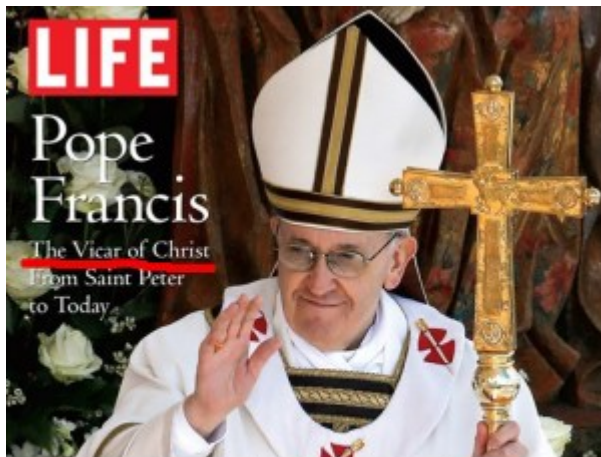


666 – The Anti-Christ to Come?



Vicar: (From Latin) vicarius, a *substitute*,
Anti: (From Greek) against, opposite, *instead of*,
Vicar of Christ = Anti Christ

I got this article from <http://historicism.com/misc/666antichristprint.htm> It is so good I just had to make a copy of it on this site to preserve it in case that page ever goes offline. It summarizes all my present beliefs about the Book of Revelation.

I especially like the interpretation of the Two Witnesses in this article. I just read it to my wife, and she agrees it's logical and reasonable. Part of the interpretation is based on an actual historical event that happened three and a half years before Martin Luther posted his 95 Thesis on a Catholic church in Wittenburg, Germany, on Oct. 31st, 1517.

Richard Gunter

666 – The Anti-Christ to come?

– By Richard Gunter

There are two main schools of thought on prophecy when it comes to interpreting the books of Daniel and Revelation. One is called *Historicist*, and the other is called *Futurist*. (There is a third, called *Praeterist*, which is more like a 'lucky dip' than a serious method so we will leave it out) Both the *Historicist* and *Futurist* points of view are a long way apart, and they cannot possibly be joined together, or merged, yet both claim to be the correct way of interpreting certain prophecies, especially when it comes to the two books mentioned.

The Historicist view was held by all the Protestant Reformers – that is, every major preacher of the gospel on the Protestant side of the Reformation. They all believed that the Papacy was the Antichrist. This view did not mean that the Pope as an individual was the Antichrist, but the succession of Popes, from about 600 AD right through the centuries. Pope after pope after pope – all represented 'the Antichrist'.

The word "Antichrist" comes from the Greek word "antichristos" which means "in the place of". The Popes all confirm this name because they all wear a triple crown, representing dominion over Heaven, Earth and Hell, and they take the name "Vicar of Christ:" which means "In the place of Christ".

The Futurist view holds that the Antichrist is yet to come. No accusing finger is pointed at the Papacy or the church of Rome.

About 1180 AD Peter Waldo identified the Papacy as the Antichrist.

Not long after that, the connection between the Bible's Antichrist and the Papacy became clear to Joachim of Floris, in 1190 AD, whose followers were called Joachites. They believed that the Pope of their time, by claiming to be in the place of Christ, was the "antichristos", and so convinced was Joachim of this connection that he actually informed the crusader Richard 1 (Coeur de Lion).

In 1380 John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English and immediately recognised the Papacy as the Antichrist. (See the preface to the King James Bible – the Papacy is called "that man of sin".)

In 1519 Martin Luther first called the Pope the Antichrist and later wrote to Pope Leo X and with great boldness informed him that he, the Pope, was the Antichrist of that time. Not long after, Luther was notified of his ex-communication.

All the Reformers saw the Pope as the Antichrist. Among these many devout Christians we have John Calvin, John Ridley, Hugh Latimer, John Knox, John Bunyan, John Wesley, Dwight L. Moody, Charles H. Spurgeon, Dr. F.B.Meyer, Dr. Hudson Taylor, Dr. H.Grattan Guinness, Dr. Drinsdale Young, George Jeffreys and many others. These Reformers and Evangelists named the Papacy as the Antichrist and stood in the Historicist camp.

Please note: this view does not say that all Roman Catholics are bad or wicked. It does not label all Catholics as Antichristian, nor does it say that all Popes are wicked men. All this view does is identify a religious system. Individual Catholics may become Christians, as may any Pope.

The effect of the Reformation was to cause huge numbers of people to swing either away from or into the church of Rome. The great zeal of the newly-fired up Christians caused a great division between the two systems, and many people were forced to take their stand, either for or against the Pope. It was at about this time that Luther, who had been reading the Scriptures for himself, discovered several areas in which he knew his church was failing to obey God. At the start, he did not want to leave the church or cause any trouble. All he wanted was a few small reforms, and he would have remained a devout Catholic, but his objections caused a great stir and forced him back to the Scriptures. Eventually, he realized that God's Word was more important than Man's word, which caused him to write down exactly what the Bible said. Gradually the contrast between what his church taught and what the Bible said became clearer and he realised how far from God's Word his church had come.

Luther nailed his 95 theses on the door of the Wittenburg church and as a result, half the congregation defected from Rome. Although many of Luther's beliefs were still strongly Catholic, he had started a move that made more and more people examine the Scriptures carefully, and make more comparisons.

The Presbyterians (from the Greek "presbuteros" meaning "elders" not Popes) sprang up in Holland and Scotland. The Congregational church sprang up in England. The early British church, established, some say, in Glastonbury, also grew rapidly, and soon the Church of England was established.

The church of Rome saw these developments and became quite worried, especially as the Reformation deprived it of the steady flow of money that it was used to. (King Henry VIII had put a stop to this.) So the church of Rome devised many plans in order to win the Protestant 'heretics' back into the fold of the 'Mother church'. The Anglo-Catholic and Tractarian movements were started, and a group of highly trained men called the Jesuits were sent out to launch clandestine plans aimed at winning people back to Rome – by hook or by crook.

One of the plans devised by the Roman church was hatched by a Spanish priest called Francisco de Ribera. In 1585 he wrote a commentary on the book of Revelation, in which he tried to take the spotlight off the Pope. While the Reformers were pointing to Revelation 13 and declaring the Papacy as the Antichrist, Ribera explained that this "Antichrist" was some person who was to appear somewhere in the future. Ribera's comments were published as footnotes in the Latin Vulgate edition of the Bible – meant for Roman Catholics to read of course.

Here, in summary, is what Ribera said about the Antichrist:

1. The Antichrist is a political leader, and individual, who will appear sometime in the future,
2. He will arise in the last days and make a covenant with the Jewish nation,
3. He will rebuild the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, where the Muslim dome of the rock now stands, and restore animal sacrifices for the Jews, ruling there for 3 and a half years,
4. He will emerge as a world ruler, with power and authority over all nations, using miracles to back his claims and subdue the church under him during a great tribulation.

Ribera misquoted Daniel chapter 9 in his attempt to shift the focus away from the Pope. He changed the word "confirm" to "make" in Dan 9:27, saying that the Antichrist would "make" a covenant with the Jews. The reference is actually to the Messiah, who confirmed the New Covenant and then died for his people. It should not surprise us to see how the Roman church twisted Scripture to bolster a lie.

One outstanding horror of Ribera's work was to shift the focus away from the Papacy, but then he added insult to injury by taking the glory away from Jesus the Messiah.

In 1838 Archbishop William Howley appointed Samuel Roffey Maitland as

Librarian and Keeper of the Manuscripts at Lambeth Palace. This was the headquarters of the Archbishop, where the library of the Church of England was kept. Dr. Maitland discovered Ribera's work and was so impressed by the new slant on the Scriptures that he decided to publish it.

The errors of Ribera were circulated, and soon one of the leaders of the Plymouth Brethren, John Nelson Darby read them. He got busy and published the work himself, spreading its message far and wide, so it was not long before thousands of Christians were influenced by the lies of the Spanish priest. Perhaps because it was 'novel', and perhaps because the huge struggle of the Reformation was slipping away into distant memory, and perhaps because many Christians did not want to seem uncharitable to what looked like a very powerful Christian church – the Roman one – the writings of Ribera were accepted. The Historicist view was not so relevant, now that the Reformation had taken place, and many Christian leaders were expounding the Futurist teachings, so many lay people accepted what their leaders said without question.

Today the situation is even worse. Most Christians are familiar with Ribera's teaching, but very few have even heard of the Historicist view.

What Futurists must do to make their view look right:

1. They must not see some things. One of their views holds that, in the latter days "a great falling away" must occur before the Antichrist can appear. They get this idea from 2Thess.2 where Paul warns the Christians that before the "man of sin" can appear there must first be a great "falling away". This in fact has happened already. The "great falling away" comes from the Greek meaning an apostasy, which occurred soon after the Early Church was established. Right on time, the first popes appeared in the 600's after the great falling away.
2. They have to believe that, in a world that is continually demanding more "Rights", and "Freedoms" and which is increasingly breaking up into more and more "Independent" countries and nations, each with its own flag and constitution, some as-yet-unknown man is going to draw them all together under his control. This seems highly unlikely! Can you imagine The President of the USA and the top man in China bowing to some Jewish man?
3. A piece of Daniel 9, (the last part of the prophecy about the 70 weeks), has to be ripped out of place and pasted into some future time – and this must be done in violation of the grammar, the context, and the clear application to the Messiah.
4. Some future period, called "the Great Tribulation" must still happen, and obviously, Jesus may not return until it happens first. This means that Christians can complacently believe that Jesus will not come today because the "Great Tribulation" hasn't happened yet.
5. The moment this so-called Antichrist character appears, we can start counting the days, and know precisely and exactly when Jesus is returning – despite the fact that he said we would not know the day or the hour.

Have we been through the tribulation yet?

Dr.Grattan Guinness wrote: "It has been calculated that the Popes of Rome have directly or indirectly slain on account of their faith, 50,000,000 martyrs; men and women who refused to be party to the Romish idolatries, who held to the Bible as the Word of God, and loved not their lives unto death, but resisted unto blood, striving against sin". (The Approaching End of the Age p212)

The Futurists are saying therefore that some future Antichrist will slaughter MORE than 50,000,000 people in 3 and a half years. How does this compare with WW2? About 20,000,000 were killed.

So if there ever was a "Great Tribulation" we have been through it. It was called the Dark Ages, under Papal Rome.

Bible language.

One of the main reasons why the modern church, that is Christians in general, jump into the Futurist camp, is because of their ignorance of Bible language. They do not have a good working knowledge of the language of the prophets, so they tend to take prophetic language literally when they read it in the New Testament. Westerners, including myself, tend to come into the Bible from the N.T. end, so they miss out on the whole O.T. with its symbols and pictures, its visions and manner of speaking. (I have met several long-standing Christians who had not even read the O.T. even after many years) The Bible can be a difficult book to understand. Jesus used many cryptic expressions, and there are many passages that seem totally inexplicable. An interpretation that sounds right, even if it is wrong, is sometimes accepted simply because it seems to make sense.

But when we come to the book of Revelation, we do not need to take it as a separate book and try to work out its symbols as if we had no precedent. Every symbol in the book is already explained by other Scriptures if only we will take the time to refer back to them in the Old Testament.

Even the very first verse of Revelation gives us a clear lead: "The revelation of Jesus Christ . . . and he sent and signified it by his angel to his servant John" The root word for "signified" in Greek is "semaino" from which we get the word "signs". A sign is a pointer to something else, like a signpost.

This shows that the book of Revelation is written in a code, but why would God hide the future under a layer of signs and code words? Because the book came out at the time when the Roman Empire was in its strength, and the book of Revelation predicts the fall and destruction of the Roman Empire. It would have been quite unkind of God to give the church a book that clearly foretold the fall of Rome. The Romans thought their 'glorious empire' was going to last forever. The Christians had enough problems without a book which struck at the heart of the emperors.

But Christians (mainly Jews at first) who knew the O.T. symbols would have

had no trouble in understanding the prophetic code. This gave them hope, while the Romans knew nothing about it.

How the code works is given in chapter one of Revelation. 1:20 says "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks which you see are the seven churches". These signs and symbols were quite meaningless to the average Roman, who regarded Christians as a peculiar "superstitio", and who never read the Jewish Old Testament.

Futurists, however, take many of the "signs" in the book of Revelation as literal, just like your average ignorant Roman, and misunderstand the meaning of the prophecies. You can't normally break a code without the correct decryption system.

Revelation chapter 11.

Now, returning to the theme of the Papacy, it must be understood that all the Reformers accepted the "beast" in Revelation chapter 11:7 as referring to the Papacy. The timescale was 1260 years, as shown by Rev.11:3, taking one prophetic day as one literal year. This is the correct decoding system.

In AD 533 there was a decree by Emperor Justinian, which constituted the bishop of Rome as "Head of all Holy Churches, and of all Holy priests of God". Up to this time, the Bishops of all the various districts were looked upon as equals, each with their own small flock to guide, but now the Emperor had decided that the Bishop of Rome was the most important Bishop of them all.

This decree in 533 paved the way for the first of the Popes to rise. His name was Boniface III.

Now add 1260 day/years to this date and we come to 1793, when the French Revolution took place, and the power of the Papacy was struck down by a terrible blow. To understand how terrible this blow was we need to look at a little history.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, France had slaughtered or exiled every Protestant, and was known as "the eldest daughter" of the Vatican. But now, during the French Revolution, there was a complete change. Within 5 years some 2,000,000 people died, including 24,000 priests (murdered) and 40,000 church buildings were turned into stables.

The impact of the French Revolution spread to other Catholic-dominated countries, and the impact of those times is still continuing through to today. The Papacy never regained its power, and never will.

2 Thess.2 also describes the fall of the Papacy, in two stages.

1. By the "breath of the Lord's mouth" and
2. By the brightness of His coming. The symbol of the mouth signifies preaching, which happened during the Reformation. The Roman church was brought down by the use of the mouths of God's faithful evangelists and teachers. The second stage in the Roman church's fall is the return of

Christ.

Once the decree of Justinian had been passed, the way was set for all the future Popes, and the clock began to tick towards the time when the power of the Popes would be broken. It may be objected that there is still a Pope in the world today, and he seems to have great power, but most people regard him as a harmless old man who goes about the world talking about peace and so on. He no longer has the immense military, political and spiritual power that Popes used to wield up until the French Revolution. Besides, the Bible says that some remnant of the Papacy must remain up until the return of Christ, so the fact that there still is a Pope actually confirms Scripture.

In AD 606 the Roman Emperor Phocas issued a decree conceding to Boniface III the "Headship over all the churches of Christendom". The decree was written in Latin.

In this single stroke of the pen, the Emperor set Boniface III up as Universal Bishop. As the Rev. J.A.Wylie says, in his work on Evangelical Alliance: "The ecclesiastical supremacy had now a legal existence, but it must become real also. So vast (a) power, extending over (so) many interests, and over such a portion of the globe, no imperial fiat could create; it must grow" (From 'The Papacy', page 31)

The Papacy did indeed grow, slowly but surely. By 1073 – 1085, Pope Gregory was able to exert supreme power.

Opposed to this terrible power of the Papacy were many Christians, who became known as Paulicians. They witnessed the gospel and the truth over the whole 1260 years, using the Scriptures as their guide. God supported his "two witnesses" throughout the 1260 years, who were "clothed in sack-cloth" which was a stark contrast to the rich clothing of the priests and cardinals.

Who were the Two Witnesses?

The Futurists (predictably) say they are two literal people, two men of great faith, who emerge from the general population and do great things for a few years. But this view contradicts the code of Revelation. The "two witnesses" must be a sign, or symbol, of something else. One clue is that these two witnesses are working throughout the whole 1260 years -hardly a normal human lifespan – and another clue is the fact that they are clothed in "sack-cloth".

What does history show? It shows that throughout the whole 1260 years of Papal rule there never was a time when Protestant Christianity ceased. True Christians were always somewhere in the world, protesting the truth, and quoting the Bible, to confirm what they believed. (I also feel that the Church is pictured here, because it seems demeaning to think that the two witnesses simply represent the Old and New Testaments, i.e. just the Bible).

Following through with the view that the Two Witnesses are the faithful Church remnant, we should see consistency in the rest of the chapter to support it. Let us see if this is so.

The Two Witnesses finish their testimony and “the beast” overcomes them and kills them. History shows that the Popes opposed the circulation of the Bible and killed true Christians so thoroughly that, at one point, it looked as if Rome had won.

The bodies of the Two Witnesses are said to lie in the street of “the great city”, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. Here the Bible gives us another helpful clue, by identifying Sodom and Egypt as “spiritual” names, i.e. coded or symbolic, in the form of prophetic language.

Sodom represents the impurity of the Dark Ages, and Egypt represents the idolatry of the Dark Ages. Both names are distinguished in the Old Testament in certain specific ways. Sodom had the interbreeding of humans in immoral ways, and Egypt had the worship of creation, idols and demons. The church of Rome was distinguished by both characteristics. It not only committed spiritual impurity by ‘interbreeding’ or adopting many pagan rites and practices, but it also included the worship of saints and the doctrines of devils.

The bodies of the Two Witnesses are said to lie in the streets for three and a half days, while the enemies of God rejoice, and the bodies are not permitted to be buried. The enemies of God make merry over this apparent victory.

What does history show? The representatives of the Roman church of Western Europe came together to hear a famous proclamation of triumph. The Council address was given by A. Pucci of Rome on May 5th, 1514. He said, to the delegates gathered before him: “There is an end of resistance to Papal rule and religion. Nobody opposes anymore.” There was great joy over this proclamation . . . but on October 31st, 1517, exactly 3 and a half years later, when the Council of the Church announced that all ‘heretics’ were finally dead, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the door of the Wittenburg church. His thesis was a loud protest against the many unscriptural practices of the Roman church, and it sent shockwaves through Europe.

Rev.11:11 says that the Two Witnesses suddenly stood up on their feet again, causing great fear to come on those who saw it. Martin Luther recognized what had happened from the symbols in Revelation when he wrote: “We are not the first ones who applied the Antichristian kingdom to the Papacy. These many great men have dared to do many years before us, and that frankly and openly under the greatest persecution. The old-divinely ordained witnesses confirm our doctrine, and the bodies of these saints arise as it were among us with the newly vivified Gospel, and (they) awaken much confidence.”

Rev.11:12 says that God calls the Two Witnesses up into heaven so their enemies can see them there, in a cloud. If this was literal, we would have an absurd situation – bodies floating about in the clouds, heaven in our Earth’s atmosphere, resurrected saints raised before the day of resurrection . . .??? But if we stay within the Bible’s consistent use of symbols we have “heaven” representing a “place of elevation” as in importance. And this is exactly what history shows us. The Reformers were no longer the downtrodden, but

became a powerful force, and soon became too strong for the enemies of the truth to attack.

What does history show? In Germany, Martin Luther was elevated and protected by Frederick of Germany. In Britain the Reformed Church was protected by Henry VIII. Once the Reformers were protected, the Reformation traveled fast through Holland, Switzerland, Scandinavia, England and Scotland. Since then the Two Witnesses, embodied in the true Church and the Bible, have penetrated to the ends of the Earth.

The Reformation has caused endless trouble for the Papacy. True Christians have no need for rosary beads, confessionals, statues of Mary or the saints, blessings from bishops, or priests – since all believers are priests. All Christians are saints too, and there is no need to have a head over the churches, since Christ is the only rightful Head. (Etc, etc)

So steady has been the undermining of the Roman church that it was reported in the newspaper a few years ago that Pope Paul VI was “appearing deeply depressed, even despairing”. He was quoted as saying that “the church is doomed to die”. (NZ Herald 26/10/74)

All the above has been done by way of setting the scene for the subject of this article. Having shown how prophetic language works, and where the relevant verses are in regard to real history, we can now move on to the question of the identity of 666 and the Mark of the Beast.

What is the mystery of 666 and the Mark of the Beast?

Linked with the Antichrist is the mystery number 666. There have been many attempts to identify this person, and the Futurists are no exception. They have come up with many suggestions, naming Henry Kissinger at one stage, and John Lennon at another. But because Futurists always look into the future for the fulfilment, they can never be sure.

Rev.13:18 The number of the beast is the number of a man: 666. This chapter describes the end of the Pagan Roman Empire, and then the rise and fall of the Papal Roman Empire. And we must never forget that the whole book of Revelation is written in the same code, so we cannot expect to read a literal account of history in the way we might read a newspaper. The true meaning of the prophecy is hidden behind the signs and symbols.

One good reason why the code is used is to protect the Church. As we saw before, the Church would come under a lot more persecution if the Romans thought there was a book that foretold the fall of Rome. In the same way, much persecution did actually come when some Christians identified the Papacy as the Antichrist. If they had not said this, they might not have been troubled so much.

The beast of Rev. 13:1 “Having seven heads and ten horns” is a description of pagan Rome. The seven heads represent the seven different systems of government that Rome employed, all represented by the headship symbol, and the ten horns represent the ten different divisions into which Rome

subsequently divided.

Way back in Daniel (which is like the first half of Revelation), we saw the coming of the Roman Empire. There was the head of gold (Babylon), then the chest and arms of silver (Medo-Persia and Elam), the belly of brass (Greece), and the legs of iron (East and West Rome) – Dan.2. After Rome came the subdivisions which we call Europe, symbolized by the iron and clay feet.

Some background information from the history books:

The historian Machiavelli lists TEN small kingdoms that arose out of the broken pagan Roman Empire: The Lombards, Franks, Burgundians, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, Heruli, Sueves, Huns and Saxons (Elliot's *Horae*, vol.3, page 136)

The Pope of Rome claimed himself to be king of kings over all the kings of these ten kingdoms, and over their successors, for centuries, right up until the Reformation, when, one by one, the nations threw off his temporal power. Britain was the first, in 1534. Italy was the last, in 1870.

Gibbon, another historian, who specialized in 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' wrote of the first Norman king of Sicily: "The nine kings of the Latin world might disclaim their new associate, unless he were consecrated by the authority of the supreme pontiff" Nine plus one is always ten.

Back to Revelation again, and in ch 13:3 we see the end of the pagan Roman Empire, and its almost miraculous re-appearance as the Papal Empire: "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world (the Roman world) wondered after the beast".

What does history show? In 476 AD pagan Rome fell under the blows of the Goths and the city was captured. The Roman Empire came to an end. It looked as if that "head" was wounded to death. But 60 years later, in 533 AD, the decree by Justinian gave power to the bishop of Rome, and the Papal Empire began to rise. In this way, the "deadly wound" was healed, and the amazing resurgence of Rome began to take place.

Harnack, in his book 'What is Christianity?' page 126 says: "The Roman church in this way privily (secretly) pushed itself into the place of the ole Roman-world Empire, of which it is the actual continuation; the empire has not perished but has only undergone a transformation".

Rev. 13:11 Another head is seen, which has two horns like a lamb, but with a voice like a dragon. There are two symbols combined here – a lamb and a dragon.

What does history show? Having seen the rise and power of the Papacy from the ashes of Pagan Rome, and the Pope instead of the Emperor, we come to the Pope's hardcore administrative council – the Lateran Council. Since the time of Pope Gregory in 590 AD all the bishops wore a pallium, made of specially blessed wool of lambs. (Incidentally, Jesus warned against wolves in "sheep's clothing" Mat. 7:15)

The abbots wore two-pointed miters, and they were called Goruti, which means "horned ones". Not to mention that whereas the symbol of a dragon depicts Satan's power in chapter 12, and a lamb depicts Christ Himself in chapter 5, the combination of the symbols of lamb and dragon in chapter 13 depicts the puppets of Satan, the Roman Catholic clergy, impersonating Christ as both head of the Church and mediator between God and man.

The Papacy ruled over the same territory as the Pagan Roman Empire, and it also retained the same totalitarian power of dictatorship. Woe betide anyone who disobeyed the Pope! Dissidents were crushed as ruthlessly by the Popes as by any Diocletian or Nero. (For example on the authority of the Pope an Inquisition was established in the Netherlands to suppress the Reformation. As a result some 30,000 Protestants were martyred.)

How exact the Bible was when it described the Papacy as both a false lamb and a dragon.

Rev. 13:13. So universal was the power of the Papacy that, in the code language of Revelation, they seemed to make fire come down from heaven. Fire and heaven are not literal, but symbolic.

The beast system commanded symbolic fire to come down, and claimed for itself the divine prerogative to punish what it decided was disobedience. The "great wonders" include Satanic manifestations, false tears or blood from statues, arms or legs on images moving as if in blessing, visions, strange healings and voices. Often these "wonders" came along in response to various amounts of money donated to the church.

As the Papal power increased, the Papacy used the Lateran Council as its spokesman. Rev. 13:15 describes this Council as "the image of the beast". As we know, Adam was made in God's image, so the code is cracked. The beast has produced an image of itself, the Council, which reflected faithfully everything which the Papacy did and said.

The Popes "spoke" their decrees and judgements through the Council of Trent in 1545 and other Councils. These orders were enforced by the armies which marched at the Pope's bidding.

Following the example of the Roman Emperors, the decrees, edicts and laws were made binding on every citizen within the borders of the Roman church control, on pain of death.

Rev. 13:16-17. Here we are told that the beast causes everyone who does not receive a mark on their hand or forehead, and if they do not have one they will be ineligible to buy or sell. The "mark" represents slavery. It is a symbol of the Papal demand for complete and unreserved obedience from all within its domain.

What does history show? Many Papal decrees, forbidding trade with 'heretics' could be quoted. For example, at the Third Lateran Council in 1178 Pope Alexander III issued an order that "no man presume to entertain or cherish them (the Protestants) in his house, or land, or exercise traffic with them."

The same Pope passed a law against the Protestant Waldenses and Albigenses, demanding that "no man should presume to receive or assist them in selling or buying, that, being deprived of humanity, they may be compelled to repent of the error of their way."

Pope Martin V in his decree sent out after the Council of Constance, commanded that "they permit not the 'heretics' to have homes in their districts, or enter into contracts, or carry on commerce, or enjoy the comforts of humanity with Christians."

The poor Protestants were a minority, unable to own their own homes, or even rent somewhere to live, and unable to sell their goods or earn a living. As a result, these Bible-loving members of the true Church starved and perished because they would not bear the "mark of the beast".

So far the Historicist view has been consistent with Scripture and history. All that the Bible says in code has matched perfectly with the sequence and events of real history. Revelation is therefore history written in code. The story has unfolded methodically, verse by verse, without sudden glitches of mystery. Futurists, on the other hand, have to make wild jumps from place to place, joining different scriptures together to make their view seem reasonable.

If Historicists are correct in their view, the number of the beast ought to now unfold in a logical and consistent manner. We will see.

Rev. 13:18 "Here is wisdom, Let him that has understanding count the number of the beats: for it is the number of a man; and his number is 666"

What does history show? Going on what we already know about the Papacy, we should logically expect the number of the man to further identify the Papacy. This is exactly what we do find.

The eastern Roman Empire (the left leg of the statue in Daniel) used Greek as its main language, but for the western Empire (the right leg) of Rome it was Latin. It was a Latin world with a Latin liturgy for the Catholic church, a Latin Bible in the Vulgate Version. Everything was Latinised in the church, so that almost every inhabitant of western Europe used Latin, and so, in the code of Revelation, they received the "mark" of the beast. (Just by way of an interesting sidelight, it could be noted in passing that Pope Vitallian issued a decreed commanding the exclusive use of Latin in all the services of the Catholic church . . . in the year 666 AD)

The word LATIN in the Latin language is a proper noun, and also the name of the father of the Latin race. Just as we say the Papal Empire, meaning the Empire fathered by the Pope, we can say the Latin Empire, because it was fathered by Latin. Also, when Pope Vitallian issued the decree that Latin was the only language to be used in worship, he earned for himself the name "Latinus", which means "The Latin man".

Latin letters have a numerical value, which, when added together, give us a total. The numerical value of LATIN is 666.

When Latin is changed into Greek we get the word LATEINOS, which also has a total value of 666.

(L=30, A=1, T=300, E=5, I=10, N=50, O=70, S=200 added together = 666.)

Some further interesting facts which neither prove or disprove anything, are as follows:

When a Pope is crowned, there is placed on his head a heavy golden crown made of three crowns. One crown represents rulership over heaven, one is for rulership of earth, and the third is for rulership of hell. When this golden crown is placed on the Pope's head at his coronation, it bears the inscription VICARIUS FILII DEI, which means, in English "Vicarius Son of God". A person who is "vicarious" stands in the place of another, on their behalf. This is why the Pope claims to be the vicar of Christ – he actually claims to be God the Son on Earth! The word "anti" means alongside of, or in the place of, so the Pope has elevated himself to equality with God the Son.

The words VICARIUS FILII DEI have a numerical value of 666.

(VICARIUS = 112, FILII = 53, DEI = 501)

It is also interesting to see the numerical value of the title ROMITI which means ROMAN MAN. It is 666.

ROMITI translated into Hebrew gives us ROMITH, which also has a numerical value of 666.

(Footnote: Away back in the 2nd century, a man called Irenaeus, who was a follower of the apostle John, wrote "Lateinos has the number 666, and this is a very probable solution". Unfortunately he was so far ahead of his time his words were forgotten.)

Conclusion.

So here is the evidence. We have a man who is the Antichrist, who takes on titles and thus blasphemes the holy words of God, who sits in God's Temple (so he assumes) showing himself to be God, who also rules over a Latin kingdom, with the power to kill and destroy all who oppose him, yet he claims to be a representative of Christ. Who else could this be but the Papacy? The Historicist view makes perfect, logical sense, without violating Scripture or the prophetic code.

For further information, see Mr. Gunther's other article "[The Antichrist in the New Testament](#)".