

The Beast From Out Of The Earth

(Revelation 13:11-18)

Scripture: Revelation 13:11-18

13:11 And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. 13 And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. 15 And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 15 And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, 17 and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

Intro: This morning we resume our study of Revelation 13. Two beasts are described in this 13th chapter, one from out of the sea (vs. 1) and one from out of the earth (vs. 11). The beast that rises up out of the sea is Antichrist. As we learned last Sunday, he will be the final world ruler, who the dragon, Satan, will empower to rule over the revived Roman Empire, comprised of a ten-nation federation. The second Beast, described as “rising up from out of the earth,” is the false religious prophet (vv. 11-18). He will cause men to worship the first Beast, Antichrist. These two beasts will be empowered by Satan, and will join him in promoting an unholy trinity of evil. Just as God exists in a holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; so too, Satan will imitate the Holy Trinity. Satan, the great dragon, will exalt himself as God; the first beast, Antichrist, will assume the identity of Jesus Christ; the second beast, the false prophet, will duplicate the Holy Spirit by causing all men to worship Antichrist (v. 12). This is Satan’s final attempt to substitute a false religion for true faith in Jesus Christ.

I. His Appearance And Authority (vv. 11-12)

A. His appearance (v. 11)

11 And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon.

John next sees a second beast rising up out of the earth. This second beast is identified in Revelation 19:20 as “the false prophet,” who uses miraculous signs to cause men to receive the mark of the beast, and to worship him. His “coming up out of the earth” may be a reference to his arising from a specific land or locale. Some have taken this as a specific reference to the Promised Land, leading them to identify this second beast as a Jew. However, in the light of the great anti-Semitism that will escalate in the Tribulation, it seems unlikely that Satan or Antichrist would allow a Jew to live much less occupy such an important position of power and authority.

While the nationality and geographic origin of the false prophet are not clearly indicated, he is described as having two horns like a lamb, and speaking as a dragon. He will be a powerful religious leader who comes on the scene as a meek little lamb.

The Lord Jesus warned in Matthew 7:15 “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.” Anti-christ will be the consummate wolf in sheep’s clothing. He will promote love and ecclesiastical solidarity, but will speak as a dragon. Anyone who opposes him or his ecclesiastical one-world religion will be killed (v. 15).

I should note that Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic Church has been working tirelessly the last two years to promote a one-world ecumenical church. Just last month he convened a congress in the Old City of Jerusalem with leaders from Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim faiths. This was one of the largest inter-faith services ever held. Pope Francis vehemently rejects the exclusivist claims of salvation in Jesus Christ alone. He has actually equated the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ by Evangelical Christians as Jihadism. Francis teaches that all faiths and gods ultimately lead to heaven. Pope Francis’ salvation is based on love, tolerance, inclusion, and redistribution of wealth. We will be discussing this current information on Wednesday night in a couple of weeks. For those of you who are interested in viewing a recent commentary on this fast moving

story I have included a link on your handout
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSYafB6NNTY>

The false religious leader's sole purpose will be to make all those who dwell on the earth to worship the beast, Antichrist, v. 12

B. His authority (v. 12)

12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

The false prophet exercises all the authority of the first beast, Antichrist. Both of these beasts will be empowered by Satan. The false prophet will make all the people of the earth to worship Antichrist. Here again we see the imitating scheme of Satan, in that his false prophet ministers like the Holy Spirit of God. The primary function of this false prophet will be to use his Satanic authority and power to demand all men to worship Antichrist.

You will recall from last Sunday's lesson that Antichrist will appear to suffer a fatal wound, from which he will be healed (13:3). The people of the entire world will be astonished and follow after the Antichrist. Only God gives life. Satan does not have the power to raise Antichrist from the dead. He will deceive the people of the world into believing that Antichrist actually died and was restored to life.

The false prophet's ministry is likewise founded on deception, vv. 13-14

II. His Deceptive Powers (vv. 13-15)

A. His great signs (vv. 13-14a)

13 And he, the false prophet, performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.

The false prophet is endowed with Satan's power, which enables him to perform great signs and wonders, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven. We often overlook the fact that even though he is limited, Satan has supernatural power to work great miracles. He unleashed his wrath upon Job, and hurled a great storm on the Lake of Galilee in an

attempt to kill Christ. Here, he imitates the Old Testament prophet Elijah, who called fire down from heaven upon his enemies (1 Kgs. 18:38). Others feel that he is imitating the two witnesses in Revelation 11:5, who had the ability to spew fire from their mouths on anyone who tried to harm them. According to verse 14a, the false prophet will use these miraculous signs to *deceive* those who dwell on the earth.

From the dawning of time, human beings have always been suckers for Satan's *deceptive schemes*. Deception is the primary weapon in Satan's arsenal. I am reminded of Paul's warning to the believers in Corinth. We read in **2 Corinthians 11:3**—"I am afraid [for you my brethren], lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ." Satan's number one weapon in leading believers away from the simplicity of remaining devoted to Christ is deception. Satan strives and connives to deceive our minds. He is constantly trying to lead us away from Christ by distorting God's Word, which leads to spiritual apostasy.

Paul continues in verses 13-14 "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."

Like Satan, his emissaries disguise themselves as angels of light. The Corinthians apparently embraced false preachers and teachers, who preached an adulterous gospel. They added human merit (works) to God's gracious offer of salvation by grace through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. We must remain always vigilant to recognize false teachers who distort, deny, and malign God's holy Word.

The second thing the false prophet will do is recorded in verses 14b-15

B. His image of the Beast (vv. 14b-15)

14b He will tell those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

The false prophet will instruct the people of the earth to set up an image of the first beast, who had been killed by a sword and has come to life again. This image of Antichrist will be set up in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. Paul tells us in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that the first beast, Antichrist will sit in

God's temple and receive worship which belongs to God. One commentator writes: "The image is designed not only to portray a likeness to the beast, but the reality of his rule and worship. Whatever the image will be it will portray a likeness of the beast which becomes a symbol of his power and majesty, and of the character of his system" (J. Hampton Keathley, III. *Revelation 13*, pg. 28; available @ Bible.org).

This image of Antichrist becomes the center of the false worship of the beast and the focal point of the final state of apostasy and idolatry.

We read in verse 15 Once the image of Antichrist is set up in the temple, the false prophet will give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and he will cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

The fact that the false prophet can give breath to the image of the first beast, even making it speak, is probably another deceptive work of Satan. Just like the phony death and resurrection of Antichrist; so here, the false prophet merely gives the *impression* that Antichrist's image is able to breath and speak. Some suggest that this may be some type of modern electronic robot-type of technology. In any event, the people of the earth will worship the Antichrist and his image. As in the days of Daniel the prophet, those who refuse to worship the image of the beast will be killed.

The difficulty of being able to identify those who refuse to worship the image of the beast will be remedied by the issuing of an identifying mark, vv. 16-18

III. His Identifying Mark 666 (13:16-18)

16 And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead,

To enforce the worship of the beast, the false prophet will require all people, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slave, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead. The word "mark" refers to an impress made by a stamp, like a brand used on cattle or products. People will be branded as slaves subservient to Antichrist.

According to verse 17 the false prophet's diabolical marking system will require that no one will be able to buy or to sell, without the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. Every person who buys or sells will have to display the mark of the Beast either in his right hand or on his forehead. Those refusing to take the mark of the Beast will be unable to buy or sell, and will ultimately be arrested and killed.

This reminds me of my six-year stay in Italy. In order to reside in Italy for more than a month, or to purchase a car, you had to register with the local police station. Once they fingerprinted and checked you out, they would issue you a *Codice Fiscale*. It was an Italian identification card with your identifying number. I remember thinking at the time, this is pretty creepy! However, as I thought about it I reflected on my own Social Security card.

Finally, I view this mark of Antichrist as another imitation of the mark Christ places on the forehead of every believer. As we noted in chapter 7 God places a seal on the foreheads of His servants. The seal perhaps the Hebrew *taw*, resembles a cross. It symbolizes God's protection and ownership and intention to protect the 144,000 selected from the 12 tribes of Israel, as well as a multitude of Gentiles who come to faith during the Tribulation.

The Beast's number is explained in v. 18: Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

Perhaps no subject of biblical inquiry has elicited more interest than attempts to identify the person corresponding to 666. Dr. Ryrie suggest, "So many identifications have been made of 666 with characters of history as to make them all unreliable. "When this man arises on the scene of world affairs, there will be no mistake as to who he is and in some way unknown now, the number 666 will play a principal part in his identification" (Revelation, 86).

Many have observed that whereas 7 is the number representing God's perfection and completeness, 6 is the number of man. Satan has tried to exalt himself above God ever since his fall from grace, but he always falls short. Some theorize that 666 is to be applied to Satan's unholy trinity. The dragon, who imitates God is a 6; the Antichrist who imitates Jesus Christ is a 6, and the false prophet who imitates the Holy Spirit is a 6. Satan and his evil accomplices are losers. They will never rise to the perfection of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit—who are One and All perfect 7's.

Conclusion: The general character of the Tribulation is clearly portrayed in this 13th chapter. The second beast that rises up out of the earth, identified as the false prophet, will work satanic miracles that will cause the people to worship the first Beast, Antichrist. The false prophet will require all men to receive the mark of Antichrist on their right hand or on their forehead, without which they will not be able to buy or sell. Dissenters will be martyred and killed. Dr. Walvoord concludes “This will be Satan’s final and ultimate attempt to cause the world to worship him and to turn them from the worship of the true God and Jesus Christ as their Savior” (“Revelation” in *BKC*, vol. 2, 963).

Applications:

1. Beware of satanic partnerships and religious apostasy. Satan is a deceiver. Beware of his traps. He uses political, religious, economic, and social situations to draw us away from simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. I encourage each of you to spend time daily in God’s Word, and in prayer.
3. May God help each of us to get involved in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, people’s only hope of deliverance from the wrath to come.
4. Where does your peace and safety reside today? Are you resting in Jesus Christ as your Savior? If so, you have nothing to fear.
5. If you have never trusted in Christ as Savior, ask Him to come into your heart as I close in prayer.

Closing prayer:

Closing Song: *We Believe*