

**Revelation 13: 18; “The Number of the Beast is 666”, Sermon # 98 in the series –
“The Faithful and True Witness”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall
on May 3rd, 2009, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

I have been attempting to show you in these sermons, that the Book of Revelation is an understandable book; though not easily understandable, at many points. It is full of metaphorical and symbolical language which conveys spiritual truths that are vital to our faith and helpful to our understanding the times that we live in. It is good for every Christian to come to understand in a general sense, where we are, in the history of the Church. The book of Revelation gives us an outline of Church history; it does not give us all the details. It is significant to your faith and mine, that we understand that we are living in the third time period of New Testament Church history. According to the book of Revelation itself, there has been the period of the seals, the period of the Trumpets, and the period of the Vials, or bowls of wrath being poured out. We are in the 3rd time period; the period of the Vials, the period of the 1260 years of the Church’s Babylonian captivity. We, as the Church of Jesus Christ are preaching the gospel but that gospel has for a very long time been suppressed by people spouting Anti-Christian doctrines; so that many people are confused about the true way of salvation, and the true way to worship and serve our God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When we understand where we are in Church History, in a general sense, it will hopefully keep us from discouragement in our labors. When you see that there are both advances of Christ’s kingdom during this time period as well as set-backs and disappointments in relation to the Church’s advance with the gospel, let your heart take courage. The Church shall yet conquer with the gospel among the nations. She shall yet triumph with Christ’s cause upon the earth. Let us remember that the book of Revelation was given to Church, so that while she is fulfilling the Great Commission which her Lord gave to her; that no matter what might happen; she might know that her Lord’s cause and kingdom will most certainly eventually triumph upon the earth. The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

The first time period of New Testament Church history after the days of the Apostles was the time period of the first Beast which was Pagan Rome. It was the time of the opening of the 7 sealed scroll. The Lord Jesus was crucified under the authority of Pagan Rome. But after His glorious resurrection He began His triumphant ride; spiritually going forth conquering and to conquer, through His Church’s preaching the gospel. The Church overcame the false system of Emperor worship through her willingness to suffer martyrdom for the truth of Christ’s Lordship, and many Bible-believing churches were established in many places in the Roman Empire. And we saw in the earlier sermons on the prophetic portion of this book (Revelation 6 and 7) that this was the time of the ten persecuting Emperors; those awful men who being controlled and motivated by Satanic impulses, horridly and cruelly persecuted many Christians, trying deliberately in many cases, to exterminate Christianity root and branch. This began in about 100 A.D., at the time of the writing of this Book, and it continued down to the year 325 A.D. when Constantine came to power as a Christian Emperor. He was able to put an end to the many persecutions that had been taking place, and made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire. Many Christians were promoted to positions of influence and power and yet, because of the earthly and outward prosperity of the Church; she afterward became corrupt within.

The second time period of the New Testament Church was the sounding of the Trumpets from 325 A.D to about 800 A.D. The first six Trumpets were sounded in Chapters 8 and 9 of the book of Revelation. The Trumpets, when each was blown, were intended to wake the Church of that time period up to the dangers of false doctrine and false worship which were being introduced by false teachers within her pale. These were men like Arius who denied the deity of Christ, and Pelagius who would mis-define man’s depravity, and who would give people the impression by his teaching,

that they had a greater spiritual power and ability than they really have had, since the Fall. Man supposedly was not so depraved but that he could still do and keep the commandments of God by his own natural power, even unto perfection. The need for the grace of Christ was being set aside. But just as bad things were yet to follow. There was the darkening of the understanding of many of those who professed to be Christians, and many who were ministers, so that many people were led astray and did not understand the truth of the Bible, and even abandoned the preaching of it. This was the great apostasy of the Church. This set the stage in this second time period for the rise of the Antichristian system; the rise of Papal Rome. I have told you in past sermons that Rome is the legs and the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's statue which was a composite of the 4 World Monarchies which would rule the world. Rome is the fourth beast of Daniel's vision of these 4 great World Monarchies; this beast being different and more dreadful than the ones who came before it. Rome is the first and second beasts of the book of Revelation; Rome Pagan and Rome Papal. And our text today says, "Here is wisdom." "Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666."

Now this number, and its meaning and significance, have fascinated Christians for as long as Christians have had their Bibles. There have been many different interpretations of what the number means and yet, to my thinking, based upon what I preached to you in the many sermons which I have given to you upon this subject; there is only 1 reasonable explanation of the number 666. It is the name Lateinos. It means Latin or Latin kingdom; the Latin one. I want this afternoon to open up this truth by asking two questions. The first is: How should this number be calculated? And secondly - How is this the number of a man? And it is my prayer that God's Holy Spirit will be working to convince us of the truth of this passage to the satisfaction of all my hearers.

First - How should this number 666 be calculated?

It should be calculated with wisdom and understanding. "Here is wisdom." "Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast." There is calculation that is necessary and a certain kind of calculation is required. Let me quote to you from William Reid's 1878 commentary on this. He says, "In order to prepare the way for a solution, a few things must be borne in mind." "Let it be remembered that the Greeks did not use Arabic numerals, as we do, to represent numbers; they used the letters of the Alphabet." "Each letter represented a certain number." "The first letter represented 1; the second = 2; the third = 3; the tenth = 10; the eleventh = 20; the twelfth = 30; the nineteenth = 100; the twentieth = 200, and etc." "Therefore, every Greek word could be represented by a number." "Take for example, the Greek word "Thought", one of the names of the god Mercury." "Th; the first letter in the word, represents 9; o, the second letter, represents 800; u, the third letter, represents 400; th, the fourth letter represents 9." "Adding these together, thus, 9+800+400+9, gives 1218." "And the mystics speak of Mercury as 1218., because the numbers represented by the letters of his name, added together, make 1218." "In like manner, they speak of Jupiter as 717, because the numbers represented by the letters of his name, added together, make 717." "Many other examples might be given, but these are sufficient."

"If then, we had any Greek name, we could very easily find the number which corresponds to it." "All we would have to do would be to add together the numbers represented by its letters, and we would have the number of the whole name." "But it is a far harder matter, when we have the number given to find the corresponding name, because the value of the letters of many different names, added together, may make the same number." "And this is the enigma we have to solve in the present instance." "We have the number 666; what name is there, whose letters added together, will make this number?" "Let it also be remembered that we must look for some Greek name, for the Apocalypse was written in Greek." "These then, are the elements given for the solution of this enigma." "Many answers have been given to this question, but the one which most satisfactorily fulfills all conditions is the Greek word "Lateinos", that is, "the Latin one". "L represents 30; a=1, t=300, e=5; i=10; n=50; o=70; and s=200." "These sums added together, make

666.” “And this is an appropriate name for the ecclesiastical power symbolized by the second beast.” “Its prayers are Latin; its canons are Latin; its breviary is Latin; its decrees are Latin; its bulls are Latin; its Scriptures are Latin; it worships in Latin; it prays in Latin; it curses in Latin; all is Latin.” “And while we may not speak with undue confidence, it does seem that the name of the beast or man, represented by the number 666, is “the Latin one”. So says William Reid.

Let me add even more about this calculation from Thomas Scott’s commentary on this verse. He agrees with Reid’s analysis, but he adds this helpful information. “But though the apostle wrote in Greek, he yet used some Hebrew names in this book; so we may perhaps think he alluded to a name in that language; and it is most astonishing that the word Romiith in Hebrew, which answers to Lateinos, signifies Roman, and it contains in numeral letters exactly six hundred and sixty six.” “Nor can any two words be produced, from two different languages, which so nearly coincide together in meaning, and exactly stand for , the same number in numerical letters; the coincidence is really most surprising.” “As John could only refer to the Greek or the Hebrew language in this matter, and as the number of the name of the Latin man, or the Roman, in both languages is exactly the number of the beast, so I see no occasion to doubt any more, either about the beast or his number.” And brethren; I agree fully with this analysis.

Now 2nd – How is this number the number of a man?

Rome is undoubtedly the 4th World Monarchy mentioned by Daniel in his prophecy in Daniel 7: 19-25. Christ was crucified under Roman authority. The early Christians were persecuted by the Roman Emperor Nero. Rome in its Imperial form of government under the Emperors was the first beast of the book of Revelation. And now Rome dominates spiritually over the true Church of Jesus Christ in these 1260 years of this third time period of New Testament church history, through the Papal system and all that has flowed from it. This is the second beast of the book of Revelation and the number of 666 perfectly represents the Antichristian power described for us here in Chapter 13 as “the Latin kingdom”, and its head; “the Latin One”. That is how the number is the number of a man. The man who heads this false system and dark spiritual kingdom is the Pope, and the Papal office has been filled by a long succession of hundreds of Popes; all of them trying to take Christ’s place in the temple of God, Christ’s Church.

Turn with me to 2 Thessalonians 2. We will see here how the Antichrist is a man. “Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us as though the day of Christ had come.” “Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” Here we have the Day of Christ being spoken of; the Day when He will return and gather together His saints to Himself. And Paul is saying that that Day will not take place until the falling away takes place and the man of sin is revealed. The falling away is the great Apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church. The man of sin is the Pope himself who takes Christ’s place in the temple of God; which temple Paul often in his letters calls the Church. (1st Corinthians 3: 16, and 2nd Corinthians 6: 16) The Pope shows Himself as the Vicar of Christ; representing Christ as Head of the Church on earth, receiving the titles of “His Holiness” and other titles belonging to Christ and God. It is plain that he is just a man; yet by deceptive power of Satan; he is transformed to be one who is supposed to be received on the level of God.

How long will it take the Christians of our generation to figure this out? They look for the Antichrist to be some one man in politics, or a Jew from the tribe of Dan, when all the while the answer has been at hand for hundreds of years. Our 1689 Confession declares plainly that the Pope is the Antichrist in Chapter 26, paragraph 4. “The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order, or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; neither can the Pope of

Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God' whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." And yet, how many pastors of our own movement of churches rationalize away these statements as something that they cannot believe. Let us believe it. Antichrist is still here and he is still deceiving the multitudes. Let us know his number and his name. The number being calculated here is the number of the beast. But it is also the number of a man. Both the kingdom and the king are taken in by this number.

Turn with me to Daniel chapter 7: 15 and I will show this to you. Here in this section Daniel is seeking to understand the vision that he has been given of the beasts. He specifically wants to understand the fourth beast. "I Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me." "I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this." "So he told me and made know to me the interpretation of these things: Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth." "But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." "Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows." "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom."

"Thus he said: The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces." The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom." "And another shall rise after them; he shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings." "He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law." "Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times, and a half a time." "But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever." "Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High." "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him."

Now there are some very interesting things revealed in these verses. Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings. Notice that the beasts are four kingdoms, but they are described as individual kings. A man who rules over that kingdom can represent that kingdom as a whole. The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom on the earth. It is has 10 horns which are 10 kingdoms which it is made up of, but they are spoken of as kings. Then another horn, or kingdom rises up after them, but he is spoken of as a king or ruler; but a ruler of a different kind – "different from the first ones." And then comes his description as a man. He speaks pompous words against the Most High and persecutes the saints of the Most High. This is a man representing a kingdom and acting like he is God or Christ Himself. What more proof needs to be offered to prove that the Pope is Antichrist?

The vast and long persecuting history before, during, and after the Reformation have proved it to be so, in connection with this verse and all the others in Chapter 13. Let no one of you be deceived by the false Church, or the false Prophet at her head. The time is coming when she shall be judged as the harlot and Mystery Babylon that she is. And all those political powers that support her will turn against her. But now, perhaps more than any other time since the Reformation, the deception continues. And it continues because the wolf is now clothed in sheep's clothing, and not many Christians know how to calculate the number of the beast. Let us pray that we might share these truths with many who need to hear them before it is too late. May Christ always be the head of His Church in our hearts. May we give place to no other man.

