

In his vision John now observes the rising of two beasts onto the world scene, providing us with a description of the Antichrist and his false prophet who will deceive the world into worshiping him and, indirectly, Satan. The healing of the Antichrist and a series of miracles performed by the false prophet will enable them to coerce the world into worshiping the Antichrist as God.

---

<sup>1</sup> And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

**“And I stood upon the sand of the sea”** - John’s perspective has changed again and in his vision he is now standing on a seashore overlooking the water. Many manuscripts read “And he stood,” apparently referring to the dragon from the previous chapter. This reading would indicate that the dragon’s wrath against the woman causes him to raise up the beasts in this chapter in an effort to destroy the woman (Israel).

**“and saw a beast [wild animal; metaphorically: brutal; savage] rise up out of the sea”** - The Greek word for “beast” here is different from the one John uses to describe the four beasts in heaven. In chapter 4 the word for “beast” means “a living creature” but here in chapter 13 the word refers to a brutal and savage wild animal. The sea represents the bottomless pit so it seems that Satan is summoning a demon from the pit to possess and empower the Antichrist.

**“having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns”** - We will see in chapter 17 that the seven heads represent seven great kingdom/empires of the past, while the ten horns and crowns represent the 10 kings within the Antichrist’s revived Roman empire. Satan has been the power behind these great empires of the past and so it will not be inconsistent for him to raise up the Antichrist and his kingdom as a tool to destroy Israel.

**“and upon his heads the name of blasphemy”** - Various places in scripture describe the Antichrist as blaspheming the name of God, particularly by exalting himself above God (vs. 5-6, Dan. 7:25; Dan. 11:36; 2 Th. 2:3-4). He will seek to suppress any deity that would compete with him as an object of worship, particularly the One True God.

---

<sup>2</sup> And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

**“And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard...”** - Because the Roman empire conquered and assimilated the Grecian empire before it (as the Grecian did the Medo-Persian empire and the Medo-Persian did the Babylonian empire), the revived Roman empire of the Antichrist is represented with elements of the prior kingdoms. The leopard represents the speed and agility of the Grecian empire, the feet of a bear the lumbering strength of the Medo-Persian empire, and the mouth of a lion the majesty of the Babylonian empire roaring over its prey.

**“and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority”** - The Antichrist’s success will not be through his own natural ability but because of Satan’s power and influence. Satan will be the one who raises him to his place of power and authority.

---

<sup>3</sup> And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. <sup>4</sup> And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

**“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed”** - Commentators debate on whether the wounded head refers to a kingdom or its ruler (the Antichrist), but there are repeated references in this chapter to “the beast” having a wound by a sword and lived. It would be hard to interpret those references as a kingdom having a deadly wound due to the frequent use of the pronoun “he” when referring to the beast. Of those who believe that this is a reference to the Antichrist being wounded to death (perhaps by an assassin), some point to the phrase “as it were” and suggest that the Antichrist will fake his death/near death experience and recovery. Whether he truly dies or not it will appear to the world as a supernatural resurrection/recovery, a Satanic imitation of Christ’s resurrection.

**“and all the world wondered after the beast”** - The world will be amazed by the ability of the Antichrist to recover from his injuries.

**“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast”** - The world will be so impressed with the Antichrist that they will worship him, probably not realizing that they are actually worshiping Satan, the power behind the Antichrist.

**“and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?”** - Satan will cause the world to see the Antichrist’s political and military successes as well as his apparent resurrection and become infatuated with him. Perhaps they will see him as a superior man at the apex of human development and intelligence.

---

<sup>5</sup> And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. <sup>6</sup> And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

**“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies”** - The ego of the Antichrist will go into overdrive as he now has a platform to speak “great things” and blaspheme the name of God. Possibly he will proclaim how that man does not need God and that he is proof that man can evolve into a higher level being. It is likely that he will proclaim himself superior to the gods that man has worshiped before (including the God of Israel) and demand the world’s allegiance and worship.

**“and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months”** - In the past God has often put a stop to those that blaspheme His name fairly quickly, such as when He killed King Herod because he did not give God the glory when the people praised him as a god (Acts 12:21-23). However, in this case it will serve the purposes of God to allow the Antichrist to continue his blasphemy for the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation.

**“And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God...”** - It seems that the Antichrist goes into a tirade against any worship of God by not only blaspheming the name of God, but also heaven (the tabernacle or dwelling place of God) and “them that dwell in heaven.” This probably includes angels and the saints of God who are now with the Lord. He will hate anything that people might worship instead of him. **Dan. 11:36** *“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous [amazing; extraordinary] things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.”*

<sup>7</sup> And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. <sup>8</sup> And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

**“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them”** - The Antichrist will be so full of his own ego and his desire to be worshiped that he will persecute the saints of God who will refuse to give him the worship he demands. God will allow him to overcome and kill many of them. Hitler’s vendetta against the Jews during the Holocaust comes to mind.

**“and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations”** - The military might and political power of the Antichrist will allow him to arrest and kill Christians all over the world. These other nations will have neither the ability nor the desire to protect their citizens from the wrath of the Antichrist. They will not be able to preserve the sovereignty of their own nation against the will of the Antichrist.

**“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him”** - Whether they want to or not, the entire planet will be compelled to worship the beast or die for resisting.

**“whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”** - Those who truly do belong to Jesus Christ will not be able to turn their back on their Savior and worship the Antichrist, but the rest of humanity will worship the beast either willingly or in order to avoid the consequences of refusing.

**Verses 9-10:** The 3 ½ years that the Antichrist will be persecuting genuine Christians will be a terrible time but vs. 9-10 is a reminder that the Antichrist and his henchmen will eventually get what they deserve. These verses will no doubt be an encouragement to tribulation saints as we are told that the captivity and sword that the Antichrist and his henchmen have inflicted on others will eventually be inflicted upon them. This knowledge is the “patience [*endurance*] and the faith of the saints,” giving them the courage to trust God as they endure to the end.

<sup>11</sup> And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. <sup>12</sup> And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

**“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth”** - John sees another beast, this time coming up out of the earth.

**“and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon”** - This beast will be weaker than the first beast, for he will only have two horns and they will be nubs. He will appear to be gentle like a lamb but his words will come from the dragon (Satan) and will be full of deceit.

**“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him”** - They are both empowered by Satan and so will have just as much Satanic influence over people as the Antichrist.

**“and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed”** - This second beast (also described as the false prophet) will preach the “gospel” of the Antichrist as Satan uses him to promote worship of the Antichrist. The world will be led into this new religion as the second beast points to the healing of the Antichrist’s deadly wound as proof of his deity.

<sup>13</sup> And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, <sup>14</sup> And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

**“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men”** - This false prophet will “prove” the legitimacy of his message by doing miracles, such as causing fire to come down from heaven any time he wants.

**“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast”** - People without faith have nothing else to define reality for them and so they will be deceived by the false prophet’s miracles. The phrase “in the sight of the beast” is interesting because it suggests that perhaps the false prophet can only do his miracles in the presence of the Antichrist, which would help make his case as to the power and deity of the Antichrist.

**“saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live”** - The false prophet convinces the world to create an idol of the Antichrist to honor his recovery from his great wound. The apparent death and resurrection of the Antichrist seems to be a central theme in the false prophet’s message and the Antichrist’s claim to deity.

<sup>15</sup> And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

The Greek word for “life” (pneuma) means “breath.” The false prophet pushes worship of the Antichrist by using his Satanic power to give the idolatrous image of the Antichrist the ability to speak. This would seem to give legitimacy to the worship of the Antichrist and a basis for putting to death anyone refusing to worship the image.

<sup>16</sup> And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: <sup>17</sup> And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Not only does the false prophet insist that everyone worship the beast, but no one will be able to buy or sell without the authorization of the Antichrist. This mark, placed in either the right hand or the forehead, signifies allegiance to the Antichrist. The word for “mark” indicates a stamp or imprint. Many theories exist pertaining to the nature of this mark, but the most likely method of taking the mark with today’s existing technology may either be a special tattoo or an RFID chip embedded in the skin, much like many pets are “chipped” today.

<sup>18</sup> Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

John gives us a nugget of wisdom by telling us that the number of the beast is 666. That number means nothing today but will become significant when the Antichrist and false prophet establish the economic requirement of taking the mark. Perhaps the number is a clue that will be useful to the tribulation saints who will understand its significance in the context of the tribulation.