

THE APOCALYPSE – A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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The Two Unholy Beasts

(Rev 13:1-18)

1. The Beast from the Sea – 13:1-10

Revelation 13:1-2, *“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 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.”*

13:1-2 -- The make-up of the first beast is described here. The word “beast (*therion*)” does not refer to living creatures (cf. Rev. 4) or domesticated animals. It refers to “a dangerous animal:--(venomous, wild) beast.” Who is he and where does he come from?

He rises up out of the sea – The sea has always been seen as mysterious and very foreboding. It is dark and deep and the mysteries hidden beneath have been the source of many old wives tales and even movies today. This perhaps indicates the mysterious origin of this beast. He is a human being for sure as the sea here also refers to the sea of humanity. **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4**, *“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”*

He has seven heads and ten horns – The chiasmic structure is clear here. The mention of the heads first and then horns and followed by the horns and the heads shows that the emphasis is to take note of this symbol of the first beast. The similarity to his master, Satan cannot be missed. **Revelation 12:3**, *“And there appeared another wonder in heaven;*

*and behold a great red dragon, having **seven heads and ten horns**, and seven crowns upon his heads [emphasis added].*” This likeness in imagery points us to the fact that the characteristic of the Antichrist to his lord, Satan, will be very, very similar. The antichrist’s job is to imitate or copy Christ. When Jesus says, “I and my Father are One (cf. Jn. 10:30)” and “He who has seen me has seen the Father also (cf. Jn. 14:9)” will also be copied by the antichrist. He will be like Satan just as Christ and the Heavenly Father are One.

Seven heads – These seven heads represent successive empires or kingdoms that will conquer Israel which will have a direct bearing on the First and Second Coming of Jesus Christ: EGYPT; ASSYRIA; BABYLON; MEDO-PERSIA; GREECE; ROME; AND THE EMPIRE OF THE ANTICHRIST. All the above empires came and gone and the kingdom of the antichrist will have the characteristics of these past kingdoms and more. He will supersede all of them by far. He has these seven heads as part of who he is.

This is the capital “A” antichrist of the last days whereas all the kings of earlier kingdoms were minions or small “a” antichrists! **John 2:18**, *“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.”*

Ten Horns – Horns when used symbolically to refer to strength and power (cf. 1 Sam. 2:1, 10; 2 Sam. 22:3; Job 16:15; Psalms 18:2; 75:4-5; 89:17, 24; 92:10; 112:9; Jer. 48:25; Mic. 4:13). **Ten** fits the imagery of the fourth beast in Daniel 7:7-8, 24, and is a symbolic number representing all the world’s political and military might. Antichrist will rise from among these ten (Dan. 7:16-24) and will not rule merely ten nations, but the entire world (cf. Dan. 7:23). Unlike the seven **heads**, which represent successive world empires, all of the rulers symbolized by the **ten horns** will rule at the same time (cf. 17:12) [**MacArthur**, vol. 2, 42—emphasis original].” Ten is the number of completeness and probably refers to the absolute power that this beast will be given. He will have absolutely power over the whole world as never before (the ten heads with ten crowns).

This power of his will be obtained by peaceful means and then his true colours will be revealed once he has obtained this power (see the first 4 seals in Rev. 6). Anyone who opposes him will be quickly put to death. This has been the mode of operation of world despots like Hitler and Mao Tse Tung. All oppositions are to be removed by the force of death. If it means murdering millions in order to secure his power, so be it. The execution of the 6 million Jews by Hitler and his henchmen was carefully documented and a movie was made describing how the key players of this massacre plotted and planned their way into gassing and slaughtering millions of Jews as if they were cattle! There was no shame but glee as they deliberated on the best method of “evacuation” (a euphemism for extermination). There was no conscience in them as they said that the method of killing 20,000 a day was the best and most effective way of ridding the world of the Jews by “racial cleansing.” The genocide of the Nazis will pale to insignificance when this empire of the antichrist becomes a reality. It will be “Christocide” where every born again believers who will not have the mark of the beast will be hunted down like wild animals. No mercy will be given. Remember Satan and his demons would have been cast down from heaven permanently and they will take it out on the Disciples of Christ. They will unleash their anger and wrath onto the followers of Christ for the real person they wanted to hit at is Christ. But they cannot hurt Him so the next best people to attack and hurt would be the Disciples of Christ (cf. Rev 12:8-13).

Tens horns with tens crowns – These crowns symbolize the power that will be given to him. Some have said that the Antichrist might be a Jew (see Dan. 12:36-37). This is markedly different from Satan who had seven crowns on seven heads. The word for “crowns” is “diadems.” This is the same kind of crowns (literally one bound onto the head i.e. a real kingly crown) worn by the LORD Jesus Christ. The imitation will be complete when he is made king of the whole world by the people, as the rest of the chapter reveals.

He has the name of blasphemy on his heads – Like many despots before him, the Antichrist will greatly exceed all the evil committed by previous world's despots by what he will do. On his heads will be the name of blasphemy. The head of the person signifies what he thinks and what he stands for. The crown is worn on a king's head to show who he is, the king! The name (singular and not plural) of blasphemy on his head reveals him as the blasphemer of God, His Holy Word and Christ and all that God stands for, He blasphemes. We live in the last days of deception where the Bible warns us that there will be many antichrists who are already in the world. **1 John 2:18-19**, "*Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*"

How would you define blasphemy? This gospel of Judas and the book "The Da Vinci Code" are clear examples of such blasphemies in these last days.

He looks like a leopard, has feet of a bear, a mouth like a lion – These animalistic features of the Antichrist resembles that of the beast of **Daniel 7:3-6**, "*And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.*" [emphasis added] The lion here represents Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian empire; the bear represents the Medo-Persian empire; and the leopard represents Alexander the Great and the Greek empire.

These are the animals used by God to describe the antichrist here in Revelation. "The **lion** was a fitting symbol for the fierce, consuming power of the Babylonian Empire. The ferocity, strength, and stability of the Medo-Persian Empire led to its depiction as a **bear**. The Greeks' swift conquests, particularly under the mercurial Alexander the Great, reflect the speed and viciousness of the **leopard** [MacArthur, vol. 2, 44]." [emphasis original] MacArthur's observation is right. The characteristics of these animals are definitely the emphasis here just as it was the case in Daniel's time..

His body was like that of a leopard, powerful and very swift in its motion. His feet were like that of the bear, i.e. steady firm and very powerful. His mouth was like that of a lion with all the ferocity of a lion when he speaks. He will be direct and blunt and very vicious in his commands and he will probably shout or scream out his commands. Subtlety is not his strong suit!! Could be that the other significance is that the Antichrist's kingdom will have all the three previous kingdoms combined together in terms of its ferocity, destruction and wickedness.

The dragon gave him power, position and great authority – The power of the antichrist is derived from Satan himself. Satan will literally give to him the power he needs to succeed.

What kind of power does Satan possess?

Accompanying this power would be the position of a global ruler where every knee will bow to him and every tongue will confess him as lord. He will masquerade himself as the Messiah, energized by Satan. He will succeed very, very well. Seated on his throne he will exercise his great authority. He answers to no one and will do whatever he pleases. He fears no man and cares for no man. Do you think that this is impossible?

“Some find it incredible that anyone could rise to such a position of absolute authority. But there are parallels in human history, albeit on a much smaller scale. Inevitably, turmoil in society aids such a ruler’s rise to power. Dictators gain control by offering solutions to society’s seemingly unsolvable problems. Adolf Hitler, for example, took advantage of the chaotic economic and political conditions in Germany following World War I. He promised the German people that under, his leadership, their downtrodden nation would again rise to a place of prominence, power, and wealth. Desperate for a way out of their dilemma, many people believed his message. Eventually, the Nazi party grew so strong that Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany. From that position he went on to seize absolute power. Antichrist, a dictator more powerful and evil than Hitler, will rise to power amid the frightening and unprecedented chaos of the Tribulation [MacArthur, vol. 2, 44].”

Revelation 13:3-5, *“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. 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 there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.”*

13:3-5 – This next section describes how the Antichrist will rise to power and how he will be worshipped by the world. This is a very shocking but inevitable end of our world as revealed by God Himself. This is what man is capable of doing when it comes to deception and worship. The Antichrist has sold his soul to Satan.

One of his heads nearly wounded to death – Some have said that this “head” that was killed refers to a kingdom or empire. This kingdom is destroyed and will be revived by Satan. The world will be amazed by the resurrection of this empire that had died. This interpretation is incorrect as this antichrist will be sent to the Lake of Fire. Furthermore there are other passages in the Bible like 2 Thess.2:3-4 that clearly explains that this Antichrist is definitely a man. The fact that there are many small “antichrists” that will come before him and are men proves that the “Antichrist” will also be a man.

This head refers to the beast that was nearly slain and made to appear as if he came back from the dead. This is also the picture in other passages of the Bible (cf. 13:12, 14; 17:8, 11).

The head is an imitator of Christ. He is the second person of the unholy trinity. Just as Christ went to the cross and died he too will die (appeared to have died but did not actually die) and will be raised from the dead (appeared to have been raised from the dead) by Satan just as Christ was raised from the dead by God the Father. True to his character, this Evil One will deceive many by his powerful deception.

Deadly wound healed – Satan will heal him and the world will be amazed. They will probably see him die (appeared to have died) and now they will see that he has come back from the dead.

Can Satan actually raise someone from the dead? Is death and Hell not the domain of God alone? Satan has no power over death outside of that which God gives to him. He can take life but to really give life and bring someone back from the dead is very different. We know he can take life such as the time when he caused the Sabeans and Canaanites to kill the animals and servants of Job in Job 1. Satan caused the great wind to come and collapse the house in which all the children of Job were feasting. They all died (Job 1:18-19). There is no record that Satan can raise the dead. What about today's claims by the Charismatics that they have been able to raise the dead? Could they be of God then if the dead were actually raised since Satan could not raise the dead? Absolutely not! The fact of the matter remains that the Bible is the objective yardstick for the determination of all doctrines and evaluation of all experiences. These claims by Charismatics are based more on hearsay than facts. Even if it based upon "facts" it would be manufactured facts or falsehood designed by Satan to confuse and deceive the gullible and spiritually naïve.

All the world wondered after the beast – After this miraculous act of "resurrection" the world will wonder after (lit. to follow behind) the beast and not "at" the beast is how the Bible describes it. The world will not only marvel but will follow the beast and take him as their leader and god. They will become his slave and his word will be their command. Absolute and total devotion would be given to them as one would give to the One Living and True God.

This was what the Antichrist had longed for all his existence. Finally the day has arrived where the world will openly acknowledge him as god.

The world worshipped the Dragon – Just as Christ points us to the Father in our worship, the beast or antichrist will do likewise. He will point people to the worship of Satan. Admiration will turn to worship. This was what Satan had longed for, for thousands of years, to be worshipped by the world. God had created man to worship Him and Him alone because He is the living and true God and besides Him there is and must be no one else. Worship is a very sacred activity. Man is allowed to worship His Creator only. The worship of anyone else including archangels would be idolatry.

The Dragon is described here as the one who gave power to the Antichrist. This phrase is mentioned twice (verses 2 and 4) for emphasis. God feels very strongly that His children need to know who is behind the Antichrist.

The contents of the world's worship – The world worshipped the beast by borrowing the words that were meant only for the worship of God. The Bible says in **Revelation 13:4**, "*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?*" This is the ultimate adoration reserved for God alone. But in the last days, the deception will be so complete that the worship of Satan will be just like the worship of the one living and true God. The imitation will be completed when the word that will come forth from the lips of the people of the world is one of total adoration, submission and obeisance.

Exodus 15:11, "*Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?*"

Psalms 35:10, "All my bones shall say, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?"

Psalms 71:19, "Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!"

Psalms 113:4-5, "The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high,"

Isaiah 40:18, "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?"

Isaiah 40:25, "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One."

Boastings and blasphemies will come out of the Antichrist's mouth – The response of the Antichrist will be to lap up all praises hurled at him. He feels no shame in making himself the center and object of man's worship. He drinks in this false worship like a drunk gulping down his liquor. He will speak great things and blasphemies. The great things refer to boastings and arrogant words. He will praise himself and elevate himself onto a pedestal. Daniel also prophesied that this antichrist will boast of himself. **Daniel 7:8**, "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."

Who gave to the Antichrist a mouth to speak these great things and blasphemies? Satan is the energizer of the Antichrist.

The antichrist will have power for 42 months – The Antichrist will be given 42 months to blaspheme and boast of himself and Satan. This limit will be the second half of the seven years of great tribulation and not the first. Remember that this coincide with the 42 months of the two witnesses of God.

This is the power that comes under the sovereign will of God, not Satan. God is still in control during the darkest moments of man's history. This darkness is what our sin has done to our world. Sinful man would rather worship Belial rather than God. What total depravity we exhibit here for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Revelation 13:6-10, "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

13:6-10 – Again the emphasis is “was given.” We are constantly reminded by God that **HE IS IN ABSOLUTE CONTROL** AND NOT Satan even when it appears as if Satan was! His deeds will be explained here.

He blasphemes God, the Tabernacle and His People – The antichrist’s blasphemies will not be on God alone but everything that God stands for. He will first blaspheme God. Names will definitely be called and what He did not do, the antichrist will lie and say that God did. What he did He will distort and make light of it. He will definitely malign the only way, truth and life that is found in Jesus Christ alone. The Word of God will surely be defamed and come under the antichrist’s onslaught. The only place of worship will probably be ridiculed as not the only legitimate way of worship. All other ways would also be acceptable. By this he will be able to please all mankind and people from all walks of life and religion.

He will also blaspheme the redeemed saints and probably level all kinds of charges against them. The good angel will also not be spared. What he will say about them is anybody’s guess at this time. Do not forget that Satan was once upon a time like them before he sinned. He was cast out and probably he holds a grudge against his “former home” and the angels that lived there happily ministering before God their Creator.

Makes war with the saints – The believers who are against all that he stands for will be persecuted without precedence. They will be hunted down like animals. They might even starve and will definitely flee for their lives. Their own family members will also be against them. Fathers and mothers will betray their sons and daughters and vice versa. Loyalty to friends and family will become a thing of the past. It will be the preservation and survival of oneself only. Everyone else will be pushed side or betrayed. It will be a time where every man is for himself in the absolute sense. All family ties will be severed and friendship can be bought with a price.

He will overcome them – This is not a reference to the destruction of the faith but only their physical lives. He will of course not be able to kill off all the saints but only those whom God has given to him.

Why would God allow his own to be overcome by the Antichrist? If God is with us should we not prosper and succeed all the time and not be thwarted by man and Satan? Does the presence of God in our lives mean that we are invincible? Does it mean everything that the believer touches will turn to gold instead of stone?

This is the kind of suffering that the Bible says Christians will have to experience as part of their calling as Christians. There is a big difference between being delivered from the wrath of God that is to come and going through sufferings allowed by God but inflicted by Satan and his hosts.

John 3:36, *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."*

Ephesians 5:6-7, *"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them." See verses preceding this verse.*

Colossians 3:5-7, *"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them."*

1 Thessalonians 5:8-10, *"But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."*

These are some of the verses that speak of the deliverance every Christian has been promised by God that they will be spared from the wrath of God that is to come. The reason for this deliverance is that Christ has borne this wrath on our behalf when He died for our sins. The wrath of God was upon Him. It would be double jeopardy if God were to punish Christians with the same wrath that He has already poured out on Christ for our sakes. This would be against His justice. At the same time the Bible reveals to us that this wrath of God that is to come will be upon all sinners. They will not escape this wrath.

The elect who have not received Christ will have to go through the wrath of God. It may be this same wrath of God upon the world coupled with the wrath of Satan that will be used by God to turn many to Christ.

The sufferings we have to endure as Christians are privileges that God has allowed His children to experience for the purpose of purification. Satan will always mean it for evil but God will confound the evil one and turn it around for the good of His children. This is the sovereignty of God experienced by every obedient Christian.

Power over the world – Not only will he be given power over the saints but also the world as well. He will dominate the world at will. Global supremacy and dictatorship will be over the whole world like never before. He will have the world in his evil hand.

This power "was given" (used 4x in succession in verses 5-7) to the antichrist to rule and reign with absolute power over the whole world. This has never been seen or achieved before by any previous despots. All other rulers from the time of the ancient kings to the Caesars and Hitler's of our time had been given absolute powers but only within their limited empires, but not this Antichrist

All will worship him – This was what Satan had always longed to possess from the time he was kicked out of heaven. He will now achieve it. Why is being worshipped so tantalizing to Satan?

Do you think people like to be worshipped?

What does it mean to worship someone?

Does the mere act of bowing down to an idol constitute worship? What if the words used for worship are God honouring and biblical, would that make it acceptable?

Exodus 32:8, *"They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."*

The "all" does not refer to all in the absolute sense. What it refers to are those "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

How does one get one's name written into the Lamb's book of Life?

This book of life belongs to the Lamb.

Why is Jesus said to have been slain from the foundation of the world?

Final warnings from the LORD – Revelation 13:9, *"If any man have an ear, let him hear."* This phrase appears 15x in the entire New Testament (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; Mt. 11:15; 13:9, 43; Mk. 4:9, 23; Luke 8:8; 14:35). This is a warning to all without distinction. The ones who hath ears let him take heed what has been revealed.

Rev 13:10 is specifically for the believers. This verse speaks of the non-retaliatory reactions of believers in the face of great persecution. Many will come to believe in the LORD during this final hour of man's existence. By God's grace we thank God for the many who will be saved.

Here God assures the believers that they must not take matters into their own hands but submit to His sovereign hands. If Christians are to be imprisoned for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, so be it and let incarceration take its course. If he were to be killed for the same, do not fight back and retaliate, but let it be. This is “the patience and the faith of the saints.”

This is the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

Why should believers not fight back to save their own lives and their freedom and property?

What is the difference between “patience” and “long-suffering” in the Bible?

2. The Beast from the Earth – 13:11-18

Revelation 13:11-12, *“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. 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.”*

13:11-12 – There was another (*allos*) beast who will be exactly like the first beast. This second beast comes out of the earth. “In the ancient world, the earth was less mysterious and foreboding than the sea. That the false prophet arises from the earth suggests that he will be subtler, gentler, less overpowering and terrifying than the Antichrist. He will be winsome and persuasive, the epitome of the wolves in sheep’s clothing Jesus warned of (Matt. 7:15) [MacArthur, vol. 2, 58].”

The first beast was grotesque in his character and features but this second beast appears harmless as a lamb. It had only two horns and they were like a lamb. There are no crowns on the horns. He will not want to be worshipped. Instead he will cause the whole world to worship the first beast.

This is the dangerous false prophet. He is the copy cat of the Holy Spirit whereas the Antichrist is the copy cat of the LORD. On the surface he will look very appealing because of his peace loving and gentle and meek demeanour. Many will listen to him and follow him.

“Despite his deceptively mild appearance, the false prophet is no less a child of hell than the Antichrist. That is evident because **he spake as a dragon**—a strange voice indeed for one with lamb’s horn! The false prophet, like the Antichrist (13:2, 5), will

be the **dragon** Satan's mouthpiece, speaking his words. But he will not echo the blasphemous tirades against God that will pour from the lips of Antichrist (Dan. 11:36). Instead, he will speak winsome, deceiving words of praise about the Antichrist, luring the world to worship that vile, satanic dictator [MacArthur, vol. 2, 59]." [emphasis original]

Some say that the second beast will replace the first best. But the text does not say that. What the text says is that the second beast will exercise all the power of the first beast in the presence of the first beast. Satan will energize the false prophet will supreme power. Just as Hitler had his many henchmen who also exercised absolute power in the presence of Hitler, the false prophet will do so in front of the antichrist. They will kill and murder at will with no regard for the law and God's justice. They are above the law. They will twist and turn the law to their own advantage.

He will lead the world in the cult worship of the antichrist.

Revelation 13:13-16, "*And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 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 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. 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:*"

13:13-16 – He will perform miracles to deceive. One of the miracles he will do is to make fire come down from heaven in the sight of men. This was the miracle done by Elijah and God himself in 1Kings 18. If one of the two witnesses is Elijah, then it is no wonder that the miracles of the two witnesses had little impact on the evil society at that time. It is probable that this second beast may even challenge Elijah to a duel of miracle by fire!

These miracles will deceive those who live on the earth. This will be done in the presence of the first beast.

Accompanying the miracles is the message of worship. It will be to make an image of the first beast in honour for who he is and what he has done i.e. having been "raised from the dead". He will be passed off as the Messiah. Idolatrous worship of this idol of the beast will be by the whole earth.

This idol will be connected to the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel (9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and Christ (Mt. 24:15).

He will be proclaimed and viewed by the world as the one who has the power to conquer death.

That was not all. He will cause the image of the beast to speak. An idol will have mouth that will speak for the first time.

The word for “life” (*pneuma*—breath) does not refer to “life” (“*zoe* or *bios*”) as if the image has taken on human or life form. It simply means that the substance of the image remains the same but will be animated to speak as if he had life.

Anyone who will not bow down to this idol will be killed like the days of Daniel’s three friends in Daniel 3.

This false prophet by his deception and smooth talking will bring the world to her knees. **Revelation 13:16-17**, "*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: 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.*"

Economic threat is a very effective weapon to bring about the conformity of the will. Have we not heard of the term “economic sanctions”? Every body needs to survive. Without an economy the nation dies. That nation is shut off from the trade that is flowing like life veins throughout the globe today. It flows back and forth and any nation that is cut off from this flow will cease to exist instantly. The World Trade Organization is the body that will also come under the command and control of the evil one. All these global organization will become the handmaids of Satan and his two side kicks.

What exactly is this mark on the right hand and foreheads? “Mark (*charagma* from the verb “to engrave”) was the term for images or names of the emperor on Roman coins. In the ancient world, such marks (tattoos and brands) were commonly given to slaves, soldiers, and devotees of religious cults (cf. Gal. 6:17). God sealed, with a mark on the forehead, the 144,000 to preserve them from His wrath against the unbelieving world (7:2-3); the false prophet marks the unsaved to preserve them from Antichrist’s wrath against God’s people. The mark will signify that the person bearing it is a worshipper and loyal follower of the Antichrist. In much the same way, the Roman emperors required their subjects to prove their loyalty by offering sacrifices to Caesar. Those who refused, like those who refuse the Antichrist’s mark, were subject to execution [**MacArthur**, vol. 2, 62-3].”

They will not be able to buy or sell if they do not have the mark of the beast. A man who lived under Bulgaria’s communist regime remarked: “You cannot understand and you cannot know that the most terrible instrument of persecution ever devised is an innocent ration card. You cannot buy and you cannot sell except according to that little, innocent card. If they please, you can be starved to death, and if they please, you can be dispossessed of everything you have; for you cannot trade, and you cannot buy and you cannot sell, without permission [cited by **MacArthur**, vol. 2, 63].”

The persecution of the Antichrist and the false prophet will be far worse than what the world has ever experienced.

They need to have either the mark of the beast or the name of the beast or the number of his name as their mark or else they were not allowed to buy or sell.

The absolute control Satan and his gang have over the economy of the world is revealed here. Today nearly all our major monetary

transactions are done through a paper trail. Little or no actual money exchange hands, today. A check, credit card, nets, cash or e-cards are all examples of such transactions that will soon envelope the world. Because of this manner of transaction, a world ruler with the cooperation of the governments of the world can easily tie up all our finances regardless of who you are or how much you possess. One could be made a bankrupt over night by the press of a button or the click of a mouse. Is this not true?

Revelation 13:18, *"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."*

This is the number of a man. His true identity will remain a mystery.

“There has been no end to the speculation as to its significance and how to calculate it. In Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, letters had numerical equivalents, and a myriad of schemes to associate the names of historical individuals with the number 666 have been put forth. Nero, Caligula, Domitian, Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and a host of others have been proposed, based on some convoluted mathematical rendering of the letters in their name. All such speculation is futile; since the Antichrist is still to come, the number 666 cannot be associated with any historical individual. The church father Irenaeus cautioned against speculating about the identity of the person associated with the number 666 until that person arrives on the scene (Alan F. Johnson, **Revelation, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary** [Grand rapids: Zondervan, 1996], 137). Robert L. Thomas gives a very reasonable perspective: ‘The better part of wisdom is to be content that the identification is not yet available, but will be when the future false Christ ascends to his throne. The person to whom 666 applies must have been future to John’s time because John clearly meant the number to be recognizable to someone. If it was not discernible to his generation and those immediately following him – and it was not – the generation to whom it will be discernible must have lain (and still lies) in the future. Past generations have provided many illustrations of this future personage, but all past candidates have proven inadequate as fulfillments. Christians from generation to generation may manifest the same curiosity as the prophets of old regarding their own prophecies (cf. 1 Peter 1: 10-11), but their curiosity will remain unsatisfied until the time of fulfillment arrives. (Robert L. Thomas **Revelation 8-22: An Exegetical Commentary** [Chicago: Moody 1995], 185.” [Taken from **MacArthur**, vol. 2, 64].

1 John 2:18-20, *"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."*

The LORD has already warned us that in the course of history prior to the coming of the antichrist, there will be many “little” antichrists who will exhibit some or even most of the characteristics of the “big” antichrist. But these are not THE Antichrist.

This number 666 is known as the number of man because man was created on the sixth day, six days shall man work and he must rest of the seventh and slaves were freed on the seventh year after having worked for 6 years (Exo. 21:2) and fields were to be sown for 6 years and be left to rest on the seventh year (Lev. 25:3). The repetition of the number 6, three times, emphasis the humanness of the antichrist i.e. he is definitely a man!! The LORD God is praise holy, holy, holy by the angels in heaven to emphasize God’s absolute holiness.

Millions and billions of people will follow him for he will control the wealth, the oil and food and water of the world. Man today equates a saviour by the peace he can bring to the world and the monetary wealth that he can give to all countries. In my humble estimation, the world of ours will decline in the fields of economy and politics. There will be global chaos thus priming the world to receive her saviour who will come and deliver the whole from total destruction. The United Nations will literally become one where national boundaries, currencies and territories will be surrendered in order to enjoy this economic and political blessing. Any refusal will be met with immediate sanction! This is the common line used by super powers today as the worlds' economy has already been fused into one. When trade line is cut off, the nation dies. The people of that nation will probably rebel and force that government to toe the line or be replaced and face death and destruction!

The WTO and World health Organization are two of such global institutions that are forerunners to the ultimate one world government and religion that will be ruled by the Antichrist. We have all so readily accept these global bodies into our country in the name of a better economy. Merge and be big to compete world wide. Entrepreneurship is the new buzz word today.

Be watchful and have the eyes of Christ to see the signs of the end times. Pray and ask God for the courage to stand and not choose the ways and attractions of the world.

“This sobering passage is not intended to be the source of fruitless speculation about its details. Rather, it stands as a warning to the unbelieving world. It also challenges believers to lead careful, watchful, godly lives (cf. 1 Peter 4:7; 2 Peter 3:11), and to evangelize a hopelessly lost world, headed for destruction. Believers are to faithfully proclaim the saving gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and thereby rescue the souls of men and women from the disaster that looms just over the horizon.” [Macarthur, vol. 2, 65.]

Let us conclude by heeding the words of God in **1 Thessalonians 5:6-10**, “*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.*”