



Square Halo Books

Selections from The End: A Reader's Guide to Revelation

DEFINITIONS

Beast from the Abyss - [Rev. 11:7, 17:8] When the two **olive trees** or **lampstands** (Jewish and Gentile churches) have finished their testimony, the beast from the Abyss will attack, overpower, and kill them (Rev. 11:7.) This character, who in Revelation 11 kills both branches of the church must be Satan. He looks like Satan in Revelation 17 where he is a **scarlet beast** (like the red **dragon** that represents Satan in Revelation 12) having **seven heads** and **ten horns**. The fact that he once was, now is not and yet will come (Rev. 17:8,11) is consistent with the description of Satan who in Revelation 20 is loose, then is thrown into the Abyss for **1000 years** and after that will be set free for a short time. The description of this beast as coming out of the Abyss is consistent with the anticipation that Satan will come from the Abyss after he is released. Satan is the only character in Revelation who is cast into the Abyss, remains there for some predetermined time and then comes forth from the Abyss. If the 1000 years refers to the same timeframe as the **1,260 days** and the **forty-two months** as it appears that it must (see articles below), then the beast from the Abyss can be no one else but Satan.

While the beast from the Abyss is Satan, he accomplishes his work when he is released through the **Man of Lawlessness**. The Man of Lawlessness is empowered by Satan (Rev. 13:2,12) and is described as acting with Satan to gather the nations (Rev. 16:14-16.) Satan will be active and involved, but he will use his representative to do the things attributed to him (e.g., deceiving the nations.)

Beast out of the Earth - [Rev. 13:11-18, 15:2, 16:10,13, 19:19,20] This beast has two horns like a **lamb** but speaks like a **dragon**. The imagery conveys a picture of something or someone whose power (horns symbolize power) appears to be godly and good (like the lamb - Christ), but it reveals its true nature when it speaks like a dragon (it is from Satan.) The two horns like a lamb suggest that the beast out of the earth, who represents the **antichrist** or the **Man of Lawlessness**, exercises Christian authority. It should be expected that the antichrist/Man of Lawlessness would be a renegade Christian because I John 2:19 describes many antichrists coming out of the church as a pattern for the final antichrist.

I John 2:18f Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

The beast from the earth is the same person who is identified in II Thessalonians 2 as the Man of Lawlessness. He is called a little horn in Daniel 7, a stern-faced king in Daniel 8, a ruler who will come in Daniel 9 and he is a king who exalts himself in Daniel 11. He is tied to the **beast out of the sea** because he exercises the authority of the beast out of the sea on his behalf. In the same way, the Man of Lawlessness is tied to the secret power of lawlessness (II Thes. 2:7.) The little horn is tied to the fourth beast that prepares its way (Daniel 7:7), and the king who exalts himself grows in power out of the kingdom of the north. There are several striking similarities between the Man of Lawlessness, the beast out of the earth and the boastful horn or ruler described in Daniel.

The Man of Lawlessness exalts himself claiming to be God (II Thes. 2:4.) His coming will be displayed with counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders to deceive those who are perishing (II Thes. 2:9f.) He is destroyed by the coming of the Lord (II Thes. 2:8.)

The Man of Lawlessness is described in four passages in Daniel as a boastful ruler. In chapter 7, the little horn speaks boastfully (Daniel 7:8) and speaks against the Most High (Daniel 7:25.) He oppresses the saints and tries to change the set times and the laws (Daniel 7:25.) The saints are handed over to him for a time, times, and half a time (Daniel 7:25.) The fourth beast (and thereby the boastful horn) is slain when the court is seated and the **books** are opened (i.e., at the judgment.) After he is slain, he is cast into the blazing fire (Daniel 7:11.)

In chapter 8, the stern-faced king (also called a small horn - Daniel 8:9f) sets himself up to be as great as the Prince of the host (Daniel 8:11.) He will destroy the mighty men and the holy people (Daniel 8:24.) He will cause deceit to prosper and will be destroyed,



but not by human power (so it must be by divine power, as in the return of Christ - Daniel 8:25.)

In chapter 9, he puts an end to sacrifice and offering (i.e., he impacts true worship) and he sets up an abomination that causes desolation until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

In chapter 11, the king who exalts himself says unheard of things against the God of gods (Daniel 11:36.) He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed and he will come to his end with no one to help him (Daniel 11:36,45.) That he is the same character as those in chapters 7 and 8 is clear because his actions are similar. He desecrates the temple fortress, abolishes the daily sacrifice and sets up the abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 11:31, 8:11,13.)

Likewise, the beast out of the earth forces the whole world to worship the first beast. Since the beast out of the earth exercises authority on behalf of the beast out of the sea the world worships him (Rev. 13:12.) He performs great and miraculous signs to deceive the inhabitants on earth (Rev. 13:13f.)

The beast out of the earth is the beast mentioned beginning in Revelation 15:2 and continuing through Revelation 19:20. He gathers armies to oppose God's people, is destroyed by the coming of the Lord, and is cast into the lake of fire. It is clear that the beast out of the earth is being mentioned in Revelation 15:2 where it speaks of those who were victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name. Only the beast out of the earth has a number associated with his name. Later in chapter 16, the same language is used (the beast and his image) that was used of the beast in Revelation 15:2. This consistency shows that it is the same beast. When darkness is poured on the throne of the beast (Rev. 16:10) it must be the same beast referred to in Revelation 15:2. If the text was describing a different beast than the one last mentioned, there would have to be some indication of the change within the text.

The beast out of the earth causes the beast out of the sea to be worshipped at first, but later he replaces the beast out of the sea with an image. The beast out of the sea (the secret power of lawlessness) is replaced by the beast out of the earth and an image that looks like the beast out of the sea. This occurs because the beast out of the earth, as the Man of Lawlessness, is the completion and personification of that power. The Man of Lawlessness replaces the secret power of lawlessness with an imitation power because he retains all true power. Since the beast out of the sea represents political and governmental power used in opposing the Lord and the gospel, the image as an imitation of the beast out of the sea is an imitation of real power. True power resides with the beast out of the earth once he appears. However, there are others, who appear to wield power but do so under the direction of the Man of

Lawlessness. These imitation rulers are likely those referred to in Daniel 9:27 with whom he confirmed a covenant. The Man of Lawlessness appears when the **forty-two months** of the beast out of the sea are completed.

The image that the beast out of the earth orders erected is given breath (i.e., life) so that it can speak and it is able to kill those who refuse to worship it. As an imitation of the beast out of the sea, the image continues to appear with the beast out of the earth, it is worshipped, and eventually it is given the title of **false prophet**.

The mark on the hand or forehead is no more physical than God's mark of his people on their forehead is physical. It represents idolatry and the choice to stand in hostility against God.

The number of this beast is provided for those who will live when the Man of Lawlessness is revealed. The 666 will allow those who know the Scriptures to identify him so they are not misled by his signs and wonders.

Mark of the Beast - [Rev. 13:16,17, 14:9, 16:2, 19:20] The mark of the beast is a symbolic description of the practice of idolatry. The symbol is derived from the Old Testament description of the Passover. When the people observed the Passover they were to eat certain foods and hold a festival. Moses required of the people the following:

Exodus 13:8,9 On that day tell your son, 'I do this because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.' This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that the law of the Lord is to be on your lips. For the Lord brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand.

Similar language appears in Exodus 13:16. The observance of the ceremonies commanded by the Lord are like signs on the hand and forehead. It should be noted that they are not literally signs or marks on the hand and forehead. These observances remind Israel of God's faithfulness throughout history and are used as reminders to Israel of the nature of the God they serve. Similarly, the mark of the beast is symbolic of the ceremonies of those committed to opposition to God, who through their observances keep their opposition where it can be seen and not forgotten.

The mark of the beast is not a physical mark that will be required during some period in history, such as during a seven year tribulation. Theories that suggest physical marking during a brief tribulation period following a rapture will have trouble not only with the biblical background passages but also with Revelation 14:9-13 where the destruction of those who receive the mark in verses 9-11 is followed by:



This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus.

Why would the destruction of those having the mark of the beast call for patient endurance on the part of the saints? Patient endurance is required because the saints are not removed from earth prior to the beast's marking of his people. They are present, are marked with the Father's name on their foreheads (non-physically, Rev. 14:1) and are standing against those having the (non-physical) mark of the beast throughout Christian history.

The mark of the beast is the failure to observe those ceremonies and practices that remind of God's faithfulness. It includes the replacement of God's ceremonies with pagan or imitation ceremonies and practices designed to express the elevation of human authority and rejection of God. This is the reason that those marked are not viewed in Revelation as unwitting pawns in the battle between Satan and the Lord, but as opponents to be destroyed. Those receiving the mark of the beast are the objects of God's wrath (Rev. 14:9-11.) They are cursed by having ugly and painful sores when the first of God's **bowls** of wrath (Rev. 16:2) is poured out. In contrast, those who refuse to worship the image of the beast and who do not accept the mark of the beast have the mark of the Lord (Rev. 14:1.) The **beast out of the sea** will wage war against the saints and will conquer them (Rev. 13:7.) Everyone whose name is not written in the **book of life** will worship the beast out of the sea (Rev. 13:8.) However, the saints must continue to be faithful in spite of opposition and apparent defeat because the Lamb will overcome and with him will be his faithful followers (Rev. 17:14.)