

THE DRAGON MAKES HIS MOVE

*THE DRAGON ASSEMBLES HIS LEADERSHIP TEAM AND STEPS UP PREPARATIONS FOR WAR
AGAINST THE OFFSPRING OF THE WOMAN AND FOR WORLD DOMINANCE*



*SUMMONING THE ANTICHRIST FROM THE SEA (THE ABYSS) AND THE FALSE
PROPHET FROM THE EARTH HE SETS IN MOTION HIS GRAND SCHEME TO SECURE
OWNERSHIP OF EARTH AND WORSHIP FROM THE EARTH-DWELLERS*

OUTLINE ... (REVELATION 13:1-18 ESV)

I. THE DRAGON SUMMONS THE FIRST MEMBER OF HIS LEADERSHIP TEAM—THE ANTICHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM, 13:1-4.

- (Revelation 13:1–4 NIV) The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. 2 The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. 3 **One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed.** The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. 4 People worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, “Who is like the beast? Who can wage war against it?”

A. The dragon summons a demon from the sea—the abyss. This demon will possess the dragon's chosen “christ” who will lead the dragon's world kingdom.

Walvoord ... As John watches the scene, he sees a beast coming up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns. Ten crowns are seen on the horns, and on the seven heads names of blasphemy are written. The identity of this beast is quite clear in its reference to the revived Roman Empire, as the description is similar to that found in Daniel 7:7–8 and in Revelation 12:3 and 17:3, 7. The stage of the empire depicted by the beast is the period after the emergence of the little horn, the future world ruler, displacing three of the horns (Dan. 7:8). The description fits the time of the empire during the great tribulation. [Walvoord, J. F. (2008). *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (pp. 197–198). Galaxie Software.]

- (Daniel 7:23–27 ESV) Thus he said: “As for the fourth beast, **there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces.** 24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten

BUT THE COURT SHALL SIT IN JUDGMENT ...

- (Revelation 19:20 ESV) **And the beast was captured,** and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. **These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.**

kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. 25 **He shall speak words against the Most High,** and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and **shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.** 26 **But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end.** 27 And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

B. The dragon gives his “antichrist” the power, throne and authority that he had previously offered God's Christ during the wilderness temptations.

- (Matthew 4:8–10 ESV) Again, **the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.** 9 **And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”** 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’ ”

C. The dragon presents his savior—his “antichrist”—to the world and so denies that Jesus is the Christ.

- (1 John 2:22 ESV) Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? **This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.**
- (2 John 7 NIV) I say this because many deceivers, **who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh,** have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.

D. The dragon—the ancient serpent, Satan, the devil—succeeds in being God in the eyes of a fallen world.

- i. The dragon achieves his goal to be worshiped as God by the people of earth.
- ii. The “antichrist” seems to suffer a fatal wound from which he recovers.
- iii. This “miracle” recovery solidifies the antichrist's leadership as the whole world is filled with wonder and follows him.

- iv. Awed by this seeming display of supernatural power the people now worship the dragon and the antichrist.
- v. Faith and hope in the conquering power of the dragon and the beast grows in the hearts of the world's population.

II. THE ANTICHRIST IS GIVEN CARTE BLANCHE IN WORLD AFFAIRS FOR FORTY-TWO MONTHS, 13:5-10.

- (Revelation 13:5–8 ESV) And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, **and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.** 6 It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 **Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.** And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, 8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, **everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.**

Carte blanche ... to be given unconditional authority, full discretionary power; complete freedom to act as one wishes or thinks best.

God is Sovereign Lord. To advance his plan and purpose through his providential rule over the kingdoms of men, God permits the uncontrolled, unconstrained speech and authority that will be given to the beast.

A. The beast was allowed to speak great blasphemies against God and was allowed unbridled authority for 42 months, 13:5-8.

- (Daniel 4:17 ESV) The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, **to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.**
- (Daniel 7:26 ESV) **But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end.**
 - i. The beast was given authority and power over the nations.
 - ii. The beast was allowed to make war on and conquer the saints of God.
 - iii. The earth dwellers worship the beast.
 - iv. The earth dwellers are those whose

names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

B. The saints of God are called upon to listen to God.

- (Revelation 13:9–10 ESV) **If anyone has an ear, let him hear:** 10 If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. **Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.**

i. When we hear God, we remember who he is—Sovereign Lord of all.

- (Isaiah 46:8–10 ESV) Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, 9 remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; **I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose."**

ii. When we hear God, we remember who we are—the saints of God.

The saints of God endure and believe God always. Even in the very worst of times we trust our Shepherd and submit our lives to his care.

- (Revelation 7:17 ESV) **For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.**

III. THE DRAGON SUMMONS THE SECOND MEMBER OF HIS LEADERSHIP TEAM—THE FALSE PROPHET, 13:11-18.

- (Revelation 13:11 ESV) Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.

A. This second beast is the false prophet.

- (Revelation 19:20 ESV) And the beast was captured, and with it **the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image.** These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.
- See also Revelation 16:13, 20:10.

B. The false prophet is the epitome of a wolf in sheep's clothing: a well spoken, charismatic leader who is as vicious, powerful and destructive as a dragon, 13:12.

- (Revelation 13:12 ESV) It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.
- i. The false prophet functions under the authority of the antichrist.
- ii. The false prophet forces the earth dwellers to worship the antichrist.

C. The false prophet performs miraculous signs that deceive the earth dwellers, 13:13-14.

- (Revelation 13:13–14 ESV) It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, 14 **and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth**, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

MacArthur ... The false prophet will succeed dramatically in his efforts to deceive those who dwell on the earth—exactly as Jesus predicted (cf. Matt. 24:5, 11, 24; Mark 13:6). ... The world will be utterly vulnerable to his deception during the Tribulation. There will be unparalleled disasters and unimaginable horrors, leaving people desperate for answers. Having rejected the true gospel and blasphemed the true God (cf. 16:9, 11), the unbelieving world will be eager to believe the deceiving lies propagated by the false prophet. [MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2000). *Revelation 12–22* (p. 61). Chicago: Moody Press.]

Deceive ... πλανῶ ... [planao] ... to (properly, cause to) roam (from safety, truth, or virtue); to be led astray, seduced, led to wander, led out of the way; led to roam about; led to err—to go astray in thought or belief; be mistaken; be incorrect.

πλανῶ ... is the word used above in 13:14 for deceive, and it is the same word used for “lead astray” in *the following verses in Matthew and Mark*.

Roaming about or wandering in our thinking is careless and makes a person vulnerable to deception. This is why we must be passionate and unyielding to seek out and stand on the clear, solid truth of Scripture. **Soft, liberal thinking is foolish and dangerous.**

- (Matthew 24:5 ESV) For many will come in my name, saying, “I am the Christ,” **and they will lead many astray.**

- (Matthew 24:11b ESV) ... **and lead many astray.**
- (Mark 13:5–6 ESV) And Jesus began to say to them, “**See that no one leads you astray.** 6 Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ **and they will lead many astray.**”
- (Jeremiah 23:32a ESV) Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams, declares the LORD, and who tell them **and lead my people astray by their lies and their recklessness**, when I did not send them or charge them.

D. The false prophet made a “living” image of the beast which was to be worshiped under pain of death, 13:15-18.

- (Revelation 13:15–18 ESV) **And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.** 16 Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, 17 so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. 18 This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.

The false prophet created what appeared ... to a deceived world desperate for a savior ... to be a living, breathing deity. This ploy seems to intentionally contrast this image with the dead, unresponsive idols of the Old Testament and thus somehow validates the deity of the god of this world—aka the dragon.

- (Psalm 135:15–17 ESV) The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands. 16 They have mouths, but do not speak; they have eyes, but do not see; 17 they have ears, but do not hear, **nor is there any breath in their mouths.**

Whatever the rationale, the created image from this supposed miracle will have some type of power to force all the earth dwellers to be marked by the name of the antichrist or by his number or be killed.