



# The Second Beast of False Prophecy

## Revelation 13:11-18



# **The Revelation of Jesus Christ**

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*Main Idea: The false prophet may appear to be powerful but cannot overcome the church.*

From the earth, the dragon brought forth another beast. It bore the image of a lamb with the voice of a dragon. While the first beast sought to draw the worship of the world, the second beast's mission is similar. The beast from the land sought only to draw attention to the anti-Christ from the first part of the chapter. The presence of the second beast only affirmed the worship of the first beast by validating its story and existence. Through the demonstration of spiritual powers, appearing to call down fire from heaven. The vileness of the first beast towards followers of Christ reminded with the second only stirring people to reject the one true God to cause death and destruction as a distraction. Unfortunately, John tells us that many will be deceived by the display of power, assuming that any charismatic display, whatever its message may be, comes from God. For those who would not be deceived, life wicked become increasingly difficult to sustain their daily life. Those who follow the beast will receive the mark of the beast from their allegiance that will provide them with the ability to buy and sell, participating in economic transactions, thus limiting the church's ability to live and survive in the culture that brands them as unfaithful, false, and outcasts of society. With the presence of the second beast, the false trinity from the dragon will appear to make great strides against the world and against the church.

## **The Image of A False Prophet**

From the description of the beast, the rationale is evident as to why people became dissuaded by the beast. The beast gives off the image of being from God. Normally, throughout scripture, imagery of being a lamb is reserved for a type of Christ. Even in the earlier chapters of the book, the lamb of God represents Christ's victory over sin and death with the authority to reign judgment on the earth. Yet, in Revelation 13, the image of the second

beast seems not quite right. The horns present a challenge for the common description of a lamb. But the voice gives the lamb away entirely. The beast speaks as the dragon would and represents the dragons will on the earth. This is no prophet to the One, True King but to the devil himself. The beast's voice betrays it; the beast represents the dragon and it's missions to devour and destroy all. Jesus' words best describe the mission of the dragon in the Gospel of John. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." (John 10:10, ESV)

Furthermore, as the beast from the earth appears to come from the land and from the people, the signs and wonders performed give a perceived credibility. The beast appears to have the authority to call down fire from heaven. Yet, John makes it clear that the beast derives no power from the first beast or even the dragon but only what God grants permission for it to accomplish. Ultimately, the only purpose this beast will serve will be to give glory to the God who sits on the throne who cannot be usurped. No amount of flash or charisma can take the place of the authentic and actual God. Flashy displays of supposed power, while they may be tempting, cannot compare to the flashes of lightning and pearls of thunder that roll from the mere presence of God.

## **The Consequences of the Church Following Christ**

As the church remains faithful to Jesus Christ, there will be consequences for doing so. In chapter 13, we see the infamous "mark of the beast" that many have speculated as to its origin. This mark, whatever it may be, will affect the church and her members financially, socially, and culturally. It represents an allegiance to the beast and thus to the anti-christ that the church cannot and should not receive. Thus, it is not unreasonable for the church to expect culturally persecution from the remainder of the world. Without the mark of the beast, the church will find herself unable to buy or sell with the world at large. By being marked on the right hand and on the forehead, those marked will attune their thoughts and their actions to towards the false savior. The church will be ostracized and persecuted subtly by their inability to par-

ticipate in economic transactions as the enemy uses manipulation to control the church in an effort to persecute the woman from chapter 12, representing the church.

Yet, for all of the perceived negative consequences the church will assuredly face during the end times, the church can hold fast to the true consequences of faithfulness to Jesus Christ. Whatever the world does in an attempt to damage or discriminate against the Christian, the ultimate consequences cannot be shaken. Our life in eternity will not be stripped away from the hands of God. The Christian does not need to fear death when Jesus Christ conquered the grave. Nor does the Christian need to fear hunger when our God represents the bread of life and the core of our sustenance. From creation, mankind bore the image of God as representations of our Heavenly Father. With the mark of the beast, the world trades the image of our creator and sustainer for a counterfeit. The world trades eternal security for the social security of economy, social acceptance, and security. Yet, bear in mind the witness from chapter 12. While the dragon pursued the woman, the dragon did not overcome her by God's sovereign protection. Nothing has changed in chapter 13. Whatever consequences the Christian faces remaining faithful to the Lord, the dragon, his false christ, nor his false prophet are capable of overcoming the Sovereign Hand of God.

## Discussion Questions

- How does the false trinity presented in chapters 12 and 13 differ from the true Trinity of the fullness of God? What is the mission of the second beast?
- Why does the flash of the second beast appeal to people? What types of things do we tend to look towards to determine if something is authentic or not?
- Why is it important for us to test the message of spiritual powers? What can we do to rest assured that they are from God?
- How will the world attempt to take away from the church what only God can provide? Where have you seen the provision of God?
- In what ways does the second beast make it difficult to survive? What does this say about the influence of the second beast?
- What are some of the negative consequences of following Jesus Christ? What are the positive consequences of following Jesus Christ? How do the two compare? Which seems more valuable?
- How can we safeguard ourselves from the deception of the second beast?