

The Beast Out of the Earth: The False Prophet

13: 11-15

DIG: What is the beast from the earth like? If the first beast exercises political power, what does the second beast exercise? How will the false prophet deceive the inhabitants of the earth?

REFLECT: How do you discern false religion or a false prophet? What tools has God given us to discern truth from error, truth from lies?

The major weapon that **Satan** uses in his attack on us is deception. **Jesus** stated that **Satan is a liar and the father of lies** (John 8:44), who masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14) to deceive people. From when he first appeared in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:2-6), until his final appearance at the end of the messianic Kingdom (20:7-8), **Satan is a liar** and a deceiver. He constantly tries to confuse people, blinding the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the Gospel (Second Corinthians 4:4).

Rabbi Sha'ul warned us **Satan's** followers will masquerade themselves as servants of righteousness (Second Corinthians 11:15). It is precisely because they spread wicked lies that **Satan** aligns himself with deceiving spirits and things taught by demons (First Timothy 4:1). Therefore, the Bible continually warns us of the danger of **false prophets** (Numbers 22-24; Deuteronomy 13:1-5; Isaiah 9:15; Jeremiah 28:1-17; 29:8-9; Ezekiel 13:17; Jude 11; Revelation 2:14).

As He concluded the Sermon on the Mount, **Yeshua** warned us: **Watch out for false prophets. They will come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves** (Matthew 7:15, also see Second Peter 2:1 and First John 4:1). **False prophets** have afflicted **God's people** from the beginning of history, but **they will** increase as the return of **Messiah** becomes imminent. Just as all the **false** christ's who have plagued mankind will culminate in the final **antichrist**, so will all the **false prophets** culminate in a **false prophet**.³⁰⁷ Therefore, after discussing the **counterfeit** father and the **counterfeit** son, the **counterfeit** trinity is completed with the introduction of the **counterfeit** holy spirit in the person of the **false prophet**.

Following the rise of **the first beast**, or **the antichrist**, **John** saw **another beast** of the same kind come **out of the earth** (opposed to heaven), thus emphasizing **his** humanity. **He** will probably come into prominence as a miracle-working religious leader. This is **the one** who separates **himself** from the Torah (**Second Thessalonians 2:3-10**). Elsewhere in the book of **Revelation** he is called **the false prophet** (**16:13, 19:20, 20:10**). **He** will appear like a **lamb**, giving the appearance of a true religious leader, but in reality **he** will speak like a **dragon**, and so **will** reveal **his** true nature (**13:11 KJV**).³⁰⁸

What is the standard for a **prophet** of **ADONAI**? Since **God's** people were to obey **His** **prophet** without question (**Deuteronomy 18:19**), to prophecy falsely was, in effect, to take **the LORD's** place. For this, **the false prophet** was to be **put to death**. Moses describes this process: **But a prophet who presumes to speak in My name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death (Deuteronomy 18:20)**. In the **70th seven** of **Daniel**, this commandment will be reinstated. **The false prophet** will fail to meet this standard and as a result **will** face the second **death** and be thrown into **the lake of fire** for all eternity (**20:14**).

Just as **the Holy Spirit** exercised equal authority with the true **Son**, the **false prophet** will exercise equal authority with the **counterfeit** son. The two **Satan**-empowered men **will** become great allies. By the time the political power of **the antichrist** is reaching its peak, the syncretistic union of the world religions **will** be concentrated under the power of the second **beast** to coexist. Each one **will** support the other. **The antichrist** will enforce the religious authority of **the false prophet**, and **the false prophet** will persuade the world to **worship the antichrist**. Just as **God the Holy Spirit** will testify about **God the Son** (**John 15:26**), the **false prophet** will testify about the **counterfeit** son. **The second beast** will exercise **all the authority of the first beast** and **will** make **the earth and its inhabitants** **worship the antichrist**, whose **counterfeit fatal wound** seemed to be **healed** (**13:12**). They **will** become an unbeatable team for a season, working together to take control.

In order to fully carry out the deception, **the false prophet** will have the power of **counterfeit miracles** by the power of **Satan** (**Job 1:16 and 19**). Just as the Egyptian magicians counterfeited the **miracles** of **Moses** and **Aaron** with their secret arts (**Exodus 7:8-13**), **the false prophet** will perform **great and miraculous signs**. One of the most impressive signs **the counterfeit Holy Spirit** will perform will be **causing fire to come from heaven to earth in full view of all the people** (**13:13**). Just as **Elijah** caused **fire to come down from heaven** (**First Kings 18:20-40, Second Kings 1:9-12**), **the false prophet** will do the same. The two witnesses used the same phenomenon to intimidate the unbelieving world (**11:5**). Even though **the antichrist** had killed them, their resurrection had been seen around the world and people still feared their power. It will be important to **Satan** that the world will see and know that **the beast** and **the false prophet** will have similar powers.³⁰⁹

Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the antichrist, he will **deceive** unbelievers, or the inhabitants of the earth (13:14a). This is just as Yeshua predicted when He said: **Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people (Matthew 24:11)**. The word **deceive** comes from the Greek word *plano*, which means *to wander*. It is the basis for the English word *planet*, since planets appear *to wander* through the heavens. During the Great Tribulation, the world will be utterly vulnerable to the deception of **the false prophet**. There will be unparalleled disasters and unimaginable horrors, leaving **many people** desperate for answers. Having rejected the true Gospel and blasphemed the true **God**, the inhabitants of the earth will be eager to believe the **deceiving lies** spread by the false prophet.³¹⁰

The purpose of the counterfeit miracles will be to carry out the work of deception. The coming of the lawless one, or the antichrist, will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. The phrase miracles, signs and wonders is the exact phrase used to describe the miracles of **Messiah (Acts 2:22)** and the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 2:4). Those unbelievers will perish because they will refuse to love the truth of the preaching of the 144,000 and the two witnesses and so be saved. For this reason **God will send them a powerful delusion so that they will believe "the lie," Satan's particular lie, and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness (Second Thess 2:11-12)**. Having rejected **God's** offer of repentance, the unbelievers will be lured by a deception so great that only true believers will be able to see through the illusion and, as a result, stand firm in the face of persecution.

After convincing the world of the supremacy of the antichrist, the false prophet will set up an image in honor of the beast (see Dr - **The Abomination That Causes Desolation**) who was wounded by the sword, appeared to die, and yet lived (13:14b). The image will **deceive many** when it appears to come to life. He will give breath to the image of the beast by the power of **Satan**, so that the image of the beast would seem to be alive and **even speak (13:15a NASB)**. The word **breath** comes from the Greek word *pneuma*, not *zoe* or *bios*, the Greek words normally translated *life*. The false prophet will animate the image of the antichrist so that it will give the appearance of being alive.³¹¹ However, only **ADONAI** can create *life* out of nothing (Genesis 1:1).

The end result will be that all who refuse to worship the image will be killed (Revelation 13:15b and see Exodus 15:18; Daniel 2:44-45, 7:13-14 and 27). Once again, Jesus prophesied that this would happen when He said: **Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of Me (Matthew 24:9)**.