The Two-Horned Beast from Out of the Earth
Revelation 13:11–18

There are two beasts: one from out of the sea and he is the Antichrist; the other from out of the earth and he is the False Prophet; in our lesson we will be studying the False Prophet.

The very work of God is to redeem men and establish His kingdom on earth; it has not been easy as Satan has fought Him all the way; the major weapon of Satan is deception; he is the father of lies and the master of deceit; Satan is always trying to confuse people by covering up the truth of the gospel; he masquerades God’s Word with lies in his attempt to deceive the believer from the truth; he does this by using false teachers and false prophets who do not communicate the message of God correctly.

Jesus warned that the end times will be marked by “many false prophets [who] will rise up and deceive many” (Matthew 24:11); Mark’s gospel quotes Jesus as saying, “False christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders in order, if possible, to lead the elect astray” (Mark 13:22).

There are many false prophets but in the time of the great Tribulation it will all culminate in the final False Prophet, who will partner with the Antichrist in getting the world to worship him as the one true god and not the God of Scripture.

The Manner of the False Prophet (13:11–12)

*His association with the first beast* … “Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth …” (13:11a); the word “another” (allos) means of the same kind, as opposed to heteros, meaning of another kind; that is, this beast has the same nature as the first beast whom we identified as the Antichrist; they are both human beings that are possessed with the Devil; we will learn that these two beasts are cohorts and in chapter 17, this beast is identified as “the great harlot … a woman sitting on a scarlet beast …” (17:1,3); the scarlet beast is the Antichrist and the woman or the great harlot is the False Prophet; they are very
much connected as the Antichrist is taking the False Prophet for a ride as she is sitting on his back; while I believe the False Prophet to be a man as he is of the same kind as the Antichrist, in Revelation 17 he is depicted as a female whore because religion is always spoken of in the female gender; remember that the Church is called the bride of Christ and Christ is the Bridegroom.

This beast “comes up out of the earth” (13:11); the first beast came from out of the sea, and as we read in Revelation 17:15 the waters represented “the peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues;” that is, the Antichrist comes from Gentile nations; the False Prophet, on the other hand, comes up out of the earth; that might be a reference to the flaming inferno in the heart of the earth; the phrase “coming up out of” (anabaino) means to ascend from a lower to a higher place; the False Prophet comes from below the earth where some evil spirits dwell; the point of this seems to be that the False Prophet will be empowered and controlled by formidable demonic spirits.

*His appearance as the False Prophet* ... “... he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon” (13:11b); He has two horns like a lamb; when a lamb begins to sprout horns you see two little harmless bumps; therefore, he comes across as innocent and harmless; he would not do anything that would harm anyone; he is not nearly as frightening and foreboding as the Antichrist; he is the epitome of “a wolf in sheep’s clothing.”

However, when he speaks he has the voice of a dragon; I’ve never heard a dragon speak, but if Satan in the Garden of Eden had a dragon’s voice, there was nothing scary about it; it was very persuasive as he was able to tempt Adam and Eve into sin.

You can contrast the two beasts: the Antichrist is a terrorizing figure; he has ten horns, seven heads, ten crowns, and speaks blasphemous names; he is depicted like a leopard, a bear, and a lion all rolled up into one creature; you wouldn’t want to meet this guy at night in a dark alley; the False Prophet appears to be gentle like a young lamb who would not do a thing to harm anyone; when he speaks, he does not scare you off, for his words, though evil, are persuasive, tender, convincing; yet as the false lamb he is the master of religious deception.

The False Prophet will lead the world into the final form of world religion where everyone will worship the Antichrist as god; John Phillips in his book on Revelation writes this concerning the False Prophet: “The dynamic appeal of the false prophet will lie in his skill in combining political expediency with religious
passion. His arguments will be subtle, convincing and appealing. His oratory will be hypnotic, for he will be able to move the masses to tears or whip them into a frenzy. He will control the communication media of the world (talk about fake news, my comments) and will skillfully organize mass publicity to promote his ends. He will manage and massage his message with guile beyond words. He will mold world thought and shape human opinion like so much pottery for clay.”

Most likely he will be the most effective charismatic orator in the history of the world—persuasive, powerful, moving people to tears as the most convincing communicator the world has ever known.

While this two-horned beast from out of the earth is not identified in our text as the False Prophet, he is so identified as such in three other places in Revelation in 16:13; 19:20; 20:10.

At this point in our Revelation study we have been introduced to the unholy trinity: Satan is the counterfeit God the Father, the Antichrist is the counterfeit Christ, the Son, and the False Prophet is the counterfeit Holy Spirit.

His authority as the False Prophet ... “And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence ...” (13:12a); the beasts are both a person and a system and for now they cannot be separated from each other or the system they represent; the first beast represents a one-world government and the second beast represents a one-world religion; the Antichrist needs the False Prophet to accomplish his goal of a one-world government where he alone is worshipped as god.

World leaders throughout history have used religion as a way of uniting or strengthening their empires; Nimrod used the tower of Babel and Sun worship to unite his Babylonian kingdom; Pharaoh used his magicians, Jannes and Jambres, to perform their religious and demonic magic to oppose the God of the Israelite; Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had his golden image before whom everyone was to bow and worship; the Caesars of Rome made Caesar worship mandatory as a way of holding a heterogeneous empire together.

When Balak, king of Moab, saw the Israeli army under the leadership of Moses approaching his territory, he hired a false prophet named Balaam to place a curse on Israel; Balak recognized that political power was not good enough, his military power was not strong enough, so he turns to religious power.
In more recent times, Adolf Hitler had his own mediums contacting evil spirits which helped him develop a new and evil kind of Christianity to manipulate the hearts of the people to follow him.

This too is the strategy of the Antichrist; if he is going to be head of the one-world government, he will need to use religion as the way of uniting the people under his rule; so the False Prophet becomes his cohort that brings about a one-world religion to which all must belong and participate at the risk of losing their lives.

Politics and religion may start out as distinct forces, but ultimately they will come together; Revelation 17 makes it clear that a worldwide universal religion is going to take shape in the end times.

**The Motives of the False Prophet (13:12b, c)**

_A To produce by force a worldwide following of the Antichrist ... “... and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast ...”_ (13:12b); the word “causes” (poieo) means “to make” or “to force;” at this point the False Prophet doesn’t seem to be that gentle lamb he was first thought to be; he was being deceptive; once he has your attention and admiration he shows his true colors and comes across in forceful ways.

Can you imagine a one-world religion that everybody can agree upon? Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, left-behind Protestants and Catholics and every other world religion all coming together under this amazing man? The only way that could happen is by force; false religion has always been the murderer of true religion.

_A To promote the worship of the first beast ... “... and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed”_ (13:12c); you will remember that somehow one of the seven heads of the beast was wounded; maybe it is in some assassination attempt, but his deadly wound is healed (see Zechariah 11:17); if indeed the Antichrist was wounded, it was not fatal for Satan does not have the power to bring him back to life; he has the power over death but not the power over life; that belongs to God alone; however, the False Prophet wants the world to believe that he died and rose from the dead, just as Jesus did as well as the two witnesses.

What the False Prophet is going to do is fabricate the resurrection; the 144,000 have undoubtedly been proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus; we already saw
where the Antichrist killed the two prophets, Moses and Elijah, in the streets of Jerusalem and left them lying there for three and a half days until God breathed into them the breath of life and raised them from the dead from where they ascend into heaven; it is the job of the Antichrist to convince the world that the Antichrist is god and that he has power over death so the world will worship him.

Man by nature must have religion; man is an incurable worshiper; we need something beyond ourselves to believe in whether it is a deity, another person, or science; I heard a scientist on YouTube refer to science as “god and it is all powerful;” he went on to say with time, science will solve all our problems and we will live forever on earth in a utopian state where all diseases and death will be wiped out; all science needs is more time.

Scripture tells us that God gave us an internal awareness of Himself (Romans 1:19) so that the worship of Him is natural; yet man chose not to glorify God, but became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened, professing to be wise, they became fools and their foolish hearts were darkened; therefore, they began to worship the created rather than the Creator (Romans 1:20–25).

The Antichrist is a human being who is a creation of God, yet he will exalt himself above all gods, and demand that mankind worship him, and the role of the False Prophet is to by force cause that to happen.

The Miracles of the False Prophet (13:13–15)

He will convince the people with signs ... “He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” (13:13).

The False Prophet is standing right alongside the Antichrist; he has a worldwide influence and a worldwide reputation as a miracle worker with demonic power; his miracles support his work as a preacher who speaks against the truths proclaimed by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists; one of his miraculous signs is the ability to make fire come down out of heaven on the earth in the presence of men; this reminds me of the supernatural power of the two witnesses, of whom it is written, “if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies;” they also have “power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls on the day of their prophecy; and they have power over the waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire” (11:5–6); so Satan, working through the False Prophet, has to counterfeit the miracles of the two witnesses.
Where does the False Prophet get the idea of causing fire to come down out of heaven? God has often sent fire from heaven to earth; He did it to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19); he sent fire to burn up Nadab and Abihu when they offered strange fire to the Lord (Leviticus 10); he sent fire from heaven on Mount Carmel to burn the sacrifice in response to Elijah’s prayer in the contest of the Gods (1 Kings 18); the False Prophet is demonstrating that he can duplicate the miracles of God.

Satan, working through the False Prophet can perform supernatural works; whatever God can do he thinks he can do; remember the wizards of Pharaoh, Jannes and Jambres, who were able to copycat the miracles of God; for instance, God told Moses to take Aaron’s staff and throw it down before Pharaoh and it will turn into a serpent; so it did; then Pharaoh called in his magicians and they accomplished the same miracle; one difference, however: Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods (Exodus 7; see 2 Timothy 3:8).

Just before the end of this age there will be an outbreak of false miracles to deceive the people; televangelists and faith healers will be fooling people with their tricks and black magic; preachers will be claiming special revelations from God that will attract multitudes to their ministries; but in the end, the one who cannot be fooled by their so-called miracles and prophecies is the Lord Himself; Jesus said, “Many will come to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness” (Matthew 7:22–23).

He will cause the construction of an image of the first beast ... “And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image of the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. And he was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed” (13:14–15).

The False Prophet has an image made of the beast; it is not far-fetched with today’s technology to believe this image is computerized with the most sophisticated equipment that shows the Antichrist being fatally wounded and coming back to life; I can imagine this image on billboards, in movie theaters and other prevalent places worldwide; it is so realistically done that when people
watch it many will believe the Antichrist actually died and came back to life in his own resurrection; the False Prophet will have his clergy stationed wherever the image is shown and those who do not worship the image will be turned over to authorities and killed.

It is of interest to note that when the text says the False Prophet was “granted power to give breath to the image of the beast that the Greek word is not the two normal words for life which are zoe and bios; rather, it is the word pneuma, which is the word for “spirit” or “wind;” this could suggest some kind of production that looks like a dead man coming back to life but it is not true life; one thing we know for sure, Satan cannot create life; he is a great miracle worker, but his power falls short when it comes to creating life or resurrecting a dead man.

Then the text says those who do not worship the image of the beast will be killed; we know that not everyone will be killed; as we saw in Revelation 12, God is going to spare a remnant of Jews in the wilderness, an area in the nation of Jordan that the Antichrist and his army had yet to conquer; there will be millions, if not billions, of Gentile believers who will be on the earth from every nation that have not been martyred; while many are martyred, and all who accept Christ during this time do so at the risk of martyrdom, yet God in His sovereign will has protected and provided for many of His children; however, these believers are living everyday under the threat of death; Satan will not be able to kill everyone who refuses to worship the beast called the Antichrist.

**The Mark from the False Prophet (13:16–18)**

_The people who receive the mark of the beast … “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 …” (13:16); the word “mark” (charagma) means to brand or to stamp; it appears that when the image of the beast is displayed and people from all economic strata bow in worship of the image, the False Prophet will have his clergy ready to brand a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads; the Antichrist wants everyone to be visibly branded as proof that they have submitted to his leadership and have acknowledged him as god!_

_Branding humans was common in ancient times; in the days of the ancient Canaanites, tattoos were burned into man’s skin to identify the god or goddess they worshipped; the Roman masters branded their slaves; even in Caesar worship, there was not a branding of citizens who on an annual basis went to a designated city and burned a pinch of incense to Caesar and declared him as_
Lord, yet they would get a certificate that enabled them to buy or sell; even the apostle Paul spoke about bearing on his body the marks of the Lord Jesus (Galatians 6:17). So the Antichrist is demanding a visible mark like a tattoo that identifies those who are worshipping him.

*The purpose of the mark ...* “... 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” (13:17); just as in the days of the apostle John, if one did not submit to Caesar worship, they could not buy or sell; this meant that Christians had real hardships and were very much dependent on each other for their survival.

This mark most likely will be more than some visible tattoo; it will include some kind of computer chip inserted into the right hand so when you go to the store to buy goods, you don’t pay with a credit card but you just swipe your hand over a scanner; as far as identifying a person by their forehead, the word “forehead” literally is “with eye;” they already have cameras that can look into your eye and identify who you are, and knowing that, all your personal information is made accessible; we already have the technology for the Antichrist to use to control you and know everything about you.

*The perplexity of identifying the mark ...* “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” (13:18)... People for years have tried to figure out the name of the Antichrist; as you may know, languages like Hebrew, Greek, Latin have numerical value to letters of their alphabet; throughout history many people have been tagged as the Antichrist, such as Nero, the Pope, Martin Luther, John Knox, Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Henry Kissinger, Bill Clinton and even Barack Obama; someone, I am confident, will figure out a way to manipulate things so Donald Trump gets that devious title.

It was Irenaeus, one of the early church fathers, who took the Greek letters which had numerical equivalence and said 666 makes the name Uanthus; in truth we do not know who the Antichrist is, whether he is alive today or not.

There is another way of looking at this number 666; six is the number of man; he was created on the sixth day; a slave was to be set free on the sixth year from his master unless he chose to stay; seven is the number of God which represents His day of rest and the completion of creation; it is also the number of perfection and six is one number short of perfection; therefore it can represent man in his fallen,
sinful nature; some Bible teachers see six-six-six as representing the unholy trinity of Satan, the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

John MacArthur’s viewpoint is that “God has identified the final form of man’s government in the world as six, six, six. And somehow that thrice repeated number of man, much like the thrice repeated statements about God—holy, holy holy—is intended to reiterate the identity of man. God is holy, holy, holy and man is always six, six, six ... short of perfection.”

Macarthur goes on to say, “Somehow when this final Antichrist comes there will be some way to identify him and his mark with an understanding of this, the number of man. Specifically what that is, I don’t know, nor did John ...”

To summarize, some see the number 666 as referring to a specific evil man who is called the Antichrist; some see the number as representing the unholy trinity; some see the number as representing the final form of man's government along with its leader, the Antichrist.

The Methods of Today’s False Prophet

*The reality of false prophets in the end times* ... Jesus warned of false prophets in the end times; He said “Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many” (Matthew 24:11,24); Paul warned the elders of Ephesus in his day, “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock...[for] I know that after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be on the alert” (Acts 20:28–31).

*The recognition of a false prophet...*

1. They introduce destructive heresies and deny who Jesus is (2 Peter 2:1).
2. They exploit people with great swelling words of emptiness and deceit (2 Peter 2:3, 18).
3. They refuse to confess Jesus is from God (1 John 4:2–3).
4. They speak for God, but what they say does not come true (Deuteronomy 18:22).
5. They live lives that do not demonstrate a commitment to holiness; they walk according to the flesh in the lusts of uncleanness; they have eyes full of adultery and cannot cease from sin (Jeremiah 23:14–15; 2 Peter 2:1, 14).
6. They despise authority, are presumptuous, self willed, arrogant and dishonest (2 Peter 2:10, 17–19).
7. They speak in the name of a god other than the true God (Deuteronomy 13:1–3).
8. They do not produce the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Galatians 5:22–23).
9. They emphasize vain visions with sensational insights like visiting heaven or hell (Colossians 2:18).
10. They only deliver a positive, unrealistic message of peace and prosperity and never call men from sin to repentance (Jeremiah 23:16–17).
11. They are greedy for monetary gain (Jeremiah 8:10–11; 2 Peter 2:3, 14b).
12. They use their wages for carousing in personal pleasure (2 Peter 2:13).

The responsibility of the believer … John wrote, “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1); we are to test the spirits so we can discern between true and false doctrine; how do we do that? We measure what is said against the Word of God; we are to be like the Bereans, who upon hearing the apostle Paul, examined the Scriptures daily to see whether or not these things were true (Acts 17:10–11); it was Paul who told us “not to think beyond what is written…” (1 Corinthians 4:6); the Word of God is our standard; if a teacher cannot support what they are saying from Scripture they are not to be listened to; we are not to add to or take away from the written Word of God.

Tragically, most professing Christians are incapable of testing anything; they are biblically ignorant; there is a famine of the Word in most churches today as people are fed a diet of pop psychology and positive thinking; the prophet Amos has a word for this generation when he wrote: “‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD God, ‘that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the LORD” (Amos 8:11).

What about you? Are you in the Word on a daily basis? Are you capable of testing doctrine by Scripture? If not, then you are a sitting duck for deception; let's be a people who follow Paul’s advice when he said, “Examine everything carefully; hold fast to what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21); let's be a people of the Book! Amen!