

The False Prophet
*(A Translation and Commentary
of Revelation 13:11-18)*

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Before getting started, let's review a few notes that will help make sense of this booklet...

**This work mostly uses British spelling, except for the quoted material, which often employs U.S. spelling.*

**The version of Revelation 13:11-18 featured below is my own translation. As for other Bible references: unless otherwise stated, the Old Testament quotes are from the NASB and the New Testament quotes are from the ALT3.*

**"LORD," "GOD," or "Jehovah" signifies the personal name of God.*

**The ALT3 distinguishes between singular and plural second person pronouns by means of an asterisk (*).*

**Divine pronouns are normally not capitalized, unless they appear that way in Bible versions or other quotes.*

**Words that appear in brackets within quotes are not found in the original texts, and were added by the translators or are my personal comments, etc.*

**The textual basis for all New Testament quotations is Maurice Robinson's Byzantine Textform.*

I. Goliath's CPU

The largest telecommunications companies...are betraying the trust of their customers...We are building the greatest weapon for oppression in the history of man, yet its directors exempt themselves from accountability.¹ -- Edward Snowden

Edward Snowden is a hero; unfortunately, he is a hero in the twenty-first century, which means the perks are fairly negligible. He singlehandedly—with tremendous skill and bravery—blew the largest whistle the world had ever heard. He exposed the fact that the Orwellian nightmare had already been implemented across the board. The world was shocked. Media outlets were at a fever pitch. The common man lifted his head high in frustration and defiance. Then, the next morning came, and people went back to Facebook and Fifa 13. Society had grown so self-absorbed and shallow that it had become unable to revolt. Ed saved a culture that didn't care to be saved. Ed saved a culture that had ceased to really care about anything.

Nevertheless, his story remains incredibly important. What he exposed is still a substantial revelation. Major communications companies gave a fully open door to the U.S. government, while

everyone lied about it. The government acted illegally and deceitfully, a massive infrastructure was built, and people lost every vestige of privacy and liberty. The game had changed. Institutional voyeurism was now a part of everyday life. That's the way it was and the way it is and the way it shall be. We can't truly change it, but we can individually be aware of the dangers—and of the machinations of fallen humanity in a digital age.

Of course the greatest danger for every “weapon of oppression” that is formed is the possibility of it falling into the wrong hands. We're yet to see what a Fourth Reich could accomplish. This CPU of the digital Babylon is already in pretty bad hands, but things will get worse.

In the future, society will crumble and a new leader will arise. He will seem to have all the answers to the world's predicaments. He will become king of this neo-Babylon, and will find the network of pervasive surveillance to be his most useful asset. He is the Antichrist, and his time of arising may be very soon.

As I just related, he will not emerge until there is a season of tremendous trouble and chaos. There must be a storm for him to calm. God is going to execute a series of global judgments. This is what

is known as the “end times,” the “last days,” the “tribulation period,” and the “apocalypse,” etc.

Probably, the event that will inaugurate this decade (or so) will be the rapture of the church, when millions upon millions of Christians are translated to be with the Lord in heaven, disappearing before a confused and clueless world. The fallout from the rapture is bound to be catastrophic. There will also be other Biblical signs occurring early on, such as major Middle Eastern wars.

People will get an eerie feeling. “What if this is the end of the world?” “What if the God of the Bible really exists?” These will not be pleasant emotions for the lost and unregenerate to ruminate upon. They will be seeking relief from these sinking feelings. That relief will come through the False Prophet, the sidekick of the Antichrist.

He will be able to reinterpret the signs of the times to accommodate the sinful wishes of the rebellious. He will be able to persuade the global populace that the Lord Jesus Christ is not about to come and fight at the Battle of Armageddon, but rather that the time of God’s Kingdom has already arrived. God’s king has been given, and people simply need to submit to his rule, accepting a mark as a token of their obedience.

All of this is described in Revelation chapter 13, verses 11 through 18. Let's go through these lines of Holy Scripture now...

II. Revelation 13:11-18

A. Verse 11

And I saw another wild beast ascending out of the earth, and it was having two horns similar to a lamb, and it was speaking as a dragon.

The book of Revelation is very rich in Old Testament symbolism. Practically everything which appears in these visions related to John harken back to a popular motif. If in doubt as to what is meant by a certain phrase, just try and consider a pivotal place in the Tanakh where such a depiction featured prominently.

“Coming out of the earth” is definitely a reference to Adam. He was created from the dust of the ground back in Genesis 2. Moreover, whereas Genesis 1 speaks of God in general terms, as he creates the whole universe and frames it for the coming nations, Genesis 2 speaks of God more personally. In that chapter he is known as *Jehovah Elohim*, referencing not only is universal power,

but also his covenant faithfulness. Adam and Eve were not just the first people to be created, but the first such beings brought into an intimate relationship with him.

Given that Cain and Abel—the first children born after the fall—bring sacrifices to God, it is obvious that this first family had a priestly function. Indeed, most of the early patriarchs were priests, as such duties were not revoked from the masses until the Levitical covenant was established. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Job, were all depicted in the Old Testament as offering priestly sacrifices to God.

So the wild beast coming out of the earth signifies that he will appear to be a priest like unto Adam. Thus he will be a leader, a primary member of a clerical body. He will be seen as the chief Christian, as a clergyman who has exclusive access and fellowship with divinity. Also, the idea of resurrection speaks of being a second Adam (cf. 1 Corinthians 15). That this leader is still around after the rapture, it is as if he is of a new and nobler quality than a typical Christian.

This wild beast will have two horns which resemble a lamb. It's important to understand that the Greek says these horns resemble a lamb, and not the beast. The “wild beast” is singular, the

“horns” are plural, and the word translated “similar” is also in the plural; thus “horns” and “similar” match grammatically.

Revelation 13:1-8 describes the first wild beast. This creature contains seven heads and ten horns, each of which represents a personage. Thus it is possible that the two horns here also represent two people. Yet, by the time the end fully comes there is only one person, for the second wild beast is later simply called a singular “false prophet” (see Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10).

This answers to a strange caveat in the description of the two witnesses in Revelation 11. That particular chapter describes two individuals who will do amazing miracles from God, in order to give the world a major warning before the worst of the judgments befall the planet. Yet, a couple of times (depending upon the Greek textual basis) these two individuals are spoken of as being only one (cf. Revelation 11:8-9). What are we to make of all of this? I don't think we can make much of it now, but it would be wise (I believe) to encourage people to tuck this in the back of their minds, for it probably will have some sort of significance whenever the tribulation period comes to fruition.

There are all sorts of possibilities. For example, maybe the witnesses will be a husband and wife team, and thus they can be seen as two and as one. Then, maybe some sort of relationship is also implied between the two horns of the second wild beast. Or, perhaps, there will initially be only one witness, but one of the horns of the wild beast will join this lone witness, picking up his proverbial mantle upon his death. If this was the case, this horn would quickly be killed as well, for it seems clear that two bodies are resurrected in Revelation 11. As I said, this is just one of those things that's wise to be aware of, yet specific knowledge is probably impossible right now.

The last thing to consider in this verse is the fact that this wild beast speaks as a dragon. The dragon is used throughout the book of Revelation to denote Satan (see especially 12:3-13:4). BDAG makes a passing reference to the idea that this could be a hydra², a serpent in Greek mythology which had many heads. The Hebrews were also familiar with the idea of a water-monster which had several heads (cf. Psalm 74:14).

This imagery ultimately hearkens back to the very early passages of Genesis 1 (see verse 21), where great sea creatures are specifically mentioned as being created of God. These particular animals of

course were real, and so didn't have multiple heads. Yet given the fear that many large aquatic animals probably evoked among the nations, it would have been easy for many legends to spring up concerning their terror and their destructive prowess. Here these terrors are said to come upon the world in the form of the Antichrist and his False Prophet, to include the systems that facilitate their rise to power.

Ancient man was terrified by dinosaur-like creatures and also by small tribes of humans that seemed very large and misshapen when compared to others (*for this last fact, see Genesis 14 and Deuteronomy 2; especially I encourage you to study the etymology of the names of these tribes; for example, "Horites" probably meant "cave dwellers"*). Our culture poorly understands these fears, and have written them off as creatures that lived tens of millions of years ago and as hoary cavemen that were superseded by *Homo sapiens*. These sort of naturalistic explanations are ridiculous, as they ignore all the statements about these groups in ancient texts, including the Bible.

So although the false prophet will appear to be as meek and placid and endearing as a wee lamb, yet his words will pour forth from the Devil himself. How many times must God teach this lesson to

the world? Do not look to appearance, but to substance. Judge with righteous judgment. Elijah was gruff but he spoke the truth; this deceiver will have a golden tongue, but will also expostulate the doctrine of demons.

There will be choices that will have to be made. Everyone in the eschaton will have to face them. One of them will be the question of just who is really speaking from God? When disaster strikes, people seek religion. Disaster struck the Kingdom of Judah, and the prophets were multiplied. Many of them however were completely bogus (see Jeremiah 28-29). The Lord Jesus Christ warns us very carefully that this proliferation of deceivers will be a hallmark of the apocalypse...

And many false prophets will be raised up and will lead many astray [fig., will deceive many]. --
Matthew 24:11

On an interesting aside, Jeremiah had constant problems with opposition from the religious in Jerusalem. Recent archaeological discoveries have brought his struggles back to mind...

During the archaeological unsupervised construction at Solomon's Stables (1996-1999) and the replacement of an electrical cable at the el-Marwani Mosque underneath the al-Aqsa Mosque compound (July 2007) under the

supervision of the Jerusalem Islamic *Waaif* which oversees the Mosques, some 400 truckloads of archaeological rich topsoil were removed from the Temple Mount and dumped in the Kidron Valley...

The dirt and debris was moved to a location just below the Hebrew University's campus on Mount Scopus. The Temple Mount Sifting Project...began dry/wet sifting the piles of dirt...

While over 5,000 coins, numerous seals, fragments of pottery and glass vessels, metal objects, bones, worked stones, mosaic tesserae stones, and *opus sectile* tiles in various colors, shapes and sizes have been recovered, one burned stamp seal stands out. The 6th cent. BC partially inscribed seal impression (bullae) contains the priestly name of *Immer*...The Bible mentions the priestly family of *Immer* (Ezra 2:37, 59; 10:20; Neh 3:29; 7:40, 61; 11:13; 1 Chron 9:12; 24:14) and Pashur Ben Immer (Jer 20:1), who had administrative control over Solomon's Temple (7th-6th cent. BC), and who "beat Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the LORD" (Jer 20:2).³

Jeremiah was a man of great sorrows during his lifetime. He was abused by men of power while fighting against sinful priests and false prophets. Yet his labour has produced more fruit than he could have ever imagined at the time. As the Psalm says...

Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying [his] bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves [with him.] -- Psalm 126:5-6

The world can offer no such assurances. When it comes to this culture, you may sow in tears, accomplish nothing in tears, die in tears, and be remembered without tears.

B. Verse 12

And it performs all the authority of the first wild beast before it; and it was causing the earth and the (ones) dwelling in it that they should worship the first wild beast, whose wound of death was healed.

That a major respected figure would encourage others to worship someone might seem incredible,

but history repeats itself. Ancient Rome initially fought against such practices, but eventually embraced it fully...

...The Imperial Cult created a problem for the early Christians...This problem centred on the worship of the Roman emperor and Roma, the spirit and personification of Rome...This practice goes back to the Roman Senate deifying Julius Caesar upon his death. The practice flourished in the East, where the worship of a hero or leader was encouraged, while initially in the West it was discouraged by the Emperors. However, the practice of paying homage to an Emperor as god soon found widespread favour with the Emperors as a means of unifying the empire and demonstrating loyalty to Rome...⁴

Moving on, the common Greek word [*pronounced "poi-eh-ow" in its lexical form*] appears often in this section of Scripture. It has a gigantic semantic range. It normally means "to do" or "to make," but it can also be translated as "to perform" or "to cause," etc. This is a list of appearances according to chapters in the book of Revelation...

Chapter 1: *1 occurrence*

Chapter 2: *1 occurrence*

Chapter 3: *2 occurrences*

Chapter 4: *0 occurrences*

Chapter 5: *1 occurrence*

Chapters 6-10: *0 occurrences*

Chapter 11: *1 occurrence*

Chapter 12: *2 occurrences*

Chapter 13:1-10: *2 occurrences*

Chapter 13:11-18: ***7 occurrences***

Chapter 14: *1 occurrence*

Chapter 15: *0 occurrences*

Chapter 16: *1 occurrence*

Chapter 17: *4 occurrences*

Chapter 18: *0 occurrences*

Chapter 19: *2 occurrences*

Chapter 20: *0 occurrences*

Chapter 21: *2 occurrences*

Chapter 22: *4 occurrences*

In just five verses (13:12-16) the term appears seven times, and this obviously dwarfs the other sections of the book in comparison. The false prophet will be big on doing things. He will perform many miraculous works and cause others

to perform works of servitude unto the beast. He is a great rod of activity, stirring up apostate Judeo-Christianity to their increasing detriment.

The fact that supernatural events are happening every second of every day in every corner of the globe is humanity's best kept secret—somehow. We all know that strange things happen, yet at the same time, we labour under the spell of an ultra-naturalistic ontology. What would happen if CNN started reporting on a major religious leader who was performing “bona fide” miracles? Can you imagine the response, especially if the person was someone who wanted to sanction and bless various forms of iniquity? He would be more popular than Jesus Christ.

The world has been primed for the arrival of this lawless pseudo-prophet.

There have been a lot of commentators who have pointed out the contrast between the authentic Trinity and the devilish trinity in the book of Revelation. The first chapter of the book clearly describes the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then in chapter 13 we have mention of the dragon (who is identified as Satan in 12:9), the Antichrist, and the False Prophet. I think the comparison is valid, but it is rather complex and nuanced. This is typical when comparing the Trinity with other roles.

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