



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Revelation 49 Final False Prophet! Revelation 13:11-14

Revelation 13:1-18, *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 on 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.

The work of God to redeem men and to establish the kingdom of Christ has not been easy. It has always been a battle.

The reason for the battle is because Satan and his hosts of demons have fought God all along the way. The most dominant aspect of Satan's war, the major weapon in Satan's arsenal against God, and God's purpose, can be summed up in one word "deception."

- He is a liar and the father of lies.
- He is a deceiver.
- He is disguised as an angel of light,
- His messengers are also disguised as angels of light though they are the demons of darkness.

Satan is always trying to confuse people by covering up the truth of the saving gospel with lies that are masquerading as if they were the truth.

Satan has from the very beginning attempted to barrage the world with demon doctrines, coming from seducing spirits through false teachers and false prophets.

If the major enterprise of Satan, in endeavouring to fight against God is deception, then the major agents of Satan are deceivers.

They deceive them
either by demons or men.

As we move closer to the return of Christ and to the coming of the kingdom, we can be sure that Satan will escalate the efforts of false prophets.

Overview of the False Prophet:

The closer we get to the end more false prophets will increase.

Matthew 24:11, *Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.*

Matthew 24:24, *For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.*

The promise of Scripture is that there will be a numerous false prophet ever more of them as we get closer to the end.

We are at the very climax of all this escalating explosion of false prophets are released from the pit and from the Euphrates River. There will be more demons than ever, running all over the earth.

All the ones who were in the heavens will be cast to earth.

All the ones in the pit, who are not eternally bound, will be released.

Those bound at the Euphrates will run rampant over the earth. With more deceiving spirits will come more hypocritical, deceiving false prophets and liars.

It will all finally consummate in the ultimate, final false prophet.

We have just read the description of this man.

The final false prophet will be Satan's last and powerful, deceiving, and hypocritical liar.

He is called about a beast.

A beast that comes out of the earth.

Revelation 13:1-10 we see there a beast coming up out of the sea.

We have learned that description who is commonly known as the Antichrist.

Though there are many antichrists, there is one who is the consummate final and ultimate is the Antichrist. There were antichrists even in the New Testament time as the New Testament says there are already many antichrists.

But there will be one consummate, final world ruler, one great political power, one imperial world dictator, indwelt by a demon spirit who comes up out of the abyss.

We learned about him in the first half of this very same chapter. Apostle Paul clearly described for us in 2 **Thessalonians 2**. He is called the “lawless one.”

He will be powerful. He will come in the activity of Satan with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish.

This first beast out of the sea, this antichrist, is also called, by Daniel, the little horn, the king of fierce countenance or fierce face. He is called the wilful king. He is called the son of perdition and the man of sin.

- He is a blasphemer who makes war with the saints.
- He embodies all the evil powers of all world empires.
- He exercises the power of Satan, the power of demons, and all the power of men.
- He will be the greatest world ruler ever, dominating all the earth.

But he is not alone. He has a partner in this massive, satanic system of final, ultimate deception.

His partner is the final false prophet.

- The Antichrist is primarily a political and military leader.
- The false prophet is a religious leader.

We have political power/military power joined with religious power.

Political power/military power dominating the external world and spiritual power dominating the internal world.

The Antichrist has the devil and his hellish demons.

He has the accumulated powers of all demonic and human sovereignties.

He has control of the governments of all the globe.

The Antichrist also has a potent companion who promotes his power and aids him greatly by swaying the hearts of people into satanic religion.

His aide will be religious.

It will be spiritual.

He will cause the world to worship the Antichrist as if he were God.

The Antichrist power is political, military, economic and he will have great religious power. Because the false prophet will convince the world that this Antichrist is God and is the only

hope of the salvation of the crushing, crumbling world that is going to bits during this time of tribulation.

People will buy the lie of the false prophet.

People will bow down and worship the Antichrist as if he were God. They will be destroyed and damned with him.

The work of the false prophet is critical to the effort of Satan, because the power of religion over men's minds is so great.

Man does not live without some transcendent belief system this we can see from the whole human race history. It is built into the very fabric of man's life to believe in some transcendent power, something beyond himself.

Some faith exists in all men.

- Faith in the supernatural,
- Faith in the mystical,
- Faith in the psychic,
- Faith in something that is divine or something that is invisible.

There is in the heart of man, that longing, that desire to touch something transcendent, something beyond himself, something greater than his trouble and his circumstances, someone that can deliver him from what is going on all around him.

In the time of the great tribulation people are going to be looking for a deliverer. They are going to be desperately looking for some transcendent power in which they can believe.

- The Antichrist, by Satan's design, will be that power.
- The false prophet will convince the world.

The false prophet will come along as the greatest preacher. He will be the greatest false preacher the world has ever heard.

The world has known many of them through its history, but none like this one. He is so powerful that his preaching sways the entire world.

True or false, human nature must have a religion.

Man is an incurable worshiper.

He needs somebody beyond himself to believe in, even if he cannot identify who it is, even if it is vague.

The Antichrist who opposes God, declares that he is above everything and everyone who is called God, and demands that the entire world worship him. We will find that that indeed will be accomplished through the agency of this false prophet.

The false prophet then leads the world into the final form of world religion which is the worship of the Antichrist at the very end.

His arguments will be subtle, convincing, and appealing. His oratory will be hypnotic, for he will be able to move the masses to tears or whip them into a frenzy.

He will control the communication media of the world and will skilfully organize mass publicity to promote his ends. He will manage and massage his message with guile beyond words. He will mould world thought and shape human opinion like so much pottery for clay.

He will be the greatest, the most persuasive, the most powerful, the most moving, the most convincing communicator ever.

Satan would not finish out his last effort with anything less than his greatest effort.

False prophet becomes the final figure in the false trinity.

- Satan, the counterfeit of God the Father,
- Antichrist the counterfeit of God the Son, and
- False prophet the counterfeit of God the Holy Spirit.

This second beast here is called the false prophet.

Revelation 16:13, *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

Revelation 19:20, *Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he*

deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

In all three of those Scriptures, he is **identified as the false prophet.**

His **purpose is to direct the attention of the world toward the Antichrist** and cause the whole world to worship him.

He does that amazingly by the power of Satan and is successful. He will be a religious preacher, convincing the world to worship the Antichrist.

A partnership between political power and religion is not new.

In the days of **Pharaoh**, we would think of Pharaoh as the great world power. But we remember when **Moses and Aaron** stood beside Pharaoh, the head of Egypt. He called in two magical priests by the name of **Jannes and Jambres** religionists of his empire. He asked them to oppose the God of the Israelites. He was a pagan king with great political, and military might who had brought alongside himself those kinds of people, who by their signs and wonders and their mystical powers could sway the hearts of men and women.

When **Balak a powerful, formidable king of Moab** sought to destroy Israel.

What did he do?

Balak went out to find a prophet, a religious man.

He hired the services of the **corruptible prophet Balaam** to curse Israel.

Military power was not enough.

Political power was not enough.

He wanted religious power.

In the days of **Dan**, when that robbing tribe conquered Laish, (**Judges 18**) they stole a priest and an ephod to worship some deity. It was not enough that they were powerful, that they were awesome in power to conquer their enemies, but they wanted some transcendent deity to assist them.

When **Absalom** began his revolution to destroy his father David, he did so by using the assistance of **Ahitophel**.

When **Jeroboam** revolted against **Judah**, he felt compelled to build gods of gold at **Bethel and Dan** and elicit the service of deities in his revolt.

Ahab and Jezebel, who were able to accomplish their idolatrous debauchery of Israel by using, as their cohorts, the foul priests of **Baal**.

Coming down into a more modern time, **Hitler** had both personal demon contacting mediums for himself and, with the help of those demonic sources, developed a new kind of

Christianity to manipulate the hearts of the people in his own nation.

It has always been.

Even **Rome**, though it had world power by its might, wanted to make sure that people worshiped **Caesar** as if he was God, because there is in the heart of every person a need to worship at the shrine of some transcendent power.

The Communist empire of Eastern Europe tried to defy that. With their atheism, they conquered by force. But they had to control the people on the outside because there was no religious faith on the inside.

As soon as their external power was broken, the whole thing disintegrated. What was once the Soviet Union fractured into the pieces that were in existence before it ever began, because there was no unified belief system to hold them together. In many cases, to the belief system that was theirs before it ever started.

Politics and religion may start out as distinct forces, but ultimately, in consummate power, they must unite.

Revelation 17 makes it clear that a worldwide form of universal religion is going to take shape in the end time.

Revelation 17:1-9, described there a worldwide system of religion very clearly defined.

Revelation 17:3-6, *So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁴The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. ⁵And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. ⁶I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marvelled with great amazement.*

Why?

Because false religion has always been the murderer of true religion and it will certainly be true in the end time. When they massacre the true believers and those who are the witnesses who adhere to Jesus Christ.

There you have a picture of that system, that woman sitting on a beast. That is a picture of the final form of world religion in the time of the tribulation.

The woman sits on the beast.

The woman is the harlot.

The beast who is the political military power.

Riding the beast is this religious system.

This leads us to believe is that these two things will coexist. There will be the developing, amassing power of Antichrist, and the military, economic and political.

But riding right along will be this false religious system. What we have is the Antichrist gaining his power through the military, the political realm, and the false prophet gathering his power through the false religious system.

They will coexist for a while.

This is an especially important point to understand this chapter.

Revelation 17:15-16, *Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. ¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.*

What happens here?

The beast on whose back the false religious system is riding suddenly rises and destroys that false religious system.

Revelation 17:17, *For God has put it into their hearts to fulfil His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.*

The Antichrist and his military political kingdom, and the false prophet and his religious kingdom, which is a worldwide religious system over which the false prophet has power, God wants them to be one not two.

So, the Antichrist rises and destroys that false religious system. They now have a common purpose. They give over their kingdom to the beast.

In the end, the only world religion left is the worship of Antichrist. That is not going to be how it starts.

World religion will develop around some other mystical, supernaturally concocted demonic system that will pull the entire world together. They will worship in a way that is not yet the worship of the Antichrist until some point when the Antichrist rises, destroys that system, and makes the whole world worship him.

When is that?

Daniel calls and what Jesus referred to as the abomination of desolations that happens **3 ½ years** into the great tribulation.

There comes a point when the false world religion is destroyed in favour of worshipping Antichrist and Antichrist alone. He would have risen to power by the middle of the week. He will be in a prominent, predominant place.

What is the abomination of desolation?

It is when the Antichrist sets himself up as God.
Precisely that is what he does.

At the very midpoint, all other religion is destroyed.
The man of lawlessness comes. He is revealed. He is the son of destruction.

2 Thessalonians 2:4, *who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

The abomination of desolations. **3 ½ years** into the tribulation Daniel says it is going to happen. Jesus reiterates the same thing in Matthew chapter 24.

When that happens, that signals the last 3 ½ years, which is called great tribulation, the fiercest of the wrath of God begins to be poured out, culminating in the day of the Lord.

Politics and religion start out separate, and then they unite.

A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.

The final kingdom of Satan will not be divided against itself it will unite in a final form, both politics and religion. Satan's last effort to establish his kingdom on earth and prevent the Lord Jesus Christ from setting up His own.

From that midpoint, the whole world then is directed to worship the Antichrist.

He is the only God and there is no other religion.

Whatever other religion has been tolerated in this form of world religion, whatever other components of worship have been allowed are no longer allowed.

The whole world must worship the Antichrist.

Anybody who does not will be killed. At least the threat of death is against them.

Now, back to the book of Revelation for a moment, t

The worship of the Antichrist, with the aid of the false prophet then becomes the central focus of the world.

Revelation 14:9, *Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,*

Revelation 14:11, *And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

Revelation 15:2, *And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.*

We can see what happened is the whole world looks at nothing but the beast and his image.

The beast and his image are the image or the idol that replicates the Antichrist. That idol will be established right in Jerusalem, and that will be the focal point of worship, and he will be the only one worshiped.

Revelation 16:2, *So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.*

Those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

Revelation 19:20, *Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

There is only one individual worshiped from here on out. From the midpoint on, everything focuses on Antichrist.

Now, it is difficult to speculate, with any kind of success, about who the false prophet will be.

Some have suggested the false prophet might be a Pope. That certainly is possible if he can have that kind of religious power.

If he can, by the operation of demons, through his own human ingenuity and cleverness and communicating skill, sway the entire world. If a pope can be the one who orchestrates a world religion, it could be a pope.

On the other hand, it could be somebody else. We cannot be certain.

In Revelation 17, that a city of seven hills is identified as being at the heart of the false religious system. Throughout history Rome has been known as such a city.

There are some characteristics there that lend to the credence of such a viewpoint.

But this false religion will grow in the first 3 ½ years, and then it will be dismissed in favour of the singular worship of the Antichrist.

Of course, by the middle point, there have been many judgments, and frightening things have happened, and people have died.

Once the midpoint event happens, then things begin to escalate, and the world, in a panic, will be looking for somebody to deliver them.

When the false prophet starts pointing at the Antichrist, starts doing signs and wonders that are humanly inexplicable, he will gain the affirmation and the faith of the world on behalf of the Antichrist.

The Antichrist will have a false resurrection.

The world will think he comes back from the dead. There will be an image created that will be able to speak.

There will be all kinds of things happening in the sky, fire coming down, and all of this is to draw the world to worship the Antichrist. This is so blasphemous, because what they ought to be doing is getting ready to worship the Christ.

Thus, the partnership begins.

1. The person.

V 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.*

Very simply, he is described as a beast coming up out of the earth.

The beast has to do with a wild animal ***Thērion***.

Some people have suggested that this describes a system.

Some have suggested it describes a government.
Some have suggested it describes an ideology.
But none of those really fits into the context very well. It is better to understand it as a person.

Clearly the first beast was a person.
This is *allo Thērion* meaning another of the same kind.
If Antichrist is a person, and this is another beast like him, then this is a person also.

Furthermore, false prophet is a personal designation.
Three times in the book of Revelation to describe this individual.
Furthermore, in **Revelation 19:20**, both the beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire.

God does not cast systems, governments, and ideologies into hell, but He casts individuals there.

Clearly this is a person.

Very clever, powerful, persuasive, captivating, charming, genius who is demon inspired, demon empowered. The combination of the powers of hell and the powers of his own human talent cause him to be convincing.

He comes up out of the earth.

The first beast came out of the sea, and that represents darkness, blackness, the mysterious, the unknown, the pit, the abyss.

That indication that this individual, called the Antichrist, became indwelt by some powerful demon that comes up out of the pit.

But here you have somewhat similar origin from below the earth. It does not say that he comes from on the earth, but it says he comes up out of the earth.

Again, this might well be a reference to that flaming inferno that is at the heart of the earth. He comes up from below.

He comes up from below, from beneath. Again, it indicates that the false prophet will be controlled, indwelt, empowered, and impelled by some formidable, demonic spirit.

Yet, the earth is not as mysterious.

It is not as predicting.

It is not as unknown as the sea.

It is not the dark and the black place that the sea is.

The difference here may be simply the Scripture's way of explaining that there is a somewhat significant difference in these two.

The Antichrist is mysterious, dark, black, frightening, and foreboding.

The False prophet is a subtler, gentler, more domesticated individual.

He is not so overpowering.

He is not so frightening.

He is not a terrorizing power like Antichrist, but rather he is winsome, and persuasive.

He is the epitome of the wolf in sheep's clothing described by Jesus in **Matthew 7**.

Some have suggested the earth means that he is a Jew.

But Jews are not identified with the earth so much, but they are identified with the land.

There is no reason to assume he will be a Jew because he comes up out of the earth. He could be a Jew, but that is not conclusive. He could be a Gentile.

But the description of him gives us a somewhat subtle, gentle, deceptiveness.

Because notice the first beast was just plain scary. Ten horns, seven heads, ten crowns, and blasphemous names. He is like a leopard, bear, and a lion.

He has got the power of the dragon.

He has got this mortal wound in one of his heads. A frightening looking thing.

But notice down in verse 11 the difference.
The false prophet had two horns like a lamb.

Have you ever seen a little lamb as it begins to sprout its horns?

Two little bumps, harmless.
His subtlety.

Certainly, he is, in some ways, weaker than the Antichrist but still powerfully deceptive. He does not come like the Antichrist. The Antichrist comes fiercely, like a leopard, bear, lion ripping and tearing rapaciously, speedily moving across the world.

But here is this subtle, gentle lamb.
There is a sense in which he could also be called Antichrist because he is anti-Christ, and he is a pseudo-Christ masquerading as if he were the true Lamb.

But the point of the description is to show us the subtlety of his approach. He does not come raping, killing, and devastating.

He comes as a deceiver.
He comes as a false lamb.
He comes appearing to be gentle.
He comes wanting to comfort and with a certain kind of tenderness.
But he is lending his aid to the Antichrist.

Here Satan counterfeits Jesus Christ. This is his masterpiece of religious deception, the counterfeit of the true Lamb, but when he opens his mouth, he gives himself away.

V 11, *“He spoke as a dragon.”*

A strange voice for a lamb.

He is Satan’s mouthpiece. That is why he speaks like a dragon. When he opens his mouth Satan’s words come out.

When he speaks, hell will speak through his mouth, just as they use to say when Adolph Hitler spoke, it was not his own voice. He will be completely controlled by hellish powers, and when he speaks, it will be the voice of the dragon. But he will not necessarily speak monstrous things against God as the Antichrist will, according to **Daniel 11**.

He will not speak arrogant words and blasphemies as **V 5**.

He will speak rather winsomely about the Antichrist. Satan’s Antichrist will blaspheme God, but Satan’s false prophet will lure people to worship Antichrist.

I want you to remember something. False prophets are not like antichrists. They do not come blaspheming God’ they come deceptively. They come looking like lambs. But when they speak, it is the voice of the dragon.

Satan's false prophets are the voices of hell. Even now, even today, they may appear meek and mild and lamblike. They may appear to be gentle preachers who come to solve the problems of men and women and bring them truth. But when they open their mouth, the dragon talks. The dragon is none other than Satan, as we learned back in chapter 12.

During the tribulation, with all its terrors, fears, death, destruction, the false prophet will come along as a little lamb. Offering deceptive comfort to the burdened, disturbed, and injured in all the fiery judgments that are hurtling in every area.

He will offer them hope to a pained world if they will just worship the Antichrist. He will be powerfully persuasive, but his voice is the voice of hell. Hell can speak blasphemy, or it can speak subtle deception.

2. His power.

V 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.

Some suggested that this means he replaces the first beast so that he alone rules in the great tribulation.

That is impossible!

Since both are cast into the lake of the fire at the end of the great tribulation and since the very task of this individual is to point to the Antichrist and establish the worship of the world in his behalf.

This view could not imagine why anybody would hold it, because he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. That is in the very presence of Antichrist.

He is there.

He is alongside of him.

He has worldwide influence, reputation as a miracle worker and maybe the greatest who ever lived, apart from those who were the true preachers of God's truth.

He exercises the same kind of demon power and authority of the Antichrist because he is empowered by the same source.

While the Antichrist is Satan's false Christ, the false prophet is Satan's false Holy Spirit. He is able to put together a world religion, uniting all of Satan's diverse systems into one.

The house divided become united.

It is his tremendous ability that pulls it off. Imagine creating on a one-world religion that everybody agrees on.

Buddhists, Muslims, Protestants, Catholics, and every other world religion they all come together under this amazing man.

V 12, *and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast,*

He causes this to happen.

Eight times it says, "He causes this to happen."

He has tremendous world influence.

Beside his great personal influence, persuasive speaking and astounding leadership ability, his effort is aided by one massive apparent miracle.

V 12, *"He gets the whole world to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed."*

V 3, *And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marvelled and followed the beast.*

His fatal wound was healed and the whole earth was amazed and followed the beast.

Same amazing thing over in Revelation chapter 17, where he is called the beast that was and is not and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction.

He was.

He is not.

He is coming back.

This could refer to a restored and revived Roman Empire. It could speak of that government or that entity.

But it is better to assume that what this is talking about is a carefully crafted deception of a resurrection. It could not be a real resurrection because Satan does not have the power to give life.

The Bible says he has the power of death, but not the power of life.

Carefully crafted resurrection, a fake resurrection, pulled off with tremendous human ingenuity and satanic skill.

Not only to imitate the Lord's resurrection, but to imitate the resurrection of two witnesses.

Revelation chapter 11 that the two witnesses were killed, and then "after three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God came into them; they stood on their feet." They came to life.

To gain the kind of credibility that the Antichrist wants in the world, he is going to have fabricate a resurrection to imitate the two witnesses, to imitate our Lord Himself.

How that is going to happen, we do not know, but it does not seem to be too formidable task.

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

Addition to having the full authority of the Antichrist, functioning alongside the Antichrist. Using the fabricated resurrection to draw attention to him as supernatural, he performs great signs.

He even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.

He performs great signs.

Greek phrase up ***sēmeia megala*** that same phrase is used of Christ.

Again, he is counterfeiting Christ. He performs great signs. When used of Christ, it is used to describe our Lord's miracles. **John 2:11, John 2:23, John 6:2**, etcetera.

It also mimics not only the Lord, but again it mimics the two witnesses back in chapter 11.

The two witnesses had amazing ability to do things. Fire also came out of their mouths and devoured their enemies. They had the power to shut up the sky that it might not rain during the days of their prophesying.

They could have power over the waters to turn them into blood. They could smite the earth with every plague as often as they desired.

Satan has got to counterfeit those true witnesses as well as counterfeit Jesus Christ because he is got to make the whole world believe that this Antichrist is more powerful than any of God's witnesses, and more powerful even than Jesus Christ.

The Antichrist, then, has this immense power, and so does his partner the false prophet, to sway the whole world.

2 Thessalonians 2 says his power and signs and wonders come with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth to be saved.

Anyone rejecting the gospel, who will not receive the truth is going to be deceived. They are going to believe that indeed the Antichrist is God. Indeed, he did rise from the dead, these are powerful signs of supernatural strength and authority, and we can put our trust in the Antichrist.

He is going to deliver us from whatever is going on, whatever terrible things are happening.

At this time, they will all be blaspheming the God of heaven cursing the God of heaven and putting their trust in the Antichrist.

What are these signs that he can do?

What are these amazing, convincing signs?"

Satan can do some amazing stuff. He can do some supernatural works.

Illustration:

Exodus 7:8-12, *Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,* ⁹ *“When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, ‘Show a miracle for yourselves,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and let it become a serpent.’ ”* ¹⁰ *So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the Lord commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. ¹¹ But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. ¹² For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods.*

The magicians in Pharaoh’s court identified as Jannes and Jambres.

2 Timothy 3:8, *Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;*

They copycatted the miracles that God was doing.

Satan can fabricate supernatural signs. Specifically, one of them that he does, this false prophet, is identified here.

He makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth.

The Greek text would indicate continually. This is something that goes on all the time.

He does it in the presence of men.

Why?

Because he wants to convince them of his power.

Is he trying to imitate the Day of Pentecost?

Is he trying to imitate the power of Elijah?

2 Kings 1:10-12 talks about Elijah's power with fire.

But more than likely he is trying to imitate the witnesses out of whose mouths fire came and devoured those who attempted to take their lives.

Where does he get the power to do this?

A modest skill in the use of pyrotechnics could do that.

The ability to do that kind of thing would be probably enough, in that day, with all the rest of the stuff that is going on in the world, to convince people.

It may be that they have some capability, from a supernatural source, to put on those kinds of signs, but it does not have to be that way.

God has often used fire out of heaven. He used it to destroy **Sodom and Gomorrah** and the cities of the plain in **Genesis 19**. He sent it out of heaven, in **Leviticus 10**, to burn up **Nadab and Abihu**.

God sent fire from heaven on **Mount Carmel** to respond to **Elijah's prayer**.

God has demonstrated His supernatural power by fire.

Here Satan's counterfeit trying to do the very same thing. Whether there is actually some miraculous component, or whether it is pure pyrotechnics, it is going to convince the whole world.

Malachi 4:5-6, *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. ⁶And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."*

The prophet said that before the great consummation and the coming of the kingdom of Christ, Elijah would come back.

The Jews have always known that Elijah was one in whose life there was the evidence of supernatural fire. It could be that this is a counterfeit Elijah.

This is Satan's counterfeit prophet, counterfeiting the forerunner of the true Messiah because he himself is the forerunner, speaking of the false messiah.

The false Prophet comes with tremendous power.

V 14, *“He deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given to him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beat who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.”*

He deceives those who dwell on the earth.

He leads them astray.

- Consider the vulnerability of people.
- Disaster after disaster after disaster.
- Holocaust after holocaust after holocaust.
- Death all over everyplace.
- Great cataclysmic events destroy a fourth of the earth.
- A little while later they destroy a third of the earth.
- Demons running all over the globe maiming people with their sting so that they cry for mercy but cannot die.

Another wave of demons that slaughter people.

- Wars all over the place.
- People killing each other.
- The sky falling.
- The level of desperation is beyond imagination.

They are ready to believe in anything except the true God because they have rejected the gospel. They are cursing the God who is doing this to them and looking for a deliverer.

Along comes the false prophet, pulls off the tricks that convince the whole world their only hope is in this great Antichrist.

They will already know what a formidable person he is because he will have attained world control.

The false prophet will not just be some person who walked in out of the desert or got off the latest bus. He will be the most formidable religious ruler and leader on the face of the earth, and its greatest communicator.

Between the two of them and whatever else they can pull off, either supernaturally or by human genius, they will cause everybody in the whole world to be deceived.

They will erect an idol to the image of the beast. They will erect it in Jerusalem in defiance of the true God.