

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### THE THINGS FUTURE, REVELATION 4 - 22

#### EXPLANATORY PROPHECIES, REVELATION 12 - 14

- This section is another parenthesis in which those who play important parts in the tribulation are introduced. The people include a woman representing Israel (12:1-2); the red dragon representing Satan (12:3-4); the male child representing Christ (12:5-6); the archangel Michael representing angels (12:7-12); the offspring of the woman, representing Israel (12:13-17); the beast out of the sea, the world dictator (13:1-10); the beast out of the earth, the false prophet (13:11-18); and the judgment by the Lamb (14:1-20).
- Grant Osborne, *Chapters 12–14 are the third and final interlude tracing the church's involvement in the action of the three judgment sets, this time showing the war between the woman/church and the false trinity (the dragon and the two beasts).*

#### INTRODUCTION

- The work of Satan in the last days is now carried out by his emissaries, the beast out of the sea (13:1-10) and the beast out of the earth (13:11-18). The beast out of the sea, the future world dictator, is aided by the beast out of the earth, the false prophet.
- Charles Ryrie, *The Beast has already been introduced in 11:7, but now his person and work are described more completely. Though there have been many antichrists throughout church history, this is the great and final Antichrist who is still to come (1 John 2:18).*
- Thomas Constable, *John also received information about Satan's chief instruments: the Antichrist and the false prophet, through whom he will pursue his goals during the Tribulation. He recorded this information in order to enable his readers to identify these individuals and to respond properly.*
- John Walvoord, *In the first ten verses of chapter 13, a character is introduced of central importance to the events of the great tribulation. This passage is first of all a revelation of the revived Roman Empire in its period of worldwide dominion, but more especially this paragraph directs attention to the evil character who exercises satanic power as the world dictator.*
- William Barclay, *The general meaning is this. Satan, thrown out of heaven, knows that his time is short and is determined to do as much damage as he can. To cause that damage on earth, he delegates his power to the two beasts which are the central figures in this chapter.*

### THE SECOND BEAST

#### INTRODUCTION

- Thomas Constable, . . . *it seems best to take these beasts as representing individuals.*
- Charles Swindoll, *Along with the Antichrist (the Beast from the sea), John witnessed the rise of a second figure who will serve as the Antichrist's right-hand man.*
- Mark Hitchcock, *Revelation 13 presents two beasts who will rule the world in tandem. The first beast, who rises from the sea, is the political, military leader, while the second beast, who comes from the earth, is the religious, commercial head. This second beast is also known as the false prophet (Revelation 16:13; 19:20, 20:10). Along with Satan, these two rulers form the unholy trinity of the end times. Satan is the false Father (the Antifather), the first beast is the counterfeit Son (the Antichrist), and the false prophet is the counterfeit Spirit (the Antispirit).*
- Kendall Easley, *Throughout the ages God has seen religious evil as a horrible earth monster, and in the final time of Great Tribulation this monster will become a personal False Prophet who brings about the loyalty of earth's people to Antichrist.*

## REVELATION 13:11-18

- A. His appearance (11), *Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.*
1. Matthew 7:15, *Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.*
  2. Charles Ryrie, *The horns suggest strength, though less strength than the first Beast, and the lamb may allude to an appearance of meekness or innocence and may also indicate his character as an imitation of the Lamb of God. This beast is no weak person, however, for he speaks as a dragon.*
  3. Mark Hitchcock, *He looks like a harmless lamb, but speaks like a deadly dragon . . . the reference here to the earth is probably better understood as a contrast to heaven. This beast, known as the false prophet, will be earthy in every sense of the word. His entire horizon will be dominated by the earth.*
  4. J. Dwight Pentecost, *He is influential in religious affairs (13:11, "two horns like a lamb"); he is motivated by Satan as the first beast is (13:11);*
  5. Warren Wiersbe, *The image of the horns (Rev. 13:11) suggests that the false prophet has authority, but the absence of a crown indicates that his authority is not political.*
  6. Thomas Constable, *Clearly this second beast is a servant of the dragon, but his connections with the dragon are not as obvious as those of the first beast . . . His speech will reveal his true loyalty. He is known as the false prophet (16:13; 19:20; 20:10).*
  7. John Walvoord, . . . he is apparently the one referred to as "the false prophet" in 19:20 and 20:10 . . . His geographic origin and his racial connection are not mentioned. He is pictured, however, as having two horns like a lamb and as speaking like a dragon. The description of him as a lamb seems to indicate that he has a religious character, a conclusion supported by his being named a prophet. His speaking as a dragon indicates that he is motivated by the power of Satan who is "the dragon."
- B. His authority (12), *It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.*
1. J. Dwight Pentecost, . . . he has delegated authority (13:12 "the power of the first beast"); he promotes the worship of the first beast and compels the world to worship the first beast as God . . .
  2. Mark Hitchcock, *Just as the Holy Spirit points people to Jesus Christ as the object of worship, the false prophet will point people to the Antichrist as the world's savior and messiah.*
  3. Charles Ryrie, *At no time in his career does he promote himself, but his interests are always concerned with those of the first Beast.*
  4. Thomas Constable, *The second beast will exercise all the authority of the first beast by acting as his prophet (19:20; 20:10; cf. Exod. 7:1). Compare the ministries of Moses and Aaron (Exod. 4:16; 7:9), and the Lord and Elijah (1 Kings 17:1).*
  5. John Phillips, *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. He will control the communication and media of the world and will skillfully organize mass publicity to promote his ends . . . He will mold world thought and shape human opinion like so much potter's clay. 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.*
  6. Grant Osborne, *The dragon gave his authority to the first beast, and now "all authority" is transferred to the second. There is a distinct chain of command, and the purpose is to enslave the whole world in their falsehoods, primarily to "make" every person "worship the first beast" . . . The basis of this worship, as in 13:3-4, is the healing of the mortal wound, that imitation of the greatest miracle of all, the resurrection of Christ. As Christ's resurrection launched Christianity, so its copy will launch this new blasphemous counterfeit religion.*
- C. His activity (13-17)
1. Fire from heaven (13), *It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people,*
    - a. J. Dwight Pentecost, . . . his ministry is authenticated by signs and miracles which he does, evidently proving that he is the Elijah that was to come . . .
    - b. Charles Ryrie, *In order to accomplish his aim, this second beast will be empowered to do certain things . . . He will make fire come down on the earth in imitation of the power of the two witnesses, to show the world that he has as much power as they had (v. 13).*

- c. Thomas Constable, *Like Pharaoh's magicians, only with greater effectiveness, the second beast will have the power to perform supernatural miracles (cf. Exod. 7:11, 22; 8:7). These will be genuine great signs and wonders, not just tricks (16:13–14; 19:20; Matt. 24:4–5, 11, 24–25; 2 Thess. 2:9).*
  - d. John Walvoord, *To induce people to worship the first beast, the second beast performs great and miraculous signs (lit., “great signs,” semeia megala; cf. “a great ... sign” in 12:1), including fire ... from heaven. People sometimes overlook the fact that, while God can do supernatural things, Satan within certain limitations can also perform miracles, and he used this power to the full in this situation to induce people to worship Satan's substitute for Christ.*
  - e. Grant Osborne, *Here the second beast parodies Elijah, who calls down fire on Mount Carmel in 1 Kings 18:36–39 and has God send down fire on the soldiers sent by Ahab to arrest him in 2 Kings 1:10–14. This miracle occurs validly twice in Revelation, with the two witnesses (Rev 11:5) and at the destruction of Satan's army (20:9). The false prophet brings fire down “in full view of the people,” not in service of God but to deceive the people into worshipping a false god. It is not a religious act but a public relations performance with an evil purpose behind it.*
2. An image for the beast (14-15)
- a. To deceive (14), ***and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.***
    - 1) J. Dwight Pentecost, . . . *the worship promoted is an idolatrous worship (13:14-15; he has the power of death to compel men to worship the beast . . .*
    - 2) Charles Ryrie, *He will order those on the earth to make an image of the first Beast (v. 14), and from what follows it appears that they will do it willingly and quickly . . .*
    - 3) Thomas Constable, *The second beast (or false prophet) will be able to produce some type of convincing lifelike likeness or image of Antichrist (cf. v. 15; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4), perhaps an apparently living statue or robot (cf. Dan. 3:4–6) . . . The first beast apparently will come back to life after being considered dead—an apparent resurrection.*
    - 4) John Walvoord, *This image, referred to three times in the chapter, is mentioned seven more times in the book of Revelation (14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4). The image is the center of the false worship and the focal point of the final state of apostasy, the acme of the idolatry which has been the false religion of so many generations.*
    - 5) Charles Swindoll, *The False Prophet of the end times will deceive the majority of the world through his hellish antics . . . Blinded by unbelief and sin, the world will easily fall prey to the second Beast's deceptive message and methods. Intellectually attracted to him, emotionally drawn by his appealing style, and convinced by his amazing signs, they will voluntarily submit and obey.*
    - 6) Grant Osborne, *Since the sinners have rejected God's offer and refused to repent, God is “giving them over” (as in Rom 1:24, 26) to the deceptions they clearly prefer. If they want to worship the very demonic powers who have tortured and killed their friends and neighbors (Rev 9), God will allow them to experience that delusion in all its terrible force.*
  - b. To give life (15), ***And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.***
    - 1) Thomas Constable, *The image will “speak,” and cause those who do not worship it to be killed (cf. Dan. 3:11), possibly by issuing commands for executions . . . Evidently these events will all take place in Jerusalem, and probably in the temple that will stand there at that time (cf. 11:1–2; 2 Thess. 2:4).*
    - 2) Charles Ryrie, . . . *his next step is to give breath to the image they make. The word for breath is pneuma (“spirit:). This could indicate a supernatural miracle (performed by the power of Satan) that actually gives life to the image . . . since it is the image that causes those who do not worship it to be killed, this may indicate that it has actual life.*
    - 3) John Walvoord, *The intent of the passage seems to be that the image has the appearance of life manifested in breathing, but actually it may be no more than a robot. The image is further described as being able to speak, a faculty easily accomplished by mechanical means . . . Whether completely natural in its explanation, or whether some supernatural power is used to create the impression of life, the image apparently is quite convincing to the mass of humanity and helps to turn them to a worship of the first beast as their god . . . The command to worship the image as well as the first beast was enforced by killing those who refused to do so. But there was a difference between the decree to put them to death and its execution. The problem of ferreting out everyone in the entire earth who would not worship the beast would naturally take time. Hitler, in his attempt to exterminate the Jews, took many months and never completed his task. The multitude of martyrs is referred to in 7:9–17.*

- 4) Charles Swindoll, *This may very well be the judgment on wicked humanity mentioned by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:11–12, “For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.” Having rejected God’s offer of repentance, the unbelievers will be lured by a deception so grand that only true believers will be able to see through the illusion and, as a result, stand firm in the face of persecution.*
  - 5) Grant Osborne, *It was popularly believed in the first century that the gods did inhabit their idols, and rituals existed to call forth the spark of the divine in them. The Roman world was enamored with magicians and rituals. But the antichrist will go beyond such deeds and will bring these things to pass in reality.*
3. A mark to be required on everyone (16-17), ***Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.***
    - a. J. Dwight Pentecost, . . . *he has authority in the economic realm to control all commerce . . . he has a mark that will establish his identity for those who live in that city . . .*
    - b. Charles Ryrie, *He will force people to become identified with the Beast by a mark that they must receive on their foreheads or right hands . . . People will become slaves of the Beast and have the identifying mark of their slavery. Without it they cannot buy or sell . . . Verse 17 indicates that it will be either the name of the Beast or the number of his name.*
    - c. Leon Morris, *The choice of right hand or forehead is presumably for conspicuousness. It could not be hidden. It may also be meant as a travesty of the Jewish custom of wearing phylacteries (little boxes containing extracts from the Bible) on the left hand (or forearm) and on the head.*
    - d. R. H. Charles, *The interchangeability of the beast’s name and the number of his name evidently indicates that the name, written in Greek letters, has a numerical equivalent (v. 18).*
  - D. His number (18), ***This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.***
    1. Charles Ryrie, *The number is further explained in verse 18 as 666. Evidently, people will be stamped with the number 666 or the name for which those numbers stand . . . 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 the identification. The mark is of the first Beast . . . whose worship is promoted by the second beast. For this reason, the second beast is called elsewhere the False Prophet of the first Beast (16:13; 19:20; 20:10)*
    2. Mark Hitchcock, *Those who take the mark will be taking the Antichrist’s name upon them and will signal his complete ownership of them and their destiny. And more significantly, all who receive the mark will be eternally doomed (Revelation 14:9-10) . . . It’s critical to recognize that nothing we see today is the mark of the beast. It won’t appear until after the rapture has occurred, the Antichrist has been unveiled, and the seven-year Tribulation has reached its midpoint. No one today should worry that he will somehow take the mark of the beast by accident. All who take it during the Tribulation will do so consciously and intentionally, and, in doing so, will seal their eternal fate.*
    3. John Walvoord, *Probably the simplest explanation here is the best, that the triple six is the number of a man, each digit falling short of the perfect number seven. Six in the Scripture is man’s number. He was to work six days and rest the seventh. The image of Nebuchadnezzar was sixty cubits high and six cubits broad. Whatever may be the deeper meaning of the number, it implies that this title referring to the first beast, Satan’s masterpiece, limits him to man’s level which is far short of the deity of Jesus Christ.*
    4. Thomas Constable, *I think that neither the identity of the Antichrist nor the number of his name will be evident until he appears and fulfills prophecy. Then wise believers will be able to calculate his number as well as identify his person. Until then both aspects of Antichrist’s identity will in all likelihood remain a mystery.*
    5. J. Vernon McGee, *I would suggest that we not waste our time trying to identify a person by this number. Instead, we need to present Jesus Christ that we might reduce the population of those who have to go through the Great Tribulation Period and who will therefore know what the number of the Beast is.*

## SUMMARY

- John Walvoord, *Chapter 13, taken as a whole, is one of the great prophetic chapters of Scripture and is the only passage which presents in any detail the two principal evil characters of the end of the age who form with Satan unholy trinity . . . The general character of the great tribulation, however, is graphically portrayed in this chapter. It will be a time of absolute rule, and Satan will have his way. The ultimate in false religion will sweep the entire world in a manifestation of evil never before seen on the earth. The fact will be demonstrated beyond question that man is not able to solve his own problems and only God can bring righteousness and peace to the earth.*
- Irenaeus of Lyons (b. 130 A.D.), *It is therefore more certain, and less hazardous, to await the fulfillment of the prophecy, than to be making surmises, and casting about for any names that may present themselves.*
- Warren Wiersbe, *We have reached the middle of the Tribulation in our study, but we are not yet ready for the return of the Lord. Before John revealed how the great drama will climax, he paused to overview great events to come; and that will be our next topic.*
- Thomas Constable, *As we see world events shaping up for this scenario, we should allow them to motivate us to redeem the time, before the Rapture or death terminates our ministries here. On the other hand we should also rejoice that our Savior's second coming—and even sooner the Rapture—is drawing near (Matt. 6:10).*