

I. Satan's General (Rev. 13:1-7)

- A. Dragon gave him his power, throne, and authority – This world leader unlike anyone who has ever lived will be empowered and directed by Satan. He will have all the resources and power of hell at his disposal. Satan and the antichrist are so connected that worshipping one is synonymous with the other. In this, the beast takes the offer from Satan that Jesus refused. (Mat. 4:8-10; Rev. 13:4)
1. Mortally wounded but healed – The beast will suffer a life ending head wound that will supernaturally be healed. His recovery from this wound will increase his fame and authority greatly. Twice His recovery from the wound that he suffers is attributed to the world wide worship and devotion that He will receive. Seemingly, the antichrist even imitates, to a degree, Jesus's death and resurrection. (Mat. 24:24; Rev. 13:12-14)
- B. Men worship the Dragon and the Beast – Millions of people will praise and laud the policies and achievements of the antichrist and fully pledge their loyalty and support to his vision. There will be songs, books, and Facebook posts dedicated to his name. As people do this they will not only be worshipping him but they will unknowingly be worshipping Satan. Many do not understand that Satan is a deceiver and appears as a messenger light and truth, not as horror and wickedness like people expect. (Mar. 13:6; 2 Cor. 11:14-15)
- C. Authority to influence – “Blasphemer” may be a more accurate title than “Antichrist” for this end-times dictator. This beast is a man who speaks against God and everything God stands for. One of his greatest weapons of warfare will be his oratory ability to deliver great speeches and statements as part of his leadership strategy. These speeches will inspire humanism, relative truth, and appeal to the intellect. He will influence the entire earth through his blasphemy. (Dan. 7:8, 25, 11:36; Jhn. 8:44-45; Gal. 4:16; 2 Thes. 2:7-12; 2 Tim. 3:2, 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:18; Jd 1:16)
1. Continue for 42 months – Once again we are given the time frame of this great persecution that will face Israel and the Church. It will be 3 ½ years. I believe there is a prophetic parallel between the imprisonment of Joseph, the drought of Elijah, Jonah in the wales belly, Jesus's time in the ground, and the death of the 2 witnesses to the 3 ½ year time frame that God will allow Satan to seemingly have victory over the church. Just as in all those historical events God uses it for the greatest of Glory to his Name and our good. (Dan. 7:25, 9:27, 12:7, 14; Rev. 11:2-3, 12:6, 14, 13:5)

II. Overcoming the Overcomer (Rev. 13:7-10)

A. We read in the earlier chapter that the saints overcome Satan's rage and are victorious over him. However, we read here that the beast will overcome the saints. So which is it? The beast overcomes the saints having power to physically kill them, and by all appearances defeating God's people. The saints overcome the beast and Satan by their unfaltering faith and walking in their calling in the face of persecution and resistance. (Mat. 10:28; Jhn 16:33; Rom. 12:21; 1 Jhn 4:4, 5:4-5; Rev. 2:11, 12:11)

1. The Beast will desire and demand to be worshipped as a god. This is also not a new idea in the realm of Satanic empires and leaders. There have been many national leaders throughout the ages who have either demanded worship or received worship. (Rev. 2-3).
2. The Book of Life contains the names of all God's redeemed. Worshipping the beast and having your name in the Book of Life are mutually exclusive. "He who has an ear" is a solemn warning meant to capture our attention concerning the wicked and toxic practice of worshipping the antichrist. (Rev. 20:15)

B. Faith and Patience of the Saints – During this difficult time it is imperative that we know that God will bring justice for all wrong doing. We must build up our faith in this truth. Even though the actions of the antichrist and his followers are allowed and prophesied about by God, they will still be held accountable for their sinful actions. (Ps. 55:23; Mat. 5:39, 26:52; Rom. 12:9; 1 Thes. 5:15; 1 Pet. 2:21-23; Rev. 16:6)

1. Winning the battle against the antichrist will not be accomplished through any other means than a steadfast and growing relationship with Jesus. We overcome not by might, intellect, physical preparation, or alliances. We overcome by knowing the truth concerning the blood of the lamb, the word of our testimony (concerning Jesus), and laying down our lives for Jesus and neighbor.

III. The False Prophet (Rev. 13:11-18)

A. The false prophet will be the leader of a worldwide religious network. He will be devoted to causing all the nations to worship the Antichrist. His goal is to do the bidding of the Antichrist, to make him the supreme leader of the earth, worshiped by as many as possible. This is the only time the false prophet is called another beast. Every other time he is called the false prophet.

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- B. This beast rises from the “earth” rather than the “sea” like the first beast and the beasts in the visions of Daniel which represented Gentile nations. The only biblical symbol that lines up with the “earth” as compared to the “sea of nations” is the idea of the “promised land” or the “land of Israel”. Therefore, it is widely held by many that the false prophet will be Jewish, and emerge on the national scene as a religious leader in Israel. (Gen 12:7, 13:15-17; Ps 37:29; Acts 7:5)
- C. “He had two horns like a lamb,” so it seems he will appear to be peace-loving, mild, and gentle, like a lamb, “But he spoke like a dragon”. The symbol of a dragon reflects he will speak with authority and deceitful lies like the dragon (Satan).
- D. No matter the ethnicity of the false prophet his role is clear. He is a highly regarded religious or spiritual leader over the earth. His main agenda is to lead the world in worship of the antichrist, thus, worldwide worship of Satan. John saw three main strategies of the false prophet in deceiving the nations to worship the antichrist.
1. Messaging - First, the false prophet will be a prophet. That is why he is called a prophet. He is a messenger. Intrinsic to the false prophet is that he is a preacher. He will proclaim oracles that he claims are from God. His demonically empowered public speeches will be confirmed with great miracles to deceive the masses. He will make these public speeches before the nations. (Rev. 13:12-14)
 - a) Adolph Hitler primarily using demonically empowered messaging created the largest German political party, conquered a dozen nations, and slaughtered 21 million people during his brutal 12-years in power.

Orators possess an extraordinary talent to move people, including intellectuals, emotionally, through the power of speech. They are unique and highly unusual human beings. In true oratory, a psychic and emotional exchange, possibly a fusion, occurs between such speakers and their listeners, which is absent in public speaking. I am tempted to say that orators “channel” in some sense, although I do not want to invoke specific New Age practice or suggest such powers exist. However, as a consequence of all this, oratory is often viewed as a magic art, a black art.
– Andrew Hamilton

- b) These messages will be backed by powerful signs and wonders. Satan has the power to mimic God’s miracles to a point. God warns us not to judge miracles based upon the power of the miracle, but upon truth of the message and the character of the individual’s heart and life (fruit of the Spirit). (Deut. 13:1-5; Ex. 7-9; Mat. 7:22-23, 24:24; 2 Thes. 2:9)

2. Establish a Religion - Secondly, he will establish a worldwide worship system that is related to worshipping an image of the beast, “the abomination of desolation”. He will tell those who dwell on the earth “to make an image to the Antichrist or to the beast.” (Dan. 9:27; Mat. 24:15-16; 2 Thes. 2:3-4)
 - a) The image of the beast is animated in some way, in that it has breath and can speak. Whether the image is animated or technologically, the result will be very real. It seems you will be able to have a conversation with this image and it will give orders that hold the authority of the antichrist himself. (Rev. 13:15)

3. Use Commerce to Demand Worship - Third, he will force the nations to worship the Antichrist through the mark of the Beast on their hand or forehead. He will force all to publicly declare their loyalty to the Antichrist through the receiving of a mark. To refuse this mark will result in not being able to buy or sell the necessities of life and will ultimately result in the death penalty. (Rev. 13:16-17)
 - a) There is a great level of fear in the church that surrounds this mark and the number 666. The interpretations and superstitions of what exactly the mark is and what the number represents are as confusing as they are endless. We must not lose sight of the fact we are given this information to have confidence not to cause us to have fear.

 - b) One of the most common fears that surround the theme of the mark of the beast is that you will get tricked into receiving it, or you will receive it unwillingly somehow. The scripture is clear that the mark will be received voluntarily as a token of your allegiance and worship of the antichrist. Every single passage that talks about this mark tells us that those who receive it voluntarily worship and love the antichrist. (Rev. 14:9-11, 16:2, 19:20, 20:4)

IV. In Summary

- A. Jesus in His kindness and perfect leadership gave this vision to John so that we would be confident in the surety of our victory over Satan and his strategy through Jesus. The main point seen throughout the vision is that the believers in Jesus advance the gospel powerfully and overcome Satan in the last days. (Rom 8:14-15; 1 Jhn 4:18)