

“Not What It Seems”

Presentation Handout

The “War of the Worlds” Radio Program

Panic gripped United States, maybe even the world!

It was October 30, 1938. The world was on the verge of World War II with fears and tensions running high as Germany and Japan continued their unprovoked aggression in Europe and Asia.

On Halloween Eve Orson Welles presented a modern day, fast paced radio adaption of H.G. Wells’ 1897 science fiction



classic *The War of the Worlds* on his popular *The Mercury Theatre on the Air* program.

In 1938, radio was the new, cutting-edge media, like movies, Facebook, Instagram, the internet, etc. today. As this new radio technology grew in popularity, Americans were “glued” to it for their entertainment and news.

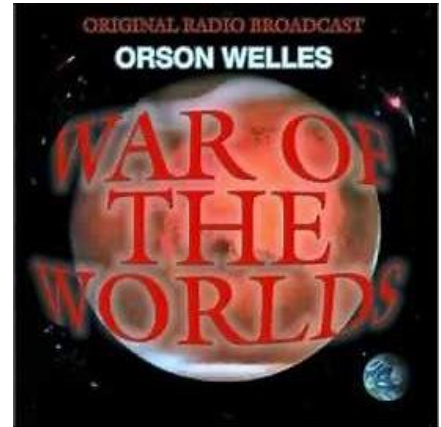
With this historical backdrop in mind, Welles presented his *The War of the Worlds* adaption. Despite repeated disclaimers this program was a fictitious adaption and not real..., people panicked.

Two sisters from the state of Illinois shared how their mother as she listened to this radio program gathered her sleeping children with her in the living room, saying, “If the world was coming to an end and if the Martians were going to get them, they were going to die together.”

Others ran out into the street at night screaming in fear and panic. Police stations, newspapers and radio stations were flooded with phone calls begging for more information about what was happening and what they should do next.

This broadcast became legendary overnight. Not for its artist content, but because of it being too realistic and frightening for its audience. Morning newspapers from coast to coast reveled in the “mass hysteria” it caused. The *New York Times* front page headline blared, “Radio Listeners in Panic, Taking War Drama as Fact.”

How and why would the listeners belief this fictitious radio adaptation was real? Maybe because of the growing tensions that finally led to World War II, probably to some extent. However, the greater reasons seem to lie with the fact that people believed what they heard on the radio as “gospel-truth” without checking the facts. They assumed the



news reports were real. Also, many people's feelings seem to have driven their response. So, they panicked and reacted accordingly. When people panic, they don't tend to make rational decisions.

Yet, the real story behind all of this hysteria...it didn't really happen, at least not to the level, the newspapers and history portrayed it, according to *Snopes*. The news agencies based their reporting on anecdotal, sketchy press coverage, instead of true facts because most of the reports were not investigated and confirmed as true.

TAKE-AWAY: This is why this whole *The War of the Worlds* saga became such a confusing, deceiving problem—people reacted out of emotions, based on their perceptions, and/or misinformation that they perceived was true.

This same confusion, hysteria, perceptions, or misinformation is what is behind Satan's end-time deceptions. That's why his signs, wonders, and other end-time deceptions are so powerful in their effect as will be discovered in this presentation handout.

An End-Time Counterfeit Reviewed ~ Revelation 12

- In *Revelation 12* we discovered three main characters/players throughout church history—the woman, the dragon & the male Child (see *Forever 04* presentation handout for a more detailed study of these different players and who they represent).
 - And we discovered *Revelation 12-14* is the center of the book of Revelation and all of biblical history with a dominate backstory of a spiritual conflict between good and evil.
 - And the dominate characters of this spiritual conflict are Christ Jesus & Satan {*Revelation 12:3-4; Genesis 3:14, (15b)*}.
 - ✓ Ultimately, this battle fans out to be between Satan's followers (which he works through) and God's people after Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven {*Revelation 12:6, 13-16; Genesis 3:15a*}.
 - ✓ Finally, the conflict takes an end-time turn with Satan's final attack on God's end-time Church/people right before Jesus' Second Coming {*Revelation 12:17; chapter 13*}.
 - War on earth—"woman" in the wilderness {*vv. 6, 13-17*}
 - This "woman" is a symbol of God's people—Old Testament Israel & the New Testament Church {*Isaiah 54:6-7; Jeremiah 3:19b-20; 2 Corinthians 11:2-3; Ephesians 5:25-26, 32; Revelation 19:7-9*}.
 - ✓ In *vv. 1-5*, the woman represents Old Testament Israel—God's true people, whether Jews or Gentiles, spiritual "Jews" who were committed to God.
 - ✓ In *vv. 6, 13-17*, the woman represents God's New Testament people, His Church, particularly after Christ Jesus' ascension to heaven and Satan's final casting out to this earth because of Jesus' death and enthronement in heaven.
 - ✓ Satan realized he couldn't harm Jesus anymore, but he knows how dear the Church is to Christ, so he turned his assaults against her/it.
 - ✓ This persecution involved:
 - ❖ Physical persecution and martyrdom

- More than 50 million committed Christian followers (men, women & children) lost their lives for their faith in Jesus and commitment to His truth during the Dark/Middle Ages alone.
- Sadly, Satan incited this persecution and martyrdom through the established Church of the time.
- Unfortunately, this type of physical persecution and martyrdom still happens, today, though not at the same severity of the Dark/Middle Ages.
- ❖ Spiritual—a twisting of God’s truth {v. 15}.
 - Along with physical persecution, which was not really working, Satan changed his tactics by “joining” God’s Church—trying to “contaminate” it through falsehoods, pagan philosophy, superstitions, twisting of humanity’s view of God and His beautiful biblical gospel found in the Bible.
 - This is what it means in *Revelation 12:17* when it says Satan “went away” (NIV version) to make war with the remnant/offspring (God’s end-time people) of the woman (God’s Church/people)

TAKE-AWAY: This “joining”/”went away” to make war with God’s Church reveals a detailed counterfeit, exhibiting itself through a satanic-false trinity/godhead.

- **A false trinity/godhead** {*Revelation 12, 13 & 16:13-14*}
 - Satan forms/creates a false trinity/godhead as he “joins” the Church, through which he “spins” from the inside out.
 - ✓ His tactic is now a subversive, non-frontal, deceptive/deceitful attack that undermines the power of God in His Church/people and tarnishes His Church in the eyes of the onlooking culture/society around it.
 - **Red dragon** = Satan/devil {*Revelation 12:7-(9), 10, 12*}
 - ✓ Counterfeit of God the Father and His work.
 - **Sea Beast** {*Revelation 13:1-10, 18; 16:13-14*}
 - ✓ Counterfeit of Christ Jesus and His salvation and intercession activities.
 - ✓ Identification: from John the Revelator’s description, one discovers this political-religious power = the Roman Catholic Church/the Papacy.

TAKE-AWAY: According to *Revelation 13*, the Catholic Church’s resurgence in religious and political power in the time of the end, right before Jesus’ Second Coming, is associated with the sea beast’s deadly wound being healed, which happens through the activity of the third power of the demonic trinity/godhead—the earth beast {*Revelation 13:11-17*}.

- **Earth Beast** {*Revelation 13:11-17*}
 - ✓ Counterfeit of the Holy Spirit and His activities.
 - ✓ Identification: as one reviews John the Revelator’s clues for the earth beast and history, the *United States of America* fits this prophetic power.

TAKE-AWAY: John the Revelator transitions us from the historical description and rising up of the earth beast to the very end of time—right before Jesus’ Second Coming—by switching from past tense verbs to present tense (in the original Greek language) as he describes the earth beast’s end-time activities, which heal the sea beast’s deadly wound.

Sea Beast's Deadly Wound Healed ~ Revelation 13

- Earth beasts end-time counterfeit-deceptive activities {*Revelation 13:12-17*}
 - Just like the Holy Spirit used miraculous signs and miracles to convince people to place their faith in Jesus {*Acts 2:1-11, 40-47; 3; 5:12-16; 8:4-8, 26-39; 9:1-22, 32-42; 10:24-48; 12:20-24; 13:4-12; 14:19-23; 16:6-15, 25-34; 19:11-20; 20:7-12; 28:1-9*}, so this counterfeit (earth beast) also uses deceptive signs and miracles to persuade the world to worship the sea beast, which in addition helps heal the sea beasts deadly wound.
 - These deceptive signs and wonders shouldn't surprise anyone since this is how Satan operates {*2 Corinthians 11:(14)-15*}, particularly in the end time/last days {*2 Thessalonians 2:1-2, (9)-10*}.
 - ✓ This is his "going away"/"went away" to make war with the remnant of the "woman"—God's end time Church/people {*Revelation 12:17*}.
 - ✓ These signs are powerfully deceptive, even deceiving, if possible, God's people {*Matthew 24:24*}.
 - ❖ How could God's people be deceived if they have a relationship with Christ Jesus and have his truth in God's Word (Bible)?
 - Satan is stealthily conditioning the world and even God's people to believe his false signs and wonders through media, like social media, internet, and/or science naturalism.
 - Here's how this conditioning works: if one makes decisions based how he/she feels or through their senses or scientific naturalism ("I see it this way." "I don't feel it's right." "I saw it on social media." "My friends are doing it." "That doesn't make sense to me."), they will be deceived by Satan's signs and wonders because they're evaluating from a human perspective only.
 - This happens because they've substituted their own personal perceptions/perspectives for God Word (Bible) as the foundation for one's spiritual faith and life practice.
 - So, if one is making spiritual decisions based on their senses, reasoning, feelings, perspectives, media, scientific evaluation, etc., he/she (even if a professed Christian) is in reality secular, not biblical, which causes a picking and choosing in what one believes from the Bible, like picking the foods one likes for a sub or burrito.
 - ❖ Unless one is choosing the Bible as their final authority for faith and life practice and surrendering their senses and perceptions to it, even if they scream the opposite of the Bible, they will be deceived by Satan's end time signs and wonders {*2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 (10-11)*}.

TAKE-AWAY: One sees this specifically in the earth beast "bringing down" fire from heaven, making an image to the beast, and through the mark of the beast.

- **Fire from heaven miracle** {*vv. 12-14a*}
 - The earth beast is performing a counterfeit of Pentecost when the true Holy Spirit caused fire to come down on God's people in response to their prayers of confession and worship {*Acts 2:1-11*}.
 - ✓ It indicated God's true believers and His authentic working through the Holy Spirit to win the world to Christ Jesus.

- ✓ Those open to God’s Word understood this truth and followed Jesus.
- ✓ Finally, it signified the coronation of Christ Jesus as the rightful Ruler of this world (see *Forever 04 presentation handout*).
- It also reminds one of Elijah and his Mount Carmel showdown with the false prophets of Baal {*1 Kings 18:20-39 (38-39)*}.
 - ✓ The fire from heaven indicated who the true God was based on which altar the fire fell on.
 - ❖ In this story the fire fell on the Lord’s altar not Baal’s altar, revealing that the Lord God was the right/true God who deserves one’s worship.
 - ✓ But..., in the last days/end-time the “fire will fall on the wrong altar!”
 - ❖ Can you imagine the impossible deciphering of this deception from Satan if one is evaluating it based on their personal, human perceptions, reasoning, reality, or scientific naturalism?!
 - ❖ Or trying to explain to family, friends, co-workers, etc. that this is a deception from Satan when the overwhelming human sense is, based on human perception/perspective, it’s from God?!
 - ❖ The pressure to “cave” to the popular, general opinion will be intense!
 - ❖ Unless one is fortified/grounded in God’s Word as their rule of faith and life practice, and not their opinion/senses, they will be deceived no matter how much they profess faith in Jesus (see above)!
- **Image to the beast** {*Revelation 13:14b-15*}
 - The healing of the sea beast’s (*Roman Catholic Church* – see *Forever 04 presentation handout*) wound will take place when this medieval religious system is restored.
 - ✓ And the earth beast (*the United States* – see *Forever 04 presentation handout*) will play the key role in this healing process through its image to the (sea) beast.
 - ✓ As the people of the world accept the earth beast’s deceptive satanic signs and wonders as an authentic manifestation of God’s divine power, they will follow the earth beast’s call (dragon-like talk) to worship and follow the sea beast again as though it’s a representative of God, from God Himself.
 - ✓ *Daniel 3*—King Nebuchadnezzar’s image-forced worship story—is the backdrop for this image making-worship by the earth beast.
 - ❖ **Counterfeit of God’s gospel truth** ~ King Nebuchadnezzar twisted/tweaked God’s statue dream {*Daniel 2*} by making it fit how he wanted/perceived it.
 - ❖ **Mixture of religious-state involvement** ~ The king used a state law to force a certain religious worship response.
 - State’s law gives force (backing/demanding) to this worship decree—images are not alive.
 - False/lifeless religion must have force, in this case state enforcement, because the motivation of love for Christ Jesus and a heart desire to please Him in worship and obedience is missing!
 - There is a heart-motivation vacuum in the lives of the people.
 - ❖ **State coercion** ~ If one didn’t worship the way the king (the state) demanded one would lose their life in the fiery furnace.

- ❖ **Majority compliance** ~ the majority of the people present (including God’s professed people) bowed to the pressure of the state—King Nebuchadnezzar’s demand to worship the image.
- ❖ **God’s persecuted minority people** ~ God’s faithful followers—Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-Nego did not bow down to the forced worship compliance even though there was intense to do so.
 - Though respectful to the king’s wishes, they obeyed God instead of the government mandate, no matter the consequences!
 - They trusted themselves to God to protect/lead them, even if God chose not to intervene to rescue them in this particular situation.
 - Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-Nego **followed God in explicit worship-obedience, not for what God could/would do for them, but for who God is!**
- ✓ Lessons learned for the end time/last days’ image making worship:
 - ❖ It involves a false worship through a false gospel message.
 - ❖ This image worship is state mandated/enforced—images are not alive {*Psalm 135:15-18*}.
 - The earth beast giving “breath” to the image counterfeits God breathing His breath of life into Adam, bringing him to life {*Genesis 2:7*}.
 - “Giving life” to the sea beast image means the earth beast puts “teeth” to the decree to worship through state enforced law(s)/civil power.
 - ❖ It speaks and causes—words used for God and His activities—that force earth’s inhabitants to worship the sea beast and it’s false gospel message (see “mark of the beast” below).
 - Through deceptive miracles and political power to enforce its demands for popular worship, the earth beast will persuade the people of the world to acknowledge the sea beast’s authority and render their allegiance-worship to it.
 - ❖ The majority of the world will follow in worship, whether from the heart or for convenience sake.
 - Protestant United States (earth beast) will lead the way for the majority of the world to worship the Roman Catholic Church (sea beast).
 - It sides with the sea beast to form a church-state union, which enforces upon the world’s inhabitants an institution that characterizes/resembles the medieval Christianity of Western Europe.
 - This same religiopolitical system Satan used during the Middle/Medieval Ages will rise again in the last days of earth’s history.
 - ❖ God’s people who refuse to worship will be persecuted/martyred.
 - Just like Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-Nego, God’s end-time people will not worship the earth beast’s image to the sea beast because of their love and commitment to God, even it means losing their lives {*Revelation 12:11*}!

- **Mark of the beast** {*Revelation 13:16-17*}
 - Those who succumb to the earth beast's pressure for false worship will receive a mark with the sea beast's name on it {*v. 16*}.
 - ✓ All classes of humanity are commanded to receive this mark, no exceptions.
 - ✓ And to receive the mark of the beast means one belongs to the sea beast—worshiping, obeying, following, listening, etc. to it.
 - ✓ The mark is an antithesis of God's seal {*Revelation 7:1-3; 14:(1)-3*}.
 - ❖ While God's seal signifies the Holy Spirit's working presence in a human heart {*Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:25-32 (30)*}, the mark of the beast counterfeits the work of the Holy Spirit through deceptive signs and wonders and/or coercion.
 - ✓ Those who receive the mark have bought into a religious system that twists God's character and counterfeits His beautiful gospel message (see *below*).
 - ❖ **Spiritual Babylon = spiritual/church + secular/government together.**
 - The mark of the beast is either received on one's forehead or right hand.
 - ✓ These two locations evoke *Deuteronomy 6:8 (4-9)* where Moses instructed the Israelites, as God's people, to bind His law as a sign upon their hands or their foreheads, showing they belonged to God in heart obedience to Him.
 - ❖ So, the mark of the beast seems to relate to God's 10 Commandment law, but in a negative, counterfeit way.
 - The sea beast's followers refuse to obey God's law—exchanging obedience to God for obedience to the sea beast, instead by substituting a false/counterfeit gospel with a false/counterfeit law.
 - However, ***Sunday-keeping today does not make anyone lost for the gospel, just as Sabbath-keeping doesn't make a person a genuine Christian!***
 - ***Neither does anyone have the mark of the beast right now!*** Sunday-keeping will only become the when people have a clear understanding of the issues involved and it is mandated as the official day of worship by law.
 - ❖ Thus, *Revelation 13* reveals the central issue in the end-time is worship—God or the sea beast, how one views God, the Bible or the sea beast's word, and the true vs. the false gospel (see *the next section below*).
 - ✓ Satan uses deception and coercion through the earth beast, which includes signs, wonders, and economic sanctions to deceive or force the people to worship the sea beast {*v. 17*}.
- **False Gospel & Law**
 - The false trinity/godhead counterfeits God's true, everlasting gospel and 10 Commandment Law.
 - ✓ To pull off this stealth, master counterfeit they must get the people to see God in a twisted/distorted way.
 - Spiritual Babylon's gospel & twisted view of God
 - ✓ We gain insights to Spiritual Babylon's ideas for a counterfeit "gospel" from literal Babylon & tower of Babel story in the books of *Genesis* & *Daniel*.
 - ❖ Focus on human achievement/works instead on relying on God's power {*Genesis 11:4*}.

- "...Let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves...."
- This belief is based on the fact that God cannot be trusted because He is selfish and/or doesn't keep His promises {*Genesis 3:3b, 5*}.
- ❖ Humans must ascend to God, not God to humans {*Genesis 11:4*}.
 - "...Let us build...a tower whose top in the heavens...."
 - This belief assumes God is distant and unconcerned about human beings {*Genesis 3:5*}.
- ❖ Coercion/force is part of God's kingdom, not freedom of choice {*Daniel 3:4-(7), 28-(29)*}.
 - This belief is based on the fact that God is demanding, controlling/ predestinate in nature, exclusive, etc.
- ❖ Humans can tweak or pick and choose what is truth to fit one's own understanding/comfort {*Daniel 2 -> Daniel 3; Revelation 13*}.
 - This belief/action is based on the assumption that one's individual perception/understanding or a group's understanding "trumps"/ supersedes God's truth.

TAKE-AWAY: When organizations, groups, or individuals begin to "play" with God's gospel, explaining it away or "tweaking" it to fit their personal preference, understanding, or comfort, it's also easy for them to tamper with God's Law.

- And *Revelation 13* reveals the false trinity/godhead's stealth attack on God's Law too, particularly the first four commandments—the ones concerning a person's relationship with God and worship.
 - ✓ **1st commandment** ~ "You shall have no other gods before Me (God)" {*Exodus 20:1-(3); Deuteronomy 5:6-(7)*}.
 - ❖ The sea beast's demand for worship is in direct defiance of God's first commandment {*v. 15*}.
 - ✓ **2nd commandment** ~ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image...; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them" {*Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 5:8*}.
 - ❖ The earth beast raising up an image to the sea beast is in direct defiance of God's second commandment {*vv. 14-15*}.
 - ✓ **3rd commandment** ~ "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain" {*Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11*}.
 - ❖ The sea beast's blaspheming God's name is in direct defiance of God's third commandment {*vv. 5-6*}.
 - ✓ **4th commandment** ~ "Remember/observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy..." {*Exodus 20:(8)-11; Deuteronomy 5:(12)-15*}.
 - ❖ The sea & earth beasts activities are also in direct defiance of God's fourth commandment—the seventh-day Sabbath of creation and redemption.
 - ❖ *Revelation 14:6-7, 9* infers the seventh-day Sabbath, in particular, will be the litmus test of one's faithfulness and obedience to God in the end-time.
 - The appeal of the three angels' messages to worship and obey the true God rather than worship the sea beast and receive the mark of the beast is clearly given in the context of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

- **14:7b** uses the phrase “worship Him (God) who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”
- This phrase strongly alludes to the seventh-day Sabbath—the fourth commandment—as stated in **Exodus 20:8-(11)**.
- ❖ In the Bible the seventh-day Sabbath focuses on a relationship with God and proper worship that proceeds from this relationship.
- ❖ As the Sabbath is the distinctive sign of God’s faithful followers’ salvation trust in God and their sanctification/obedience in Him {**Exodus 31:12-17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20**}, the mark of the beast is the sign of obedience to the sea beast and one’s trust in him/the system of religious belief that it spawns.
 - Thus, the mark of the beast substitutes human commandments in place of God’s commandments.
 - The most obvious substitution of a human-established false Sabbath is Sunday, the first day of the week, in place of God’s true, seventh-day Sabbath, the fourth commandment.
 - Also, the Muslim religion has substituted Friday, the sixth day of the week for God’s Sabbath day of worship.

TAKE-AWAY: How could human beings substitute God’s true gospel for a false one when the stakes are eternal and the conviction obvious? Because of how one views God! What one thinks of God and/or what one thinks He requires for salvation is how he/she is either grounded in the beautiful true eternal gospel (we’ll study the true gospel in *Forever 06*) or entrenched in the error of the false gospel.

Further Commentary/Research/Study Resources

- **Andrews Study Bible** ~ Andrews University Press, Berrien Springs, MI
 - Though a study Bible and not a commentary it has very helpful biblical insights.
- **Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation** ~ Ranko Stefanovic
 - An academic, deep, thorough commentary with great Old Testament references for understanding the background and interpretation of the book of Revelation.
- **Plain Revelation: A Reader’s Introduction to the Apocalypse** ~ Ranko Stefanovic
 - A mini version of Dr. Stefanovic’s bigger commentary on the book of Revelation.
 - I [presenter: David] referred to the chapters: “The Beast from the Earth” & “God’s Final Message to the World” for this presentation.
- **What the Bible Says About the End Time** ~ Dr. Jon Paulien
 - Dr. Paulien has a simple, yet profound, way of explaining the meaning of the biblical text.
 - I [presenter: David] referred to chapters 8 & 10 for this presentation.
 - Dr. Paulien’s older works very helpful—not sure about his current interpretations.
- **Armageddon at the Door** ~ Dr. Jon Paulien
 - Clear and concise for end-time events in the context of a personal relationship with Jesus.
 - I [presenter: David] referred to chapters 10 & 11 for this presentation.

LIVING CHOICE: As you learn what is ahead with Satan’s deceptions, will you commit by God’s grace to live your faith and life based on God’s Word, not your personal feelings, perceptions, understanding, etc.?