

The Second Beast: The Beast from the Earth

Revelation 13:11-15

The End Times

In my last post, we unpacked **Revelation 13:5-10** concerning **The Beast's War with the Saints**. In this post, we move on the **Revelation 13:11-15** to **The Second Beast: The Beast from the Earth**.

"Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. It had two horns like those of a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon. ¹² It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence; and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, the one whose fatal wound had been healed. ¹³ It performs great miracles, even causing fire to come down from heaven onto the earth as people watch. ¹⁴ It deceives the people living on earth by the miracles it is allowed to perform in the presence of the beast, and it tells them to make an image honoring the beast that was struck by the sword but came alive again. ¹⁵ It was allowed to put breath into the image of the beast so that the image of the beast could even speak; and it was allowed to cause anyone who would not worship the image of the beast to be put to death." ~ Revelation 13:11-15 (CJB)

The **second beast** was able to influence **the earth and its inhabitants** to worship the first beast. Can you imagine that this man affected even the rocks (the earth)? HaSatan's power to deceive is truly frightening.

Yochanan previously mentioned that the **first beast** seemed to have a fatal wound but had been healed (v. 3). Here we learn that it was the **second beast** that brought him (the **first beast**) to life again. The **second beast** is afterward called the **false prophet** (Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10).

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. It had two horns like those of a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon. The **two horns** represent power; the word **lamb** denotes religion. This **beast**, also known as the **false prophet** is, therefore, to be the head of a world religious system. Like the **first beast**, who is the Antichrist, the **false prophet**, derives his power from **the dragon**, HaSatan. This group of three makes up the unholy Trinity. John Walvoord and Roy Zuck write: ¹

Satan seeks to take the place of God the Father; the first beast assumes the place of Jesus Christ, the Son, the King of kings; and the second beast, the false prophet, has a role similar to the Holy Spirit who causes Christians to worship God. This is Satan's final attempt to substitute a false religion for true faith in Christ.

It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence; and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, the one whose fatal wound had been healed. It is now obvious that the Antichrist and the **false prophet** have entered into some unholy alliance to deceive the whole world. The **false prophet** is given the full backing of the Antichrist with the power to compel people to worship him. In this manner, the false prophet imitates the ministry and work of the Holy Spirit.

Observe also the **fatal wound** that **had been healed**. As the false prophet continues to relate this episode over and over, it will appear to the world as a whole to be a resurrection from the dead. There is a saying that if a lie is told often enough, it will be believed for the truth. The **false prophet** will do everything within his power to persuade the people that the Messiah, who is in truth the Antichrist, has arrived.

It performs great miracles, even causing fire to come down from heaven onto the earth as people watch. Clarence Larkin sheds some light on this:

¹ A Layman's Commentary on Revelation by Don Jones.

The False Prophet will be a "Miracle Worker." While Jesus was a "miracle worker," He did His mighty works in the "power" of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 10:38). Among the miracles that the False Prophet will perform he will bring down FIRE FROM HEAVEN. As we have seen under the work of the "Two Witnesses," chapter 11:1-14, there will probably be a "FIRE-TEST" between Elijah and False Prophet, and the test as to who is God of Mt. Carmel will be repeated. That Satan, who will then energize the False Prophet, can do this is clear from Job 1:16, where Satan, having secured permission from God to touch all that Job had, brought down "fire from heaven" and burned up Job's sheep and servants. ²

It deceives the people living on earth by the miracles it is allowed to perform in the presence of the beast, and it tells them to make an image honoring the beast that was struck by the sword but came alive again. It was allowed to put breath into the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast could even speak; and it was allowed to cause anyone who would not worship the image of the beast to be put to death. It is interesting that the **False Prophet** tells the people that they should make an image to the **first beast**, the Antichrist. However, they all seem to understand that when the **false prophet** makes a suggestion, it is the same as a command; do it! The image is fashioned and set up in the Temple of God to be worshiped (Matthew 24:15). With the Antichrist, himself, (2 Thessalonians 2:4) and the image both appearing in the Temple of God, this must indeed be the **Abomination Of Desolation** spoken of by Daniel (Daniel 9:27; 12:11).

Miracles pose two questions: (1) Do they happen at all? (2) If they do, are they signs from God? Whether **miracles** happen depends on how one defines a miracle. Without entering into subtleties, we can define a **miracle** as an event outside the ordinary which involves supernatural intervention. Although this displaces the locus of uncertainty onto what is meant by "supernatural intervention," the Bible, most religions and many nonreligious sources agree that **miracles** so defined do occur.

The Bible takes some **miracles** as signs from God, but others are acknowledged as having a demonic origin. Thus the second beast **deceives the people living on earth**, just as the magicians in Pharaoh's court deceived him into discounting the God of Israel (Exodus 7:11, 22; 8:3(7)); in the New Testament compare Acts 13:6b-9, 16:16-18, 19:13-16). However, God sets limits to demonic and Satanic capacity to perform **miracles** (Job 1:12, 2:6; Matthew 24:24), just as He did as in Moshe's day (Exodus 8:14-15(18-19), 9:11; see also Deuteronomy 18:9ff.).

Special Comparative Note on Chapter 13:11-15 ³

Historicist Approach:

As I noted in **The Beast from the Sea ~ Part 1, Historicists** have differed among themselves concerning the identity of the **two beasts**. Both are identified with Rome, but most seem to identify the **second beast** with the papacy itself. The Holy Roman Empire was created to last forever, yet it has not. However, the papacy is still influential to millions today.

Preterist Approach:

Preterists advance at least three positions as to the identity of the second beast. The most prominent is this beast represents *"the cult of the emperor"* in the worship of Caesars. The **two horns like a lamb** suggest a religious nature more than a political one. A third possible identification of the **second beast** is Israel itself. [As I do most Preterists interpretations throughout, I categorically reject this position.]

Futurist Approach:

² Ibid.

³ Material in this post is taken from *"Revelation: Four Views, Revised & Updated"* by Steve Gregg. Notations in brackets, if any, are my comments.

Futurists view the second beast as a religious leader ~ even a counterfeit messiah ~ as opposed to the political character of the *first beast*. Most suggest the papacy as the likely candidate. The power to cause the *fire to come down from heaven onto the earth* is duplicative of the **Two Witnesses**.

Idealist Approach:

Idealists view most of the imagery of the **second beast** as duplicative of the **Two Witnesses** and as a false religion as the servant of the **first beast**.

[As a side note, Steve Gregg points out that Hollywood is more than capable of emulating the description given of **the image of the first beast** with animatronics.]

In my next post, we will explore **Revelation 13:16-18** dealing with **The Mark of the Beast**.