

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Message #14
Revelation 13:11-18 – The False Prophet
(10/25/09 PM)

Revelation is not necessarily in chronological order. The judgments appear to advance the narrative. (Refer to overview handout)

In chapter 12 we saw five of the seven symbolic personages that will be predominant in the Tribulation.

1. The woman clothed with the sun—Israel
2. The fiery red dragon—Satan
3. The male child—Jesus
4. Michael—the Archangel
5. The rest of the woman's offspring—saved Israel
6. The Beast out of the Sea – The Antichrist

Chapter 13 continues by introducing the False Prophet through another image of a beast but this one is different.

1. The Description of the False Prophet (11)

The Satanic Trinity Will Be Completed

Satan, the Antichrist and the False Prophet imitate God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

• **This beast represents a person**

We said last week that the beast out of the sea represents both a person and a kingdom. Some see this beast “coming up out of the earth” as an institution or an ideology. The false church is depicted as a harlot in Revelation 17 sitting upon the beast out of the sea. John uses the word “another” which means of the same kind. The False Prophet will be a real person like the Antichrist. This is verified in Revelation 19:20, “Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

The description of him in chapter 19 matches his activities revealed in chapter 13.

• **The image is one of deception**

“he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.”

As we saw last week Satan deceives through deception. Jesus called him “a liar and the father of it”, John 8:44. There have been many false prophets throughout biblical history. As Jesus prophesied that many antichrists will come He also predicted that many false prophets would arise. Matthew 24:11, “Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.” This man will be the ultimate and final false prophet. This beast has only two horns which do not contain crowns. His power will not be one of conquest by military might. He will be a spiritual leader, most likely a great orator. He will be a wolf in sheep's clothing. His voice reveals that his message is from the dragon, Satan. Dr. Kroll, “As the Holy Spirit produces Christ-likeness in us, the False Prophet will produce Antichrist-likeness in the lives of those who worship the Beast.”

The False Prophet Will Be Satan's Mouthpiece

2. The Authority of the False Prophet (12-14)

He Will Imitate the Holy Spirit's Power

“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence”

His authority will be delegated to him by the Antichrist. He too will be empowered by Satan himself. As the Holy Spirit promotes Jesus and not Himself the False Prophet will promote the Antichrist. His purpose will be to promote a worldwide cult of Satanic worship. Humanly speaking this worship will be directed to the Antichrist.

“And causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”

- **He will deceive the masses through supernatural signs**

The terrible events of the tribulation will cause people to seek someone who can save them.

“He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast”

He imitates one of the signs that the two witnesses performed. This will be one of the “lying wonders” revealed in

2 Thessalonians 2:9, 2 “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.”

The earth dwellers will be eager to believe the signs they witness.

- **He will lead them in constructing the ultimate idol**

“telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.”

The False Prophet will influence the earth dwellers to set up an idol image of the Antichrist. This image will certainly stand in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. This is such an important event it is referred to continually throughout the rest of the book (14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4). We saw last week that this is connected to the “blasphemy” of the Antichrist (13:4-6).

This is the “abomination” spoken of Daniel 9:27, by Jesus in Matthew 24:15, and by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 and now John. The Antichrist is not God and therefore not omnipresent. It seems likely that he will for a time sit in the Temple until this image replaces and represents him.

The Focus of the World's Deception Will Be the Imitation Resurrection of the Antichrist

3. The Agenda of the False Prophet (15-18)

He Will Be Given His Program by Satan

- **To deceive the world through demonic power**

“He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak”

The worldwide worship of the Antichrist will center upon the image of the beast. He will give the ultimate idol the ability to speak. The words usually translated as life are *zoe* or *bios*. The word “breath” is *pneuma*, the same word that is translated as “spirit”. It seems likely that the image will be able to speak through some kind of demonic power.

- **To destroy the followers of Christ**

“and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.”

This is similar to the events of Daniel 3 when Nebuchadnezzar constructed his idolatrous image. We have already seen in 6:9-11 and 7:13-14 that there will be many

martyred during the Tribulation period. He will not be permitted to kill all believers either Jew or Gentile.

- **To enslave forever the earth dwellers**

“He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

The word “mark” means to engrave. It was used to describe tattoos or brands given to slaves in the Roman Empire. Members of cults in the first century would often mark themselves. The mark will be necessary in order to function during the reign of the Antichrist. By the end of the Tribulation both believers and unbelievers will be clearly identified. The mark of the beast will be some type of universal designation. This highlights the fact that the kingdom of the Antichrist will be characterized by global government, global economy and global religion. The mark of the beast imitates the seal of the Holy Spirit. To receive this mark is to determine one’s eternal destiny.

(14:9-11) “Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

Verse 18 Is for the Tribulation Generation

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.”

Any attempt to understand the meaning is futile. Seven is the number of perfection. Seven is associated with God. Man was created on the sixth day. Repeating the number three times is for emphasis. That this is the number of man highlights the fact that the Antichrist will indeed be a man and not God. Believers living at this time will be able to discern this mark and what it means.