

# Revelation, Part 18

## The Second Beast

**Rev 13:11** Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. 14 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 to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 15 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. 16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or their foreheads, 17 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.

18 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.

Here in verse 11, we are introduced to another “beast”. This beast comes out of the “earth” (“land” in some translations). Some interpret the “earth” or “land” to be Israel. The first beast is often considered to be Gentile if you interpret the “sea” to be the “sea of humanity” and many expositors do interpret “sea” that way. But I lean to the Antichrist being a Jew or having some Jewish blood, or, at least, he claims it to assume the mantle of Messiah.

Back to the second beast - Not every expositor believes interpreting “the earth” as Israel and this second beast comes out of Israel is accurate. There is no real support in Scripture for interpreting the “earth” or “land” this way, they argue. That said, two of my most reliable expositors take two different tracks on this. John Walvoord is in the “can’t prove this is Israel” camp, but Dwight Pentecost in his book “Things to Come” takes the opposite position that this passage says he is a Jew out of Israel. So, which is it? Let’s consider some possible scenarios.

**Rev 13:12** And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. 14 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 to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 15 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.

Whoever he is and wherever he comes from, he appears to be a religious type, as his focus is worship centered, and the first beast is the focus of that worship.

- He has two horns like a lamb — Meek appearing?
- But speaks like a dragon — Orator? Like Satan?
- “Causes the Earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”
- He “deceives those on the Earth”.
- With “great signs” like fire from Heaven.
- “Telling those who dwell on the Earth” to worship the first beast.
- And those that dwell on the Earth must make an “image” of the first beast and worship it/him.

There are three possible identities for this person.

1. He is a Jew (“out of the earth” or “land” of Palestine).
2. He is a Gentile and the religious leader of the ecumenical religion (Mystery Babylon, mother of harlots that rides the scarlet beast) that promotes the antichrist.
3. He is the 12th Imam or Madhi and is a messianic Islamic figure that causes the worship of the first beast.

Any of the three could work, but there is not enough evidence to be dogmatic to conclude which one. Tradition leans toward the second choice; he is a Gentile that is the religious leader of the ecumenical religion. What does this beast do?

**Rev 13:11** ... he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

The two horns, not ten like the first beast, seem to suggest some level of authority. If he is the leader of this ecumenical religion this would fit. Do the horns represent two distinct entities like the 10 horns of the first beast? Apostate Christianity and Islam? Apostate Christianity and Judaism? Apostate Christianity and New Age? Or some other combo?

That he is like a lamb suggests some attempt at appearing meek and humble. This seems to imply he is a religious figure of some sort or he adopts a religious posture. Verse 12 tells us he causes the earth to worship the first beast; that also suggests a religious character. Even though he seems meek and humble like a lamb he “spoke like a dragon”. This implies whatever he said in his meekness was really the words of Satan. He does not speak true Scripture but rather a distortion of the truth as designed by Satan. Satan takes a lie and wraps it in the truth to create deception.

**Rev 13:12** And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

“Exercises” is a Greek word that means to do, and “authority” might be better translated as “power”. Or we might say, “he does all the power” or maybe “he has all of the power of the first beast,” meaning he is as powerful as the first beast in the sense he is also controlled by Satan, and it is Satan who works through him. He uses this satanic power to promote the first beast and “cause” the population of the world to worship the first beast. The Greek word translated “causes” literally translated means to make a path. He paves the way for the first beast to assume world power. Does the first beast actually assume world power, that is over the entire world? Probably not in the sense he never achieves the full realization of his goal.

“... Causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” Here is that reference to a wound that is healed which will be mentioned again in verse 14.

**Rev 13:13** He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

He performs signs, and the word in Greek means some unusual event or even a miracle. Mentioned here is fire from heaven, and the verb suggests it is on more than one occasion. Jesus warned us of this.

**Mark 13:22** For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 23 But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.

Paul also warned us this was coming.

**2 Thes 2:5** Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Fire from heaven has previous examples in Scripture such as Elijah and the “altar competition” with the Baal priests.

**1 Kings 13:1** Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!”

He did it again in 2 Kings 1:10 when the king of Israel sent men to inquire of a false god and Elijah intercepted them asking if they had no god in Israel that they had to inquire of a false god?

**2 Kings 1:1** Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. 2 Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria, and was injured; so he sent messengers and said to them, “Go, inquire of

Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury.” 3 But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?’ 4 Now, therefore, thus says the Lord: ‘You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’ ” So Elijah departed.

5 And when the messengers returned to him, he said to them, “Why have you come back?”

6 So they said to him, “A man came up to meet us, and said to us, ‘Go, return to the king who sent you, and say to him, “Thus says the Lord: ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’ ” ’ ”

7 Then he said to them, “What kind of man was it who came up to meet you and told you these words?”

8 So they answered him, “A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist.”

And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

9 Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. So he went up to him; and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him: “Man of God, the king has said, ‘Come down!’ ”

10 So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.” And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. 11 Then he sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty men. And he answered and said to him: “Man of God, thus has the king said, ‘Come down quickly!’ ”

12 So Elijah answered and said to them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.” And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

13 Again, he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, and said to him: “Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight. 14 Look, fire has come down from heaven and burned up the first two captains of fifties with their fifties. But let my life now be precious in your sight.”

The apostles James and John suggested Jesus do this same miracle when he encountered rejection.

**Luke 9:51** Now it came to pass when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, 52 and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. 53 But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. 54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?”

This is a miracle that would resonate with the Jews and connect this person with their expectation of the return of Elijah the Prophet to herald the coming of the Messiah. John the Baptist was seen as a fulfillment of that prophecy but not actually Elijah. Because the Jews are expecting the return of Elijah to precede the coming of the Messiah, they even set a place for him at their seder tables, I believe this “false prophet” person will be a Jew and not necessarily the head of an ecumenical religion that will be present during the Tribulation. The effect of this fire miracle is to establish the authority of the false prophet to prepare the way of the first beast to assume maximum power as Messiah.

**Rev 13:14** 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 to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.

Within some limitations, Satan is capable of producing miracles. Remember Pharaoh’s wizards turning his staff into a snake as Moses had done? Satan can create the illusion of a miracle, and I think that is what we see in these modern-day laying-of-hands healings and tongues. With these signs, he deceives those on the earth telling them they need to worship the first beast. He makes an image of the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. Here is that reference to the fatal wound again. The word for “sword” is machaira, which is a Roman short sword. Since it is a weapon of war or at least of combat, this suggests he suffered this wound by some form of a weapon, perhaps even a sword. The wound is related to a person and not an entity, such as the Roman Empire, which disintegrated from within more than it was defeated by any outside force.

**Rev 13:15** 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.

The word “image” is *eikon* in Greek and means a likeness and is translated usually as “image,” “likeness,” or “figure”. The traditional interpretation of this “image” is that it is some sort of statue of Antichrist that is erected in the Temple, and to everyone’s amazement, it comes to life and speaks. This is the same thing Daniel spoke of in Daniel 9 and Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24, the abomination of desolation — the “image” in the temple in Jerusalem that goes up at the mid-point of the Tribulation and signals the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

Our interpretation of things future in the Bible is generally seen in the context of our present knowledge of technology and culture. That may or may not result in an accurate depiction of what is being presented in Scripture. This is especially a problem with the end times. Throughout history, we have tended to assume, maybe correctly and maybe not, that the events are close. Based on what I call “historical trends” that today seem to be pointing to fulfillment of end times prophecy, I do feel that is the case. These events we are studying are, in my opinion, very close. That said, just about every other generation held the same opinion. Imagine what prophecy-aware believers were thinking during World War II. Since there is no prophecy to be fulfilled before the Rapture of the Church, we have no signs to watch for other than these “historical trends,” and they may not be the harbingers that we think they are. Just about every expositor I have seen claims he is mostly guessing at the meanings of much of the imagery in end times prophecy. I have long felt, and others agree, that the events pictured in Revelation are not necessarily there for us to understand fully but will be understood by those who are witnesses to the events.

This “image” is a perfect example. The frame of reference for Christians 2,000 years ago and until recently has been that this “image” can only be a statue of some sort, and it talks. Have you seen the “Hall of the Presidents” in both Disneyland and Disney World? (I assume it is still there?) Automaton representations of our presidents stand on a stage, gesture, and “speak”. This “image” being a talking statue seems to be a reasonable explanation for us. However, if the Tribulation is not near, will

someone 1,000 years from now or even 100 or 50 years from now, when considering this passage in the context of his culture and the technology of his day, interpret it the same way? Quite possibly the answer is no.

Let me illustrate this using emerging technology as an example of alternative ways this “image” could be understood. Everyone has seen *Star Wars*. The first one came out way back in the seventies. It had an opening scene that involved a hologram. Is this “image” in Revelation a hologram that speaks? How about the movie *Avatar* and the idea that your conscience could occupy another body? How about Facebook’s Meta where “it helps people, communities, and businesses do more together through technologies and immersive experiences”? “Immersive experiences?” Their words I believe mean living in a fabricated world. Bill Gates changed the name of his company to Meta so he must have a clear idea of where that is going and what it means.

Those are easy ones. Try this. If you are even a little into end times prophecy, you have bound to have heard of the New World Order. Don’t laugh as I did years ago, because it is real. There are people of the wealthiest 1% of the wealthiest 1% of the people in the world, that meet annually to discuss OUR future and how THEY intend to manage it and us. I’m not making this up. It isn’t a conspiracy theory if it is real, and this is very real. Aside from the stated objectives of a one-world government and one currency free of the restraints of paper currency, among other things, they have actually expressed the need to reduce the Earth’s population down to what they call “sustainable levels,” which they have defined as 500,000,000 people. The current population of the world is close to 8,000,000,000. That means that 7.5 billion of us are defined as excess baggage, and we have to go. There is all manner of other things I could say about this lovely bunch and some are, I am sure, not true. Unfortunately, a lot of it is true, and you can confirm this on the website of the World Economic Forum.

Related to our “image” of the beast, I have one more “conspiracy theory” associated with this WEF, World Economic Forum, and what they are planning for our futures. They seem to be all enamored with the idea of man evolving into a being that can live forever. God has eternal life, and they intend to create their version. That goal will be met with a marriage of our intellect (brains or souls) with super bodies of some sort or even cyborg bodies. I’m sure they are even considering the possibility of



creating new and “perfect” humanoid bodies to move into when the old ones, well, get old. They are also introducing AI (artificial intelligence) into the equation to make us much smarter than we are now, which must be a lot considering how smart these people think they are. They say humans can be “hacked” like a computer can be hacked and manipulated by an outside source. Interestingly, the results of this “hacking” sound amazingly like the divine omniscience, as in being like God.

Some biometric devices, like the watches we wear today that record our activity, number of steps we take, heart rate, etc, through upgrades will record a myriad of other data such as where we go, what we do, what we say, what we see, and how we react to it, and even what we think. They will digitize us. We are already being tracked by numerous “eyes” and “ears” we have allowed into our lives such as Amazon, FaceBook, YouTube, Siri, security cameras, Google Alexia, smartphones, smart TVs, smart thermostats, smart electric meters — and the list goes on and on. All these convenient and time-saving devices are actively listening and observing your world and reporting that data back to someone. Haven’t you ever had a conversation with a friend about something you were thinking of buying only to receive ads from Amazon within an hour for exactly what you were discussing? I have. That device on our wrist or in our purse or pocket or your car or house can easily be miniaturized down to the size of a grain of rice and inserted under the skin of the hand or head. Sound familiar? It will know us better than we know ourselves.

Another interesting aspect of this group that meets annually to discuss how to manage the world is they believe in something called “transhumanism”. Wikipedia describes it this way.

**Transhumanism** is a philosophical and intellectual movement that advocates for the enhancement of the human condition by developing and making widely available sophisticated technologies that can greatly enhance longevity and cognition. It also predicts the inevitability of such technologies in the future. Transhumanist thinkers study the potential benefits and dangers of emerging technologies that could overcome fundamental human limitations as well as the ethics of using such technologies. Some transhumanists believe that human beings may eventually be able to transform themselves into beings with abilities so greatly expanded from the current condition as to merit the label of posthuman beings.

However, other progressives have argued that posthumanism ... amounts to a shift away from concerns about social justice, from the reform of human institutions and other Enlightenment preoccupations, toward narcissistic longings for a transcendence of the human body in quest of more exquisite ways of being. (Ya think?)

While many transhumanist theorists and advocates seek to apply reason, science, and technology to reduce poverty, disease, disability, and malnutrition around the globe, transhumanism is distinctive in its particular focus on the applications of technologies to the improvement of human bodies at the individual level. Many transhumanists actively assess the potential for future technologies and innovative social systems to improve the quality of all life, while seeking to make the material reality of the human condition fulfill the promise of legal and political equality by eliminating congenital mental and physical barriers. (New body and enhanced brain.)

In other words, you can have a new you, and the world will be a much better place for it. Isn't that a good thing? (Sarcasm). This is an attempt to create the Kingdom through technology and science.

If you want to know more, just Google World Economic Forum (or go to their website <https://www.weforum.org/>), Klaus Schwab, or his chief advisor Professor Yuval Noah Harari, an Israeli history professor. You may also want to visit YouTube and search for Yuval Noah Harari and watch some of the videos there, especially the first one that comes up of him giving a speech about "hacking" human beings and what that means. It is quite chilling!

One of the "signs" of the false prophet is he "gives breath to the image". The word for "breath" is *pneuma*, which refers to breath or spirit. Only God has the power to grant life, and in my opinion, this truth has limited the thinking of some expositors. With the rapid advance in the science of cloning, is the possibility of man "creating" a life-form from existing lifeforms truly impossible?

The "image" speaks and "cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed". Interestingly, the second beast "was *allowed* to give breath to the image of the beast". Who allowed it? God? "Allowed" is

*didomi* and means simply enough to give something to someone. Implied is it was *given* the *power* to give “breath” (life) to the image. If so, this may actually be a case of a man “creating” a life. Then the “image” was “caused” by the second beast “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” (v15). It appears to me that it is the “image” that “that causes those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.” Most expositors hold that this “image” is an automaton driven by a computer or a person, but it isn’t something that comes alive.

I’m not sure we can rule out the “image” actually coming to “life” when we consider technology and what may be possible now and in the near future. I believe the “fatal head wound” is related to this “image in the Temple” incident. I am thinking the Antichrist receives some sort of “fatal” wound through perhaps an assassination attempt probably by some Jews or Christians who have fingered him for who he really is, he “dies,” and as a transhuman/automaton is brought back to “life” in the form of this “image” in the Temple. That is, of course, speculation on my part based on my understanding of current technology. But imagine how the world would react to the death of this beloved leader who has brought peace to the world. His death and funeral would be as famous as that of Queen Elizabeth’s now. THEN, imagine how the world would react, if “through the magic of technology and science” he is “resurrected” from the dead and assumes his position of power again. I am thinking much of the world would gladly worship him, at least at first.

**Rev 13:16** He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or their foreheads, 17 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.

Either you worship the image, in which you are given a sign of compliance on the hand or forehead (that “grain of rice” which likely contains a “kill switch”), or you die. If you don’t take the sign, then no one will do business or even associate with you. You can’t buy or rent shelter, buy food, or pay for medical care. He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark. (We do need to get rid of whatever is left of that 7.5 billion “excess” people needing to be off-loaded, ya know?)

Status and money become meaningless and of no value to you. Those who take the mark will fear any association with those who refused it. To do business or even just associate with the rejectors would suggest your worship of the image was simply a means of saving your own skin, and you are not to be trusted. You become a non-entity banished from society and unable to satisfy the most basic survival needs — or that “kill switch” is activated, and you become just one more of the 7.5 billion “undesirables”.

This concept is not far-fetched at all. During WWII certain commodities were rationed, like gasoline, meat, tires, sugar, and things needed for the war effort. Didn't matter how much money you had, unless you also had a ration coupon for that item, you could not buy it.

**Rev 13:18** 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.

The order does go out, and it does get executed, and many will die. Is he successful in having all the rejectors killed? The answer is no because we know a remnant of believers survives to enter the Millennium along with even some unbelievers who won't.

Many speculate what this “666” means, but the truth is no one knows. The most common idea is it is something like that microchip the size of a grain of rice that is implanted under the skin I just described. These are in existence and are currently being used for pets and even people. They can be programmed in many ways, potentially even including bank balances and health records. The military was once considering a dog tag that contained all of a serviceman's records encoded in an embedded chip but decided that was a bad idea if the soldier was ever captured.

Some resort to numerology and attempt to use “666” to discern the name of the Antichrist with interesting conclusions. Most agree the three sixes probably have more to do with 6 being the number for man and 7 being the number for God. Six is incomplete, whereas 7 is seen as complete. The bottom line on “666” is, that if it does refer to an individual, we don't really know who or what it means, and it may be it isn't for us to know, but the Tribulation generation will understand it.

## **What do we have?**

Satan is a copycat. He copies God's plan and creates a fake version to deceive mankind. During the Tribulation, he will have a false religious system including his false "trinity". Satan will be like God the Father. Antichrist will be his fake Messiah. The False Prophet will be like the Spirit of God in that he will promote and support Antichrist. The goal of a transhumanist, authoritarian "utopia" on Earth is the fake Kingdom.

Revelation 13 gives much insight into the character of the Great Tribulation. It will be a time of attempting a one world government and one world religion, with one world economic system. Those who will resist the ruler and refuse to worship him will be eliminated. And the martyrs will likely outnumber the believers who survive. It will be Satan's final attempt to cause the world to worship him.

This chapter also makes it clear that the amillennial dream of a world reaching "nirvana" by getting better and better through Christian evangelism and discipleship is not supported in the Bible. Instead, the final form of world religion will be apostate, satanic, and blasphemous. There are many indications today that the world is heading in this direction, with the corresponding conclusion that the coming of the Lord may be near.