any or all of the names he bears
 - The people of God
 - “his tabernacle, even them that dwell in heaven” is the way the Revisers think this should read
 - This must refer to the church in heaven
 - It is a holy temple and the habitation of God (Eph. 2:21-22)
 - The disappearance of this group of people from the earth is known
 - Lest people believe the truth, the Beast blasphemes it
 - Best manuscripts leave out “and” or “even”
 - Six interpretations have been given: 1) Mother of God; 2) Heaven; 3) Shekinah; 4) Temple; 5) Christ; 6) Church
- x) The dominion of the false Christ—Rev. 13:7-10
 - The method of his dominion—Rev. 13:7a
 - The method is force that develops into armies and war
 - These he turns against the saints in the earth
 - The church is in heaven

- but there are:
 - the Jewish saints, 144,000 sealed servants of the Lord. He cannot hurt them (Rev. 7:1-8)
 - the Jewish saints who flee into the wilderness (Rev. 12:6, 14)
 - the Jewish saints who remain in the city of Jerusalem (Rev. 12:17 cf. Zech. 12:8-10; 14:1-4)
 - the Gentile saints from among all the nations (Rev. 7:9-17)
- xi) The extent of his dominion—Rev. 13:7b
 - The reading of the text suggests that this dominion is universal
 - Verse 3 also suggests the same thing
 - By this time the other three powers of the endtime may be subjugated: Northern, Eastern, Southern
 - The Northern power is crushed by the Roman power; so also the Southern power; and also the Eastern power (Dan. 11:36-45; Rev. 16:12; Ezek. 28-29) and the Roman power, the Babylon of the endtime remains supreme (Rev. 18)
- xii) The effect of his dominion—Rev. 13:8
 - The dominion of this monarch will be such that all shall worship him
 - And the cause of this is doubtless two-fold:
 - By miraculous works and marvellous deeds he attracts the worship of the millions (Rev. 13:3-4; 11-15)
 - By force he compels the worship of the millions cf. Rev. 13:16-17
 - Those who do bow the knee in worship, either willingly or by force are those who are not among the elect
- xiii) The warning of his dominion—Rev. 13:9-10
 - Here is a divine warning for any who may be living during that period and reject his leadership
 - This is the period permitted of God to this Bestial Tyrant of the endtime, and there, any display of force to withstand the might of his dominion will be sure to result in disaster
 - If the saint just realized that this Tyrant continues by permission of God and will soon reach the end of his time and be properly judged by the Lord, he will because of this faith persist on through the persecution and be spared much affliction

3. **The False Spirit: The Second Beast who is the False Prophet**—Rev. 13:11-17

- a) The person of the false spirit—Rev. 13:11-12
 - i) The origination of the second beast—Rev. 13:11—“out of the earth”
 - Some think “earth” refers to a more settled condition of things (religious) than the term “sea” of Rev. 13:1
 - But this term may be taken literally, namely, up out of the earth which means out of the Abyss
 - This may be, then, an evil spirit
 - It is certain that there is a definite relation to the first beast and to the Dragon
 - ii) The organization of the second beast—Rev. 13:12
 - Position under the first beast—“before him”
 - These words do not give the impression of priority in time, but subjugation under
 - They suggest the fact that this second beast is in some way subservient to the first beast, as prime minister, premier, personal counsellor, popular contractor, etc.
 - Purpose of the second beast—“To worship the first beast”
 - Apparently there is more of a religious significance to this beast than anything else

- It is his purpose to turn the attention of the world to this central figure, not merely as a great person, but a great person with religious meaning
- This is purpose and function of Holy Spirit toward Christ (cf. Jn. 16:8-15)
- Practice of the second beast—“and causeth the earth”
 - The word “causeth” is the word “make” in the present tense
 - It implies that this one has power to operate
 - He has power to plan, create, produce, put into operation and compel adherence to his plans
 - This certainly implies persecution for those who rebel against his plans
- iii) The signs of the false spirit—Rev. 13:13-15
 - The character of these signs
 - They are essentially religious—Rev. 13:13, 15
 - The word for wonders is the word “signs” and these are referred to as great signs
 - These signs are not mere wonders, but great works with meaning
 - It is therefore in point to look for the meaning
 - The sign of fire from heaven—Rev. 13:13
 - This looks very much as though the second beast is attempting to convey to men the idea that the first beast is actually the Messiah, and the fire is one aspect of his glorious appearance, namely, judgment (Mal. 3:2; 4:1)
 - The sign of life in the image—Rev. 13:15
 - The word “life” is the word “pneuma” or spirit
 - Now this does not necessarily mean that the image was made alive
 - But it may mean that an evil spirit was caused to dwell in the image and speak through it
 - This would startle the people
 - Here again there seems to be an attempt to counterfeit another aspect of the Messiah, namely, that of giving life (Jn. 7:28; 6:40)
- iv) The deceptiveness of the signs—they are lying wonders—Rev. 13:13-14
 - These are great miracles in quality—the word great of verse 13 is used in the sense of quality
 - These are real miracles in nature
 - They are not necessarily false because they are performed by the false prophet
 - As a matter of fact, they are performed by one who has above natural power
 - These are lying miracles in purpose
 - They are intended to lead the observer to a false conclusion cf. 2 Thess. 2:9 ff
 - The false conclusion is that these miracles come from God
- v) The purpose of the signs—to develop a religious fervour
 - Deception of the populace in general was necessary
 - All those who allegiance was with Antichrist deceived—Rev. 13:14
 - Descent into idolatrous forms of worship
 - This is definitely a step in the direction of pantheism and naturalism—Rev. 13:14
 - Definite worship of the beast through the adoration and worship of his image—Rev. 13:15
- iv) The persecution for not obeying the signs—Rev. 13:15b
 - This implies clearly an organized movement for the purpose of conserving the benefits of the signs
 - It is evident that the Beast intends to center all earthly allegiance upon himself, and that the religious factor is the means to an end
 - It must not be forgotten, that during the first 3½ years, the Beast was content to be ridden by the Scarlet Woman of chapter 17

- In the midst of the week, the Beast throws her off and establishes himself in the temple and demands worship
 - It is during the last 3½ years that this religious organization of the second beast comes prominently into view
- v) The power of the second beast to compel obedience—Rev. 13:16-17
- Without doubt the compelling force in the hands of the second beast lies in the realm of self-preservation
 - In his hands he has the physical wealth of the world
 - Public identification is the chief design of the mark—Rev. 13:16
 - This is again a counterfeiting of the things of God
 - Since God seals (Rev. 7:1-8), the Devil does also
 - He wants his own to be made quite conspicuous and to make it less possible for any to escape
 - No exceptions are made, and the most conspicuous portions of the human anatomy must be marked
 - Self-preservation is the lever that is used by the beast—Rev. 13:17
 - Having a commercial monopoly on the wealth of the world, the beast uses this to compel all men to receive the mark
 - Only by bearing the mark are they able to buy or sell
 - Extreme need drives men into his power

4. **Conclusion**

- Wisdom—No one need speculate about the identity of the number, name or notorious person of the Beast. All such in the past have been futile and worthless
- Meaning—This warning and number is especially directed to those who shall be living on the earth during this awful time. These saints are to count the number and know that it is the number of a man
- Number—The number has moral significance. “7” is the number of God. “777” signifies the Trinity in its highest perfection. “6” is the number of man, and the nearest approach to divine perfection is “666”.