

Revelation Chapter 13 – The Beast (Antichrist)

Revelation 13 is one of a number of portions of scripture which detail the life, work and destruction of this individual commonly called The Antichrist (more accurately, 'The Beast').

There are “rules” of interpretation that we use as we seek to understand any text – including our study of the Bible. To often people use one set of rules to interpret non-prophetic passages and an entirely different set of rules to interpret prophetic passages. This is a study of prophecy, not hermeneutics, so I will only detail several of the “rules” most relevant to a proper understanding of prophecy.

The Law of Recurrence: Critical for a study of the Antichrist, False Prophet and eschatology in general, this rule describes the fact that a passage of scripture will record an event and later in Scripture there will be a second recording of the same event but it gives more details than the first recording. The first such example of this is found in the non-prophetic passage of the Creation account in Genesis. Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 records the events of creation in strict chronological sequence and ends on the seventh day. Genesis 2:4–25 then goes back (recurs) to the sixth day of creation and gives more detail. The Book of Revelation as a whole relies heavily on recurrence.

Chronologically we are in the mid-point of the 7-year Tribulation as we examine chapters 10-14. The Antichrist has consolidated his power and is taking over the political, economic and religious forces worldwide.

In chapter 10 we saw the 'Little Book'. Up to this point six Trumpets have sounded so there is one remaining. Just as the 7th Seal judgment contained the seven Trumpet judgments, so the 7th Trumpet contains the 7 Bowl judgments. The 'Little Book' contains all the information regarding the seven Bowl Judgments recorded in chapter 15-16.

In chapter 11 includes the Tribulation temple, the Two Witnesses, and the seventh Trumpet

Revelation chapter 12 is the historical account of Satan's persecution of the Jews. The Woman in labor pains is the nation of Israel bringing forth the Messiah. The Great Red Dragon is Satan and his seven heads and ten horns represent the final form of the fourth world Gentile power which we will discuss in more detail later in today's study. The seven diadems refer to conquest. Just as Satan stole dominion of the Earth from Adam, the seven Gentile empires took authority from Israel. The Man-child in chapter 12 is Jesus the Messiah. Satan is cast out of heaven and confined to the Earth. As his spiritual “leash” becomes more and more restrictive, he knows his “time is short” and launches an all out attack on the Jews to wipe them out. They flee into the wilderness just as Jesus instructed them in Matthew 24:15-26. Two-thirds of all Jews will perish in the persecutions (**Zechariah 13:8-9**).

God will supernaturally deliver the remnant in the wilderness.

Antichrist is the most common way people refer to the person who will become the world dictator empowered by Satan. However, the word Antichrist only appears in the Bible five times in four verses (1Jn 2:18; 1Jn 2:22; 1Jn 4:3, and 2 Jn 1:7).

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We can begin by understanding what the title *Antichrist* means. The prefix *anti* may mean “the opposite of” or “instead of.” The Antichrist is the counterfeit Jesus. Many people think that the Antichrist will appear as a supremely evil person, that as much as Jesus went around doing good, he will go around doing bad. No. Just as Satan appears as an angel of light, the Beast He will look wonderful, be charming and successful. The Antichrist will be a satanic messiah, *instead of* the true Messiah Jesus Christ.

God is 'spirit' so He needed to take on flesh and bone in the person of Jesus to come to Earth, fulfill all righteousness, and die for the sins of mankind (Phil. 2:5-11). Likewise, Lucifer is a fallen angel, a 'spirit-being', will use human flesh in order to try and accomplish his purpose of supplanting Jesus Christ as the true King and Lord of the physical creation. Satan will attempt this through two critical human beings: the ones called Antichrist and the False Prophet.

In fact, when you consider these people together you have a counterfeit **Satanic trinity**:

The Father: The Great Red Dragon (Satan)

The Son: the Beast (Antichrist)

The Holy Spirit: False Prophet

The last half, the 3-1/2 years of the Great Tribulation will be Satan's last ditch effort to dethrone God as the ruler of the universe.

The Times of the Gentiles

Before we proceed to Revelation chapter 13 itself, a right understanding of prophecy involves an understanding of what Jesus referred to as “the Times of the Gentiles” in **Luke 21:24**,

*“and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of **the Gentiles are fulfilled**.”*

The prophet Daniel gives us the fullest description of this period of time, specifically chapters 2 and 7 of Daniel. In chapter 2 the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, has a dream of four successive world empires which Daniel then translates for him.

Nebuchadnezzar’s image of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and clay (Daniel 2:31–45) represents successive Gentile kingdoms that will dominate (particularly Jerusalem) until Christ returns and establishes His reign. Daniel’s vision of the four beasts (Daniel 7:1–27) likewise speaks of four kings, or nations, which will dominate for a time until Christ comes to rule forever. The vision of the ram and the goat (Daniel 8:1–26) gives more detail about these Gentile rulers and the time involved in their dominion. In each of these passages, the Gentiles have dominion over the world, including the Jewish people, for a time, but God will ultimately subdue them all and establish His own kingdom once and for all. Each prophecy culminates with a reference to Christ’s kingdom, so the “times” of these Gentile rulers would be all the years between the Babylonian Empire of Nebuchadnezzar and the glorious return of Christ to establish His kingdom. We are now living in “the times of the Gentiles,” that is, in the era of Gentile domination.

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When we examine the book of Revelation, we find similar references to the time of Gentile dominion ending with the return of Christ. In Revelation 11:2, John indicates that Jerusalem will be under Gentile rule, even though the temple has been restored. The armies of the Beast are destroyed by the Lord in Revelation 19:17–19, just before the millennial reign of Christ is initiated.

Looking again at Luke 21:24, we see that Jesus mentions a time in which Jerusalem is under the dominion of Gentile authority. Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Jerusalem in 586 BC began that period, and it has continued through the present time. Romans 11:25 gives us a hint as to God's purpose in the times of the Gentiles: the spread of the gospel throughout the whole world. The organization and inventions of the pagan world powers have actually aided the evangelism of the world. For example, in the first century, it was the widespread use of the Greek language and the network of Roman roads that allowed many people in far-off lands to hear the gospel.

One theme of Romans 11 is that, when the Jewish people rejected Christ, they were temporarily cut off from the blessings of a relationship with God. As a result, the gospel was given to the Gentiles, and they gladly received it. This partial hardening of heart for Israel doesn't preclude individual Jews from being saved, but it prevents the nation from accepting Christ as Messiah until His plans are finished. God will restore the entire nation of Israel and they will come to faith in Him once again, ending "the times of the Gentiles" (Isaiah 17:7; 62:11–12; Romans 11:26).

The times of the Gentiles will end only when Israel will permanently gain political control of Jerusalem at the second advent of Christ, whereas the fullness of the Gentiles will be completed when God's present task of winning Jew and Gentile to Christ is completed.

Revelation 13:1-10: Antichrist

Rev. 13:1-2 – The "sea" in verse 1 is the same as that in Daniel chapter 7 and represents the Gentile nations. Daniel chapter 2 gives the overview of the four world powers that dominated Israel: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. As interpretive Law of Recurrence would suggest, Daniel chapter 7 expounds on Daniel 2 but in chapter 7, after summarizing the four world empires again, more specific focus is given to the fourth empire and its various end-times stages. Here in Revelation chapter 13 the entire focus is on the fourth empire and even more specifically, the 10 toes in Daniel's prophecy (here referred to as 'horns') which is Antichrist's stage in the completion of the "Times of the Gentiles" Jesus referred to in Luke 21:24. In the first half of the 7-year Tribulation the world is divided into 10 'kingdoms', or zones of political/economic influence. In the last 3-1/2 years, the Great Tribulation, all 10 divisions are ruled by Antichrist.

In Revelation 13:2 the beast has a **leopard**-like body, **bear**-like feet, and a mouth like a **lion**. These are, again, descriptors from Daniel chapter 7 and his vision of the 4 world empires. The 10 horns are the final stage of Antichrist's world dominance.

Daniel 7:3-8 – *And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. The first was like a lion but had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and set up on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. And*

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behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and they said this to it: 'Arise, devour much meat!' After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. While I was thinking about the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the previous horns were plucked out before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like human eyes, and a mouth uttering great boasts.

Daniel 7:19-22 – “Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet, and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three of the horns fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance than its associates. I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

Daniel 7:23-25 – “This is what he said: ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and will devour the whole earth and trample it down and crush it. 24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will humble three kings. 25 And he will speak against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be handed over to him for a time, times, and half a time.

The theme of the 7 heads, the 7 Gentile world powers which dominated Israel, is concluded in **Revelation 17:7-14**.

And the angel said to me, “Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. “The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who live on the earth, whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was, and is not, and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains upon which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. The beast which was, and is not, is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast. These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them because He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

Rev. 13:3 – In his war against the 10 kings Antichrist moves out conquering and to conquer but even though he defeats the Kings of the North, South and East he will suffer a fatal wound.

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Dan. 11:40-45 – "At the time of the end, the southern king will oppose him, and the northern king will overrun him with chariots, cavalry, and many ships. He'll invade countries, moving swiftly and sweeping through. He'll enter the Beautiful Land, and many will fall, even though these will escape his control: Edom, Moab, and certain Ammonite officials (Petra). He'll extend his power over other countries, and even the land of Egypt won't escape. He'll capture treasures of gold, silver, and all the treasures of Egypt, with the Libyans and Cushites at his feet. However, reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he'll march out in great anger, intending to destroy and to desolate many. When he pitches his royal pavilions between the seas facing the mountain of holy Glory, he'll come to his end, and no one will help him."

The phrase royal pavilions means a royal military tent of a general. The Holy Mount is the Temple Mount, or Mount Moriah. He sets up his headquarters in the place Jesus has claimed as his throne forever.

Zechariah 11:16-17 – for I am now raising up a shepherd in the land who will neither search for the lost, nor care for the young, nor fix the broken, nor sustain the healthy. Instead, he will devour the meat of the best of the sheep, tearing off their hoofs." "Woe to the worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye. May his arm wither and his right eye be completely blind."

Remember, Antichrist is a pseudo-Christ – a counterfeit. He will die and be resurrected just as Christ and potentially even continue to bear on His body the brand marks of his death – just as Jesus does in heaven today.

Verse 4 – Satan's plan since the fall in the garden. Satan even tried to cause Jesus to worship him (Matthew 4:9-11). The blinding nature of personal pride. Mankind honors Satan and his man. It reminds me of those I have witnessed the gospel to who have responded by saying, "I would rather rule with Satan in hell than serve God in heaven". The lie is that the Lake of Fire is not Satan's kingdom nor a place where he will rule and reign. Hell is prepared for the devil and his angels and will be a place of perpetual torment and punishment. Those who align themselves with him will suffer the same fate.

Matthew 4:9 – and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

Rev. 13:5 – Satan empowers The Beast with the mind of intellect and wisdom and with great charisma and speaking skills but all these gifts are given to blaspheme God and lead people away from Him.

Rev. 13:6 – He speaks against those who were taken in the rapture, and are therefore out of his reach. Those who 'literally tabernacle' in heaven.

Rev. 13:7 clearly identifies that beast as the same one found in Revelation chapter 13 and the same as the fourth beast of Daniel 7. The beast has seven heads and 10 horns. **Verse 8** describes the death and resurrection of Antichrist and the accompanying worship of him.

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Rev. 13:8 – All who 'dwell upon the Earth" – One purpose of the 7-year Tribulation is what Revelation 3:10 says, “Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try (Gr. *peirazo*: examine or prove) those who dwell on the earth.”

One of God's designs for Daniel's 70th week (a.k.a. “The Tribulation”) is to expose those who would never entrust themselves to Christ as Lord and Savior. These are the ones who will willingly accept the Mark of the Beast – thus swearing eternal allegiance but also confessing Satan's ownership of them.

The word for “dwell” in the eight times it is used about these humans just in Revelation is the Greek word *katoikeo*. It is the same word used to describe the fullness of the godhead dwelling in Christ (Col. 2:9). It is used of Christ taking up permanent residence in the believer's heart (Eph. 3:17). The Holy Spirit could have used the Greek word meaning transitory but this word is much stronger. *Katoikeo* has the idea of permanence to it. *The definition of these people is those who have settled down in the Earth as their permanent home and sworn allegiance to this world's economic and religious system and its dictator – The Beast (Antichrist).* Once they receive the Mark of the Beast they will already have their eternal fate sealed according to **Revelation 14:9-11 and 17:8.**

Verses 9-10 of Revelation 13 explain the meaning of the seven heads. The seven heads are seven mountains in verse 9 but in verse 10 the angel specifically states they are 7 kings. When used symbolically in scripture the word 'mountain' always represents a king, kingdom, or throne. Many commentators assign the seven hills to the city of Rome. Many cities in the Middle East claim to sit upon seven hills or mountains. That is not evidence to suggest this is the city of Rome. Beside that verse 10 goes on to say 5 had fallen by John's day, one was in existence at the time of John's writing, and one more was yet future. If this was Rome 5 of those 7 hills would be gone. Contextually this is an impossible interpretation.

From this passage we know the 10 kings are contemporary with each other. They all rise to power at the same time. The seven heads, however, are sequential or chronological. As we discussed in the study of Revelation chapter 12 the seven heads were Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome with Antichrist global empire to become the seventh. Five had fallen as John wrote this, Rome was the current empire in power, and Antichrist has yet to come.

Again, the ten horns are in existence in the Tribulation and are used by Antichrist to control global politics, economics and religion. They are 10 'kingdoms' or 'powers' that constitute a one-world government. As we looked at in Daniel 7, as Antichrist consolidates his global power he uproots three of these ten “leaders” leaving seven for the remainder of the Tribulation. Antichrist is contemporary with the seven and becomes the eighth.

Rev. 13:9 – “what the spirit says to the churches” in omitted here. Phrase also used by Jesus in the Kingdom parables of Matt. 13; Mark 4; Luke 8 (the 4 soils); Matthew 11:15 – Elijah has come in John the Baptist

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Rev. 13:10 – patient endurance comes from the promise God will avenge. Those who inflicted the death and suffering on God's people will be repaid by God in like measure. (The 'Kinsman Redeemer' is also the 'Avenger of Blood')

Antichrist Establishes a Covenant with Israel

Rev. 6:2 – I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a **bow** [taxon: sign of a covenant]; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

Isaiah 10:20-23 – Now in **that day** the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never again rely on **the one who struck them**, but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, Only a remnant within them will return; **A destruction is determined**, overflowing with righteousness.

Isaiah 28:18 – “Your **covenant with death** will be canceled, And your pact with Sheol will not stand; When the overwhelming scourge passes through, Then you become its trampling place.

Psalms 55:20-21 – He [antichrist] has **put forth his hands** against **those who were at peace with him** [Israel]; He has **violated his covenant**. His speech was smoother than butter, But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords.

Daniel 9:27 – “And he will make a **firm covenant** with **the many** for **one week** [7 years], but in the **middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice** and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations *will come* one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

The coming prince [Antichrist] will make a covenant with Israel for the final unit of seven years, completing the seventy weeks prophesied for the Jewish people and Jerusalem. **Covenant with many**: The word many here is a specific reference to Israel, not a general reference to a group. The ancient Hebrew says, “covenant with the many.” With this covenant Israel will embrace the Antichrist as a political messiah, if not the literal Messiah. Jesus predicted this in **Joh_5:43** : I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

From Daniel 9:24 we know that the 70 Weeks are not yet complete yet the events promised in the first 69 weeks are fulfilled, indicated that there is a lengthy “pause” between the 69th week and the 70th week. The 70th week will begin when the coming prince shall confirm a covenant with the Jewish people. These gaps or pauses in prophecy may seem strange to us, but they are common. Comparing **Isa_9:6** and **Luk_1:31-33** shows another significant pause or gap in prophecy regarding the coming of the Messiah.

(**Henry Ironside in 1911**) Think of it in this way: God appointed 490 years of special focus on Israel in His redemptive plan. The years were paused by Israel’s rejection of Jesus. Now there is no special focus on Israel in God’s redemptive plan because this is the time of the church. God’s focus will return

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to Israel when the church is taken away (at the rapture) and the last seven years of man's rule on this earth begin. "The 70th week will begin when the Jewish people are restored in unbelief to their land and city; and among them will be found a faithful remnant, owning their sin, and seeking Jehovah's face."

In the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering: The coming prince will break the covenant with Israel in the middle of the seven years, the final week (period of seven years). The Book of Revelation sees this seven year period with both its halves as yet future (Rev 12:6; Rev 12:13-14; Rev 13:5-9; Rev 13:14-15).

On the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate: The ending of sacrifice will come with abominations, followed by tremendous desolation. Abominations translates an ancient Hebrew word (shiqquwts) that is connected to horrific idolatry (Deu_29:17, 1Ki_11:5-7, 2Ki_23:13). The idea is that the coming prince breaks the covenant and brings an end to sacrifice and offering by desecrating the holy place of the temple with a horrific idolatry. Jesus called this the abomination of desolation (Mat_24:15) and indicated that it would be a pivotal sign in the Great Tribulation. Paul referred to the idolatry of the coming prince in 2Th_2:3-4.

Until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate: This breaking of the covenant and abomination of desolation has a promised consummation. Before the 70th week is completed, each of the things described in Dan_9:24 will be accomplished and everlasting righteousness will reign.

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel as Understood by Sir Robert Anderson in "The Coming Prince"

Daniel 9:24-27 says that from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah there will be 483 years.

$7 + 62 \text{ "weeks"} = 69 \text{ groups of seven years.}$

$7 \times 69 = 483 \text{ years}$

The Jews (and Anderson) understood a prophetic year as 360 days.

This is based both on ancient history and on Rev. 11:2; 13:5; 11:3; 12:6 which means that 42 months - 3 ½ years - are equal to 1,260 days.

Therefore, 483 years x 360 days = 173,880 days

Artaxerxes started his reign in 465 B.C. The decree to rebuild Jerusalem was given on the first day of Nisan, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes. In our calendar system (the Julian calendar) that date is March 14, 445 B.C. (Neh. 2:1)

Jesus started His ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius (Luke 3:1). Tiberius started his reign in A.D. 14, so Jesus' ministry started in A.D. 29. Anderson believed that Jesus celebrated four Passovers during His ministry, one each in A.D. 29, 30, 31. and His final Passover in A.D. 32. With the help of lunar charts, we can calculate the exact date of

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ancient Passovers, so it is possible to calculate the exact day of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem as April 6, A.D. 32.

From 445 B.C. to A.D. 32. there are 476 years on the Julian calendar
(not 477 years, because there is no year zero).

$476 \text{ years} \times 365 \text{ days} = 173,740 \text{ days.}$

Adjusting for the difference between March 14 and April 6 adds 24 days.

Adjusting for leap years over a period of 476 years adds 116 days.

The total number of days from March 14, 445 B.C. to April 6, A.D. 32.

$173,740 + 24 + 116 = \underline{173,880 \text{ days.}}$

According to his calendar, Daniel told us there would be 173,880 days between the decree and the arrival of Messiah the Prince.

Jesus said to the Jews of this day: *If you had known, even you, especially IN THIS YOUR DAY, the things that make for your peace! (Luke 19:42).* David said of this day in Psalm 118:24): *THIS IS THE DAY which the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

Old Testament Titles of Antichrist

- Adversary Ps 74:8-10; Isa 59:19; Lam 4:11,12; Amos 3:11
- Assyrian Isa 10:5, 12; Micah 5:5, 6
- The Worthless One Nahum 1:15
- Bloody and Deceitful Man Ps 5:6
- *Branch of the Terrible Ones* Isa 25:5
- Chief Prince Ex 38:2
- Crooked Serpent Job 26:13; Isa 27:1
- Cruel One Jer 30:14,23
- Destroyer of the Gentiles Jer 4:7
- Enemy Ps 55:3; Jer 30:14, 23
- Evil Man Ps 140:1
- Head over many countries Ps 110:6
- Head of Northern Army Joel 2:20
- Idol Shepherd Zech 11:16, 17
- King of Princes Hos 8:10
- King of Babylon Isa 14:11-20
- Little Horn Dan 7:8f; 8:9f
- Man of the Earth Ps 10:18
- Merchant, with balances of deceit Hos 12:7
- Mighty Man Ps 52:1
- Nail Isa 22:25
- Prince that shall come Dan 9:26
- Profane Wicked Prince of Israel Ezek 21:25-27
- Proud Man Hab 2:5
- Rod of God's anger Isa 10:5
- Seed of the Serpent Gen 3:15
- Son of the Morning Isa 14:12
- Spoiler, Destroyer Isa 16:4,5
- Vile Person Dan 11:21
- Violent Man Ps 140:1f
- Wicked One Ps 9:17; 10:2,4; Isa 11:4; Jer 30:14, 23
- Willful King Dan 11:36

New Testament Titles

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- Antichrist, (Pseudo-Christ) 1 Jn 2:22
- Beast Rev 11:7; 13
- Father of the lie Jn 8:44; 2 Thess 2:11
- Lawless One 2 Thess 2:8
- Man of Sin 2 Thess 2:3
- One come in his own name Jn 5:43
- *Prince of Darkness* 1 Thess 5
- Son of Perdition 2 Thess 2:3

Next Week . . .

13:11-18: The False Prophet