

“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.” – Revelation 13:16-17

Overview:

John now sees another beast, another of the same kind, coming out not from the sea but from the earth. This could mean this person comes from the land of Israel or it could just simply focus on him being created. A man whose power is not heavenly but an abomination to God. His methods focus on what is esteemed by man and not on the things esteemed by God.

This beast is commonly referred to as the “false prophet”. He has two horns which symbolize the two spheres of his authority – religious and political. John describes his appearance as “like a lamb” but he speaks “like a dragon”. His words are vicious and devastating. He is a man of action: he exercises (v.12), and causes (v.12), he performs (v.13), he even makes (v.13), he deceives (v.14), he was granted (v.15), he causes (v.16).

The second beast does things to get noticed by others. In Rev 13:12 we read, “And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence”. This elevates the status of the Antichrist in the view of men. In Rev 13:13 we read, “He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.” The false prophet is all about getting noticed and making men worship the first beast, the Antichrist or be killed.

The false prophet deceives those who dwell on the earth by performing great signs and wonders. He can cause fire to come down from heaven and he even gives breath to the image of the Antichrist so that it can speak. He makes everyone, no matter their social status, take a mark so they can buy and sell.

We are told in Rev 13:14, “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”. There has been lots of speculation on what this means and who is the antichrist, but the Bible doesn't give us that information. What we know from this text is it is a number of a man. No matter how many signs and wonders the antichrist performs, at the end of the day, he is just a man. Used by Satan to deceive men, women, and children so they won't repent and turn to Jesus – “*The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” - John 1:29

References:

- Rev 13:11 – Second instrument of Satan's warfare against the offspring of the woman – Rev 12:17
- Rev 13:11 – His power is not heavenly – Luke 16:15 an abomination to God
- Rev 13:11 – Like a lamb – John 1:29; Rev 5:6
- Rev 13:12 – Subservient to the 1st beast, plays into the way man thinks – Acts 14:8-15
- Rev 13:13 – Makes fire come down from heaven – 2 Kings 1:10-12; Rev 11:5
- Rev 13:14 – Who was wounded – Rev 13:3, 12, 14
- Rev 13:14 – Deceives – Pleasure in unrighteousness vs. love for the truth – 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12
- Rev 13:14 – To love the truth is to love its end, Jesus – John 14:6
- Rev 13:14 – Love of God growing cold – Matthew 24:12; Hebrews 5:12-14
- Rev 13:14 – Ephesian church rebuked for leaving its 1st love – Jesus – Rev 2:4-5
- Rev 13:15 – He was granted power to give breath – a strong delusion, the great lie – 2 Thessalonians 2:11
- Rev 13:16 – A mark (charagma) – something shaped by art and man's devising – Acts 17:29
- Rev 13:16 – On their right hand or on their foreheads – Rev 7:3-4
- Rev 13:18 – Here is – Rev 13:10,18; 14:12; 17:9

Questions:

- * Where does John see this beast coming from?
- * How does John describe this beast?
- * What is the main goal of this beast?
- * Why do signs and wonders cause people to be deceived?
- * Read 2 Corinthians 5:7 – How does Paul tell us to live our Christian lives?
- * Take a few minutes and ask God to teach you not to depend on signs and feelings to live the Christian life by.

Additional Study:

Rev 13:11

* Then I saw another (*allos*) – another of the same kind

Rev 13:14

* Image to the beast (*eikon*) – image, representation

Rev 13:16

* The mark (*charagma*) – something shaped by art and man's devising