

Revelation: The Seven Interludes

Lesson 20

The Seven Interludes

1. The Four Greats: Woman, Fiery Red Dragon, Great Wrath, Wings of A Great Eagle
2. The Beast Out Of The Sea (Antichrist)
3. The Beast Out Of The Earth (False Prophet)
4. The Lamb And The 144,000
5. The Three Angels
6. The Harvest Of The Earth
7. The Seven Last Plagues

The seven interludes do not advance the narrative of the end times events, but presents events and situations that are concurrent with the soundings of the trumpets. Chronological progress through the events will resume with the seven bowls discussion.

Interlude #1: 4 ‘Greats’

1. A ‘Great Sign’ – A Woman

- [Revelation 12:1-17](#)
- The picture of this woman
 - Clothed with the sun
 - Standing on the moon
 - Wearing a garland of twelve stars on her head (The 12 tribes of Israel)
 - In the process of childbirth
- This woman represents the nation of Israel and is the targeted victim of Satan’s malevolence.
 - Consistent with OT portrayal of Israel as a woman in travail. ([Isaiah 26:17-18](#); [66:7-8](#); [Micah 4:10](#); [5:3](#))
 - Isiah’s image of a woman in labor failing to give birth to a child describes the failure of the Jewish people to bring about hope and salvation for humanity.
- The first great sign in [Revelation 12](#) is a woman, Israel. Her child is Satan’s enemy: Jesus Christ Himself.

Interlude #1

2. A ‘Great Fiery Red Dragon’

- Satan’s path is downward
 - From heaven to earth
 - From earth to the bottomless pit
 - From the bottomless pit to the lake of fire
- [Revelations 12:9](#) gives us a more complete statement than other verses in the Bible of who Satan is. He is called the great dragon, the old serpent, the devil, Satan, and the deceiver of the whole world.
 - He is vicious, vile, and ferocious
 - His color is red, for his path has always been stained with blood and death. In calling Satan a serpent, this passage reminds us of his cunning and deception in the Garden of Eden.
 - Satan means adversary. Satan is adversary of God and of every one of God’s children. ([1 Peter 5:8](#))

Interlude #1

2. A ‘Great Fiery Red Dragon’ (2)

- The Dragon’s head:
 - Seven (7) heads (symbol of intelligence)
 - Ten (10) horns (symbol of strength)
 - Seven (7) diadems on his heads (symbol of a crowned monarch)
 - As the prince of this world, Satan has subjects: evil men and women.
 - As the prince of the power of the air, Satan has subjects: evil spirits (fallen angels)
 - He is the ruling spirit over those bent on disobedience and the architect of evil in the world ([1 John 5:19](#))
 - From the very beginning Satan’s purpose has been to beat God and his plan. When God Satan in the Garden of Eden that the seed of the woman ‘shall bruise your heel’ ([Genesis 3:15](#)), Satan began a campaign to eradicate God’s seed and his chosen people.
 - Satan has been judged ([John 16:8, 11](#); [Hebrews 2:14](#)). Calvary was Satan’s complete undoing when Jesus rose from the dead. Like any legal action, the decision must be enforced, and God will do this during the end times.

Interlude #1

3. A ‘Great Wrath’

- At the end of time, when believers arrive in heaven, they will have been made perfect in holiness, and there is nothing Satan can do about it. Satan’s role as the accuser will be finished.
- Satan’s presence in heaven will be abruptly concluded as he is thrown one last time to earth.
- But heaven’s purification will mean the earth’s pollution as Satan’s fury explodes in an attempt to defy God and destroy God’s people.
- Satan’s wrath on the earth will be
 - Executed with great passion
 - The desecration of the temple, the installation of the image of the beast in the temple
 - The all out aggressive, angry (enraged), and organized persecution of the Jewish people and Christians to totally destroy them. The real focus will be on all Jews whether Christian or not.

Interlude #1

4. Two Wings Of A ‘Great Eagle’

- This is a direct reference to ([Exodus 19:4](#), [Deuteronomy 32:11-12](#)) to God’s rescue of the new Nation Israel as he delivered them from Egypt.
- [Revelation 12](#) makes it clear that Israel will one day be removed to some special place of protection in the land.
- [Rev 12:14](#) seems to indicate that the Jews will experience supernatural provision, as did Elijah at the Brook Cherith and the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai.
- Take a lesson from a big snake:
 - When decapitated, the snake’s body thrashed around for several hours destroying everything around him until the body knew it was dead and laid still. Satan is like the snake. He’s already been defeated. He just doesn’t know it yet and will continue to do some damage. But never forget the snake is dead, just like Satan is already defeated.

Interlude #2:

The Beast Out Of The Sea

- In frustration and rage, the dragon (devil) in [Revelation 13:1-10](#) stood on the shore of the sea and (by implication) summoned a beast out of the sea.
 - The beast has seven heads
 - Ten horns with ten crowns
 - Resembled a leopard, a bear, and a lion – obvious composite of middle-eastern kingdoms of Daniel 7.
 - The sea could denote either the region of the Mediterranean Sea or the sea of mankind. (But also be aware that the beast is depicted in Scripture as coming up from the Abyss in both [Rev 11:7](#) and [17:8](#). Give some thought as to what ‘come up out of the abyss” might mean. The beast may prove to be more devilish than we yet surmise.)
 - The ‘beast out of the sea’ is the antichrist, the devil’s alter-ego: Having had his powers stripped at the cross, the devil now needs a “human” agent to carry out his diabolical designs for this world. Just how far the devil’s agenda has advanced, we don’t yet know. Maybe further than we think. But when everything is in place, he will bestow his authority o his earthly alter-ego, the ‘beast out of the sea’.
 - The beast will rise to power (for a limited time) and seek to eradicate every trace of God in this world – including God’s people and Jews. The beast is not the devil, but he is the devil defacto.

Interlude #2: Comparison of the Christ & Antichrist

Christ	Antichrist (Beast)
Son of God (John 1:34)	Son of Perdition (2 Thessalonians 2:3)
Holy One (Mark 1:24)	Lawless One (2 Thessalonians 2:8)
Came Down From Heaven (John 3:13)	Come up from the bottomless pit (Revelations 11:7)
Energized by the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:14)	Energized by Satan (Revelations 13:4)
Does the Father's will (John 6:38)	Does his own will (Daniel 11:36)
Cleanse the temple (John 2:14-16)	Defiles the temple (Matthew 24)
Man of Sorrow (Isaiah 53:3)	Man of sin (2 Thessalonians 2:3)
Humbled Himself (Philippians 2:8)	Exalts himself (Daniel 11:37)
Called the Lamb (John 1:36)	Called the Beast (Revelation 11:7)
Received up to heaven (Luke 24:51)	Sent to the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20)

Interlude #2: The Antichrist

- Scripture says that this world leader will rise to power in the earth's last days (Great Tribulation)
- The word sea, when used symbolically in the book of Revelation refers not to a vast body of water, but to the restless nations of the earth – and more specifically, the Gentile nations. This is confirmed in [Revelation 12:15](#)
- This man of lawlessness will be revealed, but first there must be a ‘falling away’ ([2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 7-8](#))
 - The Greek word for ‘falling away’ is apostasia which is also translated as forsake ([Acts 21:21](#))
 - Paul is telling us that before the Antichrist can be revealed, there will be a falling away, a forsaking, on the part of professing believers. This is not just a few people abandon their doctrinal beliefs; it will mark a period of major, widespread departure from the faith. ([Matthew 24:10-12](#); [1 Timothy 4:1](#); [2 Timothy 4:3-4](#))
 - After the rapture, the restraining work of the Holy Spirit, who is now holding back the man of sin and keeping the world from utter lawlessness, will be removed, and the earth will be subject to the full effects of sin. After thee falling away and the Rapture, it will be time for the Antichrist to be revealed.

Interlude #2: The Antichrist (2)

- Attributes of the beast
 - Given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. His oratory will not only gain attention but demand respect. ([Revelation 13:2](#))
 - The antichrist will be physically impressive ([Daniel 7:20](#))
 - The antichrist will be a man of great intellect ([Daniel 8:23, 25](#))
 - The antichrist will be a man of great cunning for his own agenda ([Daniel 7:8](#); [Revelation 13:2-4](#)). The antichrist will be a leader who will subdue three other kingdoms (one-by-one) not by war, but by clever political manipulation, and then he will claim their power for himself.
 - The antichrist will have such pride he will blaspheme God, false gods, and everybody who stands in his way. ([Daniel 11:36-38](#))
 - The antichrist will acknowledge no religion at all other than the worship of himself and Satan
 - The antichrist signs a 7-year peace treaty with Israel, who will then let down its guard. They will rebuild the Jewish Temple.
 - 3 ½ years into the peace treaty, the antichrist will break his covenant and turn against Israel ([Daniel 9:27](#))
 - When the peace treaty with Israel is broken, all hell will break loose on the earth. The Abomination of Desolation ushers in the second half called, ‘Great Tribulation’

Interlude #2: The Antichrist (3)

- At the Revealing of the lawless one
 - The two witnesses will be killed ([Revelation 11:7](#))
 - It will appear to the whole world that the antichrist has been killed, and then, to the astonishment of the whole world, he will be raised back to life by the power of Satan.
 - He will break his covenant with Israel
 - He will surround Jerusalem with his troops and seize the newly constructed temple.
 - And then, as one last mockery of God, Satan will install his man of sin as a god in the Temple and require all who dwell on the earth to worship him ([Revelation 13:8](#))
- Future of the lawless one
 - The Lake of fire.

Interlude #2: The Career of the Antichrist In The Tribulation Period

The Beginning of Sorrow (3 ½ Years)	The Great Tribulation (3 ½ Years)
Appears in the last days (Daniel 8:23-24)	Mortally wounded (Revelation 13:3)
Born in obscurity (Revelation 13:1)	Miraculously Recovers (Revelation 13:3)
Born a Roman prince (Daniel 9:26)	Speaks blasphemies for 42 months (Revelation 13:5)
Restrained by the Holy Spirit (2 Thessalonians 2:6-7)	Persecute saints (Revelation 13:7)
Blasphemes God (Revelations 13:5-6)	Given authority over the world (Revelation 13:7)
Subdues three kings (Daniel 7:8)	
Seizes kingdom by intrigue (Daniel 8:25)	Worshipped by all the earth (Revelation 13:8)
Energized by Satan (Revelation 13:2-5)	Energizes the false prophet (Revelation 12:12)
Tries to change time and law (Daniel 7:25)	
Makes seven-year treaty with Israel (Daniel 9:27)	Makes war against Christ (Revelation 19:19)
Kills the two witnesses (Revelation 11:7)	Defeated by Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:8)
	Cast alive into a lake of fire (Revelation 19:10)
	Tormented forever (Revelation 20:10)

Interlude #2: The Beasts' Heads And Horns

- The beast's ten crowns are located on his horns while the dragon's seven crowns are located on his heads ([Revelation 12:3](#))
 - The heads symbolize kings or empires. ([Revelation 17:10, 12](#))
 - The horns confederate nations
 - The seven heads of the beast may indicate that he characterizes all the godless Middle-Eastern empires of history ([1 John 4:5-7](#), [Luke 4:5-7](#))
 - The ten crowned horns that he gains his global stranglehold with the backing of ten allied nations.

Interlude #2: World Dominion

- The dragon gave the beast his power and throne and great authority
- One of the seven heads of the beast had a fatal wound (died) that was healed (revived), causing the whole world to be astonished and to follow the beast.
- Men worshipped both the dragon and the beast who wielded the dragon's authority.
- The world apparently believed it sheer foolhardiness to resist his will. They asked, "Who Has the power to resist the dragon and the beast who wielded the dragon's authority? In effect, mankind cave en masse.

Interlude #2: Saints Conquered, But Must Endure

- **The beast uttered proud words and blasphemies and exercised his authority for “42 months” (3 ½ years).**
 - This coincides with the last of Daniel’s 70 weeks ([Daniel 9:27](#))
 - The time, times and half a time of which the holy people are defeated. ([Daniel 7:25](#), [12:7](#))
 - The 42 months the gentiles trample on the holy city ([Revelation 11:2](#))
- **The beast ...**
 - slandered God’s name, heaven, and those who live in heaven.
 - was given power to persecute the saints and to conquer them
 - ruled over every tribe, people, language and nation on earth and was worshipped by all earth’s inhabitants excepting those whose names were written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb crucified before the world was created.
- **The saints ...**
 - The saints must remain faithful in the coming distress, which Jesus said would be unequaled from the beginning of the world and would never be equaled again ([Matthew 24:21](#), [Daniel 12:1](#))
 - Those destined to go into captivity will become captives.
 - Those destined to die will die
 - God’s standard of faithfulness for his church is unto death. ([Revelation 12:11](#))

Interlude #3: The Beast Out Of The Earth

- [Revelation 13:11-18](#)
- A second beast that had two horns like a lamb but spoke like a dragon came up out of the earth (which may symbolize defiant mankind)
- This beast is identified as the false prophet in [Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10](#) because he became the Beast of the Sea's imperial ecclesiastical regent.
- This beast has great skills of deception
 - The miraculous signs the false prophet performed for men to see, including causing fire to fall from heaven were successful in deceiving the inhabitants of the earth (This mimics Elijah the Prophet ([Malachi 4:5](#))
 - Has extraordinary skills in combining political expediency with religious passion, self-interest, with benevolent philanthropy, lofty sentiment with blatant sophistry, moral platitudes with unbridled self-indulgence
 - His arguments will be subtle, convincing, and appealing.
 - His oratory will be hypnotic for he will be able to move the masses to tears or whip them into a frenzy
 - His deadly appeal will lie in the fact that what he says will sound so right, so sensible, so exactly what unregenerate men have always wanted to hear.

Interlude #3: (2)

The Beast Out Of The Earth

- Is a composite of two types of animals: a lamb and a dragon.
 - As a lamb, he will appear meek and mild – a counterfeit of the true gentleness of Jesus. (See Jesus' warnings for wolves appearing as lambs ([Matthew 7:15](#); [24:11, 24](#); [Mark 13:22](#); [1 John 4:1](#))
 - As a dragon, the false prophet will manipulate and deceive the masses.
 - His lamb like appearance and his dragon-like speech suggests a strong relationship with the devil and his evil cohort, the Antichrist.
 - Because of their cruel and vicious ways, all three are described as beasts in the book of Revelation. And all three are characterized by their eloquent, but deceptive speech.

Interlude #3 (3)

- The False Prophet's mission was to exercise his position of authority to make the world worship the beast whose fatal wound had been healed, the antichrist.
- The False prophet implemented two strategies that supported Satan's primary mission.
 - Strategy #1: Create a one-world religion that has Satan as their god. The false prophet erected an image of the beast AND caused the beast to breathe and speak. Everyone was to worship the beast and his image or face death. All other religions are banned.
 - Strategy #2: Economic: Create a system of commerce for all transactions that supports the first strategy. The false prophet required all earth's inhabitants to receive a mark, the mark of the beast or the number of man on their right hands or foreheads in order to participate in life-sustaining commercial transactions.
 - To refuse to either worship the beast or to bear the mark means DEATH.

Interlude #3 (4)

- The False Prophet's power source .. How did the False Prophet perform miracles and persuasion skills?
 - The power of the false prophet will not be his own.
 - Power will be given to him by the Antichrist, who himself is empowered by the Dragon (Satan).
 - 5 times in [Revelation 13:2-8](#) we read that the power of the Antichrist comes from Satan
 - 3 times in [Revelation 13:12-15](#) we read that the power of the False Prophet comes from the Antichrist.
 - All the False Prophet's power will be demonic.
 - A true prophet is known by their message and their fruit, not by their gifts ([Deuteronomy 13:1-5](#); [Matthew 7:15-23](#))
 - There is no magic in this prophet's power, this will be raw demonic power at work. Through Satan, the false prophet will possess the ability to make even inanimate objects appear to come to life.
- The False Prophet's Future
 - Cast alive into the Lake of Fire.

Interlude #3

The Two Trinities

Person	Holy Trinity	Unholy Trinity
First	God The Father	Satan
Second	God The Son	Antichrist
Third	God The Holy Spirit	False Prophet

All throughout history, religion and political power are the two forces that exercise the most control over human life. One acts as an authority that forces, and the other acts as an attraction that draws. Combine the two, and the result is virtually absolute power.

Interlude #4: The Lamb And The 144,000

- Read [Revelation 14:5](#)-end of chapter
- The Lamb Is standing on Mount Zion with 144,000 people
 - They have the Lamb's name and his Father's name written on their foreheads
 - There's a roaring song like harpists playing
 - The 144,000 sang a new song before the throne, the four living creatures and the elders that only they could sing
 - They did not defile themselves women, for they had kept themselves pure
 - They follow the Lamb wherever He goes
 - They were purchased from among men and offered as first-fruits to God
 - No like was found in their mouths, they are blameless
- That they are standing on Mount Zion with the Lamb is clearly post-tribulation: Jesus has already returned for them.
- Whether or not any of the 144,000 died during the tribulation is not stated.

Interlude #5: The Three Angels

- Read [Revelation 14:6-13](#)
- The following verses seem to indicate that Baby, baby, you've only got one LAST chance to repent.
 - The first angel, flying in midair, proclaimed the eternal gospel to every nation, tribe, language and people, exhorting them to fear and worship God. It appears God is calling mankind one last time to repent believe and be saved.--- even to the end. ([2 Peter 3:9](#))
 - The second angel announces, “Babylon the Great has fallen” What is said of this city here is that she has seduced the nations to join her in a massive revolt against God for 42 months.
 - The third angel warns “if anyone worships the beast and his image and receives the mark on the forehead or on the hand he too, will drink of the wine of God’s fury.”
 - Judgment awaits those who worship the beast and receives his mark
 - The saints who refuse to submit to the beast and choose to stay faithful to Jesus, must patiently endure the distress
 - Believers must set their faces toward heaven as Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem, not shrinking back. Those who die in the “great distress” will be blessed forever; their obedience will be rewarded and they will enter God’s rest.

Interlude #6: The Harvest Of The Earth

- Read [Revelation 14:14-20](#)
- The earth is reaped
 - One like the son of man is on a white cloud
 - Crown of gold on his head
 - A sharp sickle in his hand
 - An Angel from the temple called to him to reap the earth for its harvest was ripe
 - The one like the son of man swung his sickle and harvested the earth
 - Sounds like Jesus, but could be an angel: notice V 17-20.
 - The harvest can be interpreted as either the harvest of the righteous or the wicked, but the harvest of the righteous may be the better choice in view of V 17-20 that follow.
- The grapes are trampled
 - A second angel with a sickle was told to gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine because its grapes were ripe.
 - The grapes were thrown into the great winepress of God's wrath ([Revelation 14:20](#)) and trampled in the press outside the city (Jerusalem – [Zechariah 12:6b](#), [Isaiah 34:3](#), [Ezekiel 39:5](#))
 - The flow of blood from the press rose as high as a horses' bridle for 180 miles which is the full length of Israel.
 - This passage seems to be a figurative description of the great final bloodbath at Armageddon . ([Joel 3:12-13](#))

Interlude #7: The Seven Last Plagues

- Read [Revelation 15:1-8](#)
 - A View of Heaven
 - John saw seven angels in heaven holding the seven last plagues to be visited upon earth
 - He also saw a multitude that had not succumbed to the beast, his image, or his mark standing before a sea of glass and fire.
 - They were holding harps and singing a song of praise and worship
 - The temple fills with smoke
 - Seven angels with seven plagues came out of the temple and were given seven golden bowls filled with God's wrath – which apparently activates the seven plagues.
 - Interestingly, the temple that was open with the ark in view at the end of the 7th trumpet ([Revelation 11:19](#)) fills with the smoke of the glory of god at the beginning of the bowls and no one can enter it until the plagues of the seven angels are completed.