

The Book of Revelation
Revelation 13:11-18 (NIV)
“The Beast Out of the Earth”

Introduction

Then I saw a second beast, coming out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon. It exercised all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. And it performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to the earth in full view of the people. Because of the signs it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast, it deceived the inhabitants of the earth. It ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. The second beast was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.

This calls for wisdom. Let the person who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. That number is 666.

When the Apostle Paul spoke of the times of the Anti-Christ in **2 Thessalonians 2** he concluded by saying in **vs. 9-12**:

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

Paul made it clear that those who have rejected the gospel of Jesus Christ will be drawn to the power of the Anti-Christ, much like a moth to a flame. The world will be desperate for a hero, a savior to rescue them from the utter chaos. The Anti-Christ will be that man for them, but he will not be alone. He will be accompanied by his “spiritual advisor”, the man identified in **Revelations 13:11** as “the beast who comes out of the earth”. It is with this final “beast” that Satan will add the final touch to his trinity of evil during the tribulation. This man, commonly known as “The False Prophet”, will be the Anti-Christ’s “mouthpiece”, his cheerleader and ambassador of evil.

Just as the Godhead is made up of the Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Satan will offer up his counterfeit “trinity of evil” in the last days. His intent in so doing is to receive the worship from mankind that he has so desperately desired for millennia. Masses of people will find themselves being deceived by this powerful delusion, which will lead them to their ultimate destruction. *The Bible* has repeatedly warned against this final assault of Satan, which will be led by the antichrist and his false prophet, but sadly so many have ignored the Scriptures as a source of wisdom. How sad it truly has become when people would rather embrace a lie, than the very truth that could deliver them from the coming wrath.

So, as we study this passage in the final portion of **Revelation 13**, let us make certain that we have placed our faith in The One Who is The Truth. His name is Christ Jesus! A time is coming when the world shall be deceived by the very incarnation of evil and the spokesperson for this evil shall be a smooth talking “false prophet” who will seem to have the answers to all the world’s questions. He will be a deceiver, energized by the very father of lies (**John 8:44**). And we see his coming foretold to us in this passage as we look at *The Mouthpiece*, *The Magic Show*, and *The Mark of The Beast*.

The Mouthpiece

Revelation 13:11 says that this beast will come out of the earth. Many have speculated as to what this term means. Most agree that it points to the fact that this man will be less intimidating than the first beast, who comes out of the Abyss (The Abyss is much more mysterious). I, however, believe that the description is given mainly to serve as a distinction between the two. They are both summoned from the depths of "Satan's domain" as it were, but they are two entirely separate individuals working in tandem, much as the land and the sea go hand in hand. They are two men bent on one purpose, to lead people astray and then to destruction.

The false prophet is further described as one who looked like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon. This gives us insight into the person of the false prophet. He will appear innocent and harmless, but will be ruthless in power. **Rev. 13:12** goes on to say "**he exercised all the authority of the first beast on its behalf.**" This means he will be the mouthpiece, or voice if you will, of the administration. When the world needs a message from the Anti-Christ, they will get it from the false prophet. He is the talker. Smooth and charismatic, he will be a consummate politician.

It will be the false prophet, who orders the image of the Anti-Christ to be placed in the temple for worship (**vs.14-15**). Just as an underling of the President of the United States or other world leaders will go out and brag on their boss, so he doesn't have to brag on himself. The false prophet will rev up the masses to worship the Anti-Christ, marketing and glorifying his every move as god-like and awe inspiring.

I am reminded here of the way that the US president always has a press-secretary in order to answer questions on the his behalf. This person is usually very intelligent as well as a gifted communicator. The task of the press secretary is to do all that he/she can to make the president's every decision appear to come from a place of perfect wisdom. They are in fact the promoter-in-chief, if you will, of the president. This is much like the role that the false prophet will play in regards to his boss, the antichrist. He will be a salesperson, who will go to great lengths to promote the agenda and prowess of his boss. And the people will be so desperate for inspiration, they will be only too happy to follow.

Imagine the crowds at a Republican or Democratic National Convention clapping and cheering with tears streaming down their cheeks as they listen to the stirring speeches of the respective politicians giving a litany of false hopes and promises yet to be broken, and you will start to get an image of what this time of tribulation will look like on a global scale. The false prophet will preach the attributes of the Anti-Christ with such zeal and eloquence, that if it were possible even the elect would be deceived.

For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you ahead of time. (Matthew 24:24-25).

Those whom God has called will see through the hysteria and lies. They will not "drink the kool-aid", as it were, and for this they will be mercilessly persecuted, even unto death (**vs. 7-10**).

The Magic Show

The false prophet will repeatedly perform miracles for the world to bolster their faith in the Anti-Christ. He will even call fire down from heaven as counter-sign against the power of the two witnesses in **Revelation 11**. While the two witnesses are doing miracles to call the world to Christ, the false prophet will put on a show of his own to entice the world to the beast. Paul calls these signs of the false prophet "*lying wonders*" (*pseudos teras* - Gk) (**2 Thessalonians 2:9**), which would lead one to believe that the false prophet is more of an illusionist than a prophet. These false miracles are reminiscent of when the Pharaoh's court magicians, Jannes and Jambres, tried to mimic the miracles of God done through Moses in Pharaoh's court (**Exodus 7:8-13**).

Revelation 13:14 says that the false prophet will deceive the people of the earth with these phony miracles. The Greek word used for *deceived* is "*planao*". Our word "*planet*" comes from this word. The word means "*to wander*". Just as the planets of our solar system seem to wander throughout the

heavens while the stars are fixed and unmoving, the false prophet will perform his magic show to entice people to wander from the Truth of Jesus Christ that is as anchored in place as the stars, unmoving and unchanging. Satan has always been in the business of deception, offering up falsehood in order to subvert the truth. This also underscores why the elect (God's people) will not fall for the lies of the Anti-Christ or his false prophet. God's people know the Truth when they hear it. This is why we say "Amen" (or Truth), when we hear it spoken.

The false prophet will go so far as to make the image of the Anti-Christ seem alive when it is placed in the temple (**vs. 15**). Another trick of technology to cause the masses to wander from the Truth. This explains why any skeptics are killed. Of course, in this day and age, we have so many technological advances that enable us to do many things that in John's day would seem miraculous. It will not take much in this day and time to make the image of the antichrist in the temple seem to come to life.

When the false prophet brings his magic show to town it is a one time offer; believe or be executed. Just imagine what some of our own politicians today would do if they were given that type of power. We wouldn't hear such catch phrases as "Hope and Change", when everything could be more succinctly summed up as, "Bow down to me, and I will let you live. Oppose me, and you will die." One can only imagine the stress of living in those days. I am convinced that although many will become suspicious of the deceptions of those days, they will go along with the lies of the antichrist and his false prophet simply due to the fear of execution.

The Mark of the Beast

When all the dust has settled, so to speak, and the Anti-Christ is fully in power, the false prophet will institute a system of commerce to keep the people in line. Loyal citizens of the empire will be issued a mark of some type, either upon their right hand or forehead (for the really zealous believers, I suppose) (**vs. 16**). This mark will allow the people to do business and buy food. We can only speculate as to the true meaning and significance of the mark (and believe me, millions of people have speculated), but suffice it to say, it will be obvious to all, when they receive the mark that they are pledging allegiance to the Anti-Christ.

John tells us that the mark will be ***"the number of the antichrist's name" (vs. 17)***, which have led many to assume that the number 666 is the sum total of the evil dictator's name (all letters are assigned with a numerical value, and then can be added together to achieve a total sum). Others have pointed out that six is the number of man (man was created on the sixth day), and this symbolizes a religion based upon a "trinity of evil" that falls short of perfection. The number "7" in The Scriptures symbolizes completion and perfection, so the kingdom of the antichrist shall fall short of God's perfection, because it is based on Satan's deceit offered by wicked men. As I mentioned earlier, many have speculated as to the meaning of the mark of the beast, but suffice to say, whatever it may be, unless the people are willing to take it, they will not be able to survive in society. The mark will become essential in order to transact any type of business in the kingdom of antichrist.

This idea is really nothing new. Communist countries of the past, such as Bulgaria, have issued government rationing cards to its citizens. If you were not a loyal card carrying member in good standing with the communist party, you could not even buy groceries for your family. Neither could you open a business or even get a job. We seem shocked by this, but imagine trying to borrow money to build your home without your social security number. Try renouncing your U.S. citizenship, and see how much freedom you have left. The mark of the beast will be no different from what people have already seen as citizens of any county, save one thing; in order to become a citizen of the empire of the beast, you must first worship the beast. A path to citizenship despicably crafted by the false prophet, the beast who comes up from the earth.

Truth!!!