

## **Can Satan Raise the Dead? Toward a Biblical View of the Beast's Wound**

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*If the beast referred to in Rev 13:3-4 is an individual, is it God or Satan who raises the beast from the dead? Either answer raises issues to be settled. Some sources leave the issue unresolved, but biblical evidence indicates that God the Father has given His Son power to raise the dead. A third position seeks a compromise between the two positions. The text of Revelation does not resolve this issue directly, but whatever answer one gives has implications for the book's teaching about the beast in Revelation 13 and 17. When Christ returns to judge the lost, the only two humans who will be cast into the lake of fire while living are the two beasts. The two will be the first to inhabit the lake of fire, a punishment that will require special bodies to keep them from being annihilated while there. They will probably receive those supernatural bodies in connection with the resurrection of the first beast in Rev 13:3, but certainly no later than the action of Rev 19:20. The beast's ascent from the abyss could not refer to a revival of the Roman Empire, which would not attract worldwide amazement as a resurrected person would. If the beast can survive being in the lake of fire, he surely can survive the abyss, so Rev 17:18 is probably another reference to his resurrection. The text has no reference to a resurrection of the beast from the earth, but his relegation to the lake of fire before the Great White Throne judgment implies that he too must die and be raised.*

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In a recent article on the death and resurrection of the satanic beast, Thomas Ice notes the tension between two diametrically opposed explanations of Rev 13:3-4.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas Ice, "The Death and Resurrection of the Beast: Part I," *Pre-Trib Perspectives* 8/22 (April 2005):1, 4.

John wrote about the fatal wound of the first beast<sup>2</sup> and his subsequent return to life: “And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’”<sup>3</sup> Multiple questions about these verses have arisen through the centuries and continue to arise even among those with a futuristic understanding of the Book of Revelation. Is this actually the death and return to life of a future individual,<sup>4</sup> or is it a reference to the future return and revitalization of the Roman Empire?<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, if Rev 13:3-4 does refer to an individual, a core issue is raised: Who brings the first beast back to life, Satan or God? This is a pertinent question since, as will be shown, often the interpretation of who or what comes back to life is based on what Satan can do.

Since the Antichrist will be the pinnacle of Satan’s power and deception, some hold that Satan is the one who brings back from the grave the beast from the sea (Rev 13:1), i.e., the Antichrist. Such is LaHaye’s position:

Verse 3 indicates that the beast, or Antichrist, will be given a deadly wound. . . . Revelation 17:8 indicates that his spirit will go down into the pit of the abyss where it belongs, but he will be resurrected. One must keep in mind that this beast is the Antichrist. In other words, he will try to duplicate everything Jesus Christ has done. . . . Christianity is unique in that we worship a resurrected, living Lord. . . . This power will be all but nullified by the nefarious work of Satan through the resurrection of the Antichrist. As far as I know, this will be the first time that Satan has ever been able to raise the dead. His power and control of man is limited by God, but according to His wise providence He will

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<sup>2</sup>Since Revelation 13 refers to two beasts, the following discussion will sometimes for clarity’s sake refer to the beast from the sea (13:1) as the first beast and the beast from the earth (13:11) as the second beast. The second beast at times is referred to as the false prophet.

<sup>3</sup>Unless otherwise noted, English Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible (1973 ed.).

<sup>4</sup>A sampling of those who understand the return of the first beast from the dead to be an individual include Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8–22: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1995) 157-59; Charles C. Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible* (Chicago: Moody, 1978) 1735; John F. MacArthur, author and gen. ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word Bibles, 1997) 2009; J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, 3 vols. (New York: Charles C. Cook, 1909; reprint in one volume, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957) 321-30. Differences of opinion about the agent of resurrection and whether or not it will be a real event will be discussed below.

<sup>5</sup>Sources who say the first beast’s return is a reference to the revival of the Roman Empire are C. I. Scofield, ed., *The Scofield Study Bible* (New York: Oxford University, 1909; reprint as *Oxford NIV Scofield Study Bible*, New York: Oxford University, 1967) 1326-27; Lewis Sperry Chafer *Systematic Theology*, 8 vols. (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1948) 4:346-51; John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago: Moody, 1966) 199-200; J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (N.p.: Dunham, Ohio: 1958; reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1964) 334-35; Daniel K. K. Wong, “The Beast From the Sea in Revelation 13,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 160 (July–September 2003):337-48.

permit Satan on this one occasion to have the power to raise the dead.<sup>6</sup>

However, if the above statement is true, multiple questions and concerns are raised if John did, in fact, witness a return to life of one who actually died, especially a return to life wrought by Satan. In an attempt to refute this position, Hanegraaf and Brouwer respond to LaHaye's interpretation of Rev 13:3:

What is at stake here is nothing less than the deity and resurrection of Christ. In Christian worldview, only God has the power to raise the dead. If Antichrist could "raise [himself] from the dead" and "control the earth and sky," Christianity would lose the basis for believing that Christ's resurrection vindicates His claim to deity. Further, if Satan possesses the creative power of God, this would subvert the post-resurrection appearances of Christ in that Satan could have masqueraded as the resurrected Christ. Moreover, the notion that Satan can perform acts that are indistinguishable from genuine miracles suggests a dualistic worldview in which God and Satan are equal powers competing for dominance.<sup>7</sup>

Both positions raise valid points to consider; both have issues of their own to address. Hanegraaf and Brouwer raise legitimate concerns about anyone other than God being the author of life. Jesus affirmed as much, such as in John 5:21: "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes." Morris comments on the importance of this verse: "The Father (he and no other) raises people from the dead and gives them life. This is the teaching of the Old Testament (Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6; 2 Kings 5:7). It would have been accepted without question by Jesus' hearers. There was no matter for marvel in this. What is marvelous is the next assertion, the Son also gives life."<sup>8</sup>

Because of verses such as these, it is certainly valid to question the assumption that Satan could at any time possess and exercise the creative power of God, which is what will be true if Satan brings his dead Antichrist back from the grave.<sup>9</sup> However, to LaHaye's credit, he at least allows the text to speak for itself and seeks to explain the wound of the first beast in harmony with other references in the Book of Revelation, including the worldwide amazement and ultimate worship of the beast and of Satan.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Tim LaHaye, *Revelation Illustrated and Made Plain*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975) 180.

<sup>7</sup>Hank Hanegraaf and Sigmund Brouwer, *The Last Disciple* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 2004) 394.

<sup>8</sup>Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, New International Commentary on the New Testament, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 278-79.

<sup>9</sup>Hanegraaf and Brouwer's other concerns such as how this relates to the deity of Christ will be addressed later below.

<sup>10</sup>Ryrie likewise understands Revelation 13:3 as reference to the fatal wounding of the Antichrist since "it is the exactly the same phrase used as is used in 5:6 in reference to the death of Christ" (Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor, 1986) 471. Ryrie does not comment on the source of the

It should be noted, however, that concern about the raising of the first beast as a resurrection of an individual is not restricted to opponents of a futuristic understanding of the Book of Revelation. Numerous premillennial stalwarts have also raised many of the same questions and concerns. John Walvoord, who held virtually the same approach to the Book of Revelation as LaHaye, wrestled with the same basic problem if the Antichrist is killed and then Satan brings him back to life: "The wounding of one of the heads seems instead to be a reference to the fact that the Roman Empire as such seemingly died and is now going to be revived. . . . It is questionable whether Satan has the power to restore to life one who has died, even though his power is great."<sup>11</sup>

Pentecost likewise responded against the position of the death and return to life of the future Antichrist with similar concerns. Based on the promise that the dead are brought out of the grave by the voice of the Son of God (John 5:28-29), the first beast's return in Rev 13:3-4 cannot refer to an individual. "Satan does not have the power to give life. Since Christ alone has the power of the resurrection, Satan could not bring one back to life."<sup>12</sup> To sum up his position, he continues: "Since all the references to this individual present him as a man, not as a supernatural being, it seems impossible to hold that he is a resurrected individual. It would be concluded that the Beast will not be a resurrected individual."<sup>13</sup>

Others have wrestled with the dilemma of attempting to allow the text to speak for itself, while at the same time struggling with the ramifications of what such an interpretation would entail. Usually they conclude that a future resurrection of an individual will transpire, at least in appearance, but leave the means undecided. Seiss is such an example. About the language used in Rev 13:14 of "the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life," he writes,

The expression is so strong, definite, and intensified, that nothing less can be grammatically made of it than that real death meant to be affirmed. It is further described as a sword-wound, 'the stroke of his death,' or a stroke which carries death to him who experiences it. A man who has undergone physical death is therefore in contemplation. Whether he comes up again in literal bodily resurrection, or only by means of an obsession of some living man, we may not be able to decide. Whatever the mode, it will be in effect the same as a resurrection.<sup>14</sup>

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resurrection, whether God or Satan. However, in reference to the false prophet giving breath to the image in Rev 13:15, Ryrie writes, "[T]his could indicate a supernatural miracle (empowered by Satan) which will actually give life to the image" (ibid., 472).

<sup>11</sup>Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* 199. Later in reference to the second beast giving breath to the image in Rev. 13:15-17, Walvoord again raises the primary concern: "Expositors usually hold that the extraordinary powers given by Satan to the false prophet do not extend to giving life to that which does not possess life, because this is a prerogative of God alone" (ibid., 208).

<sup>12</sup>Pentecost, *Things to Come* 335.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 335-36.

<sup>14</sup>Seiss, *The Apocalypse* 325.

MacArthur likewise, in arguing that the first beast in Revelation 13 is most likely an individual, leaves room for the details to unfold during the Tribulation:

Whether the death is real or faked (cf. v. 14; 2 Thess. 2:9) is not clear. It may be that the Antichrist is really killed, and God, for His own purposes allows him to be resurrected. More likely, Antichrist's alleged death and resurrection will be a counterfeit of Christ's death and resurrection, staged, as one of the 'lying wonders' perpetrated by the false prophet (13:12-15; 2 Thess. 2:9 NKJV). Antichrist's death will be phony since he never really died.<sup>15</sup>

The purpose of this article is to present a third position, one that is between the two opposing positions. It will address the concerns of those who consider it a biblical impossibility for the Antichrist to die and return to life. It will also offer an alternative proposal and solution for those who hold that the return of the first beast will, in fact, be an authentic death and return to life of the Antichrist performed by Satan, and it will attempt to support this biblically.

### **Preliminary Considerations**

As an initial consideration in addressing the positions, one should note that John wrote what he saw (e.g., Rev 1:2; 13:3), as he had earlier been instructed by the Lord (Rev 1:11, 19). Scripture does not disclose who brought the first beast back to life in Revelation 13. God revealed that future event to John, who recorded what God revealed to him, but neither God nor the apostle identified the agent causing the beast's return or its significance. John himself may not have understood at the time how the fatal wounding of the beast and his subsequent return to life would transpire, such as when he marveled about the great whore of Rev 17:6-7. Identification of the agent in the beast's resurrection, if it is identifiable at all, must come from related passages, especially those found within Revelation.

Furthermore, Revelation 13 is not an isolated sequence. Whatever position one takes for the wound of the first beast in Rev 13:3, will reflect on other matters related to the beast, particularly his ascent out of the abyss, which is actually mentioned before his Revelation 13 advent into the world. That first reference is in 11:7, where the text describes him as "the beast that comes up out of the abyss," who will make war against God's two witnesses. Without additional explanation, the verse simply says the beast will rise from the abyss. More details about the ascent will come in Revelation 13 and 17. The first reference, Rev 11:7, "gives no time frame for his ascent from the abyss (Lenski, Caird), but later discussion will suggest it

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<sup>15</sup>John MacArthur, *Revelation 12–22*, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 2000) 45-46.

coincides with his ascent from the sea in 13:1.”<sup>16</sup> Somehow that beast must be in the abyss and ascend out of it, as shown in Rev 17:8: “The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.” Ultimately, how one interprets these passages relates directly to how one understands the resurrection of the beast in Revelation 13: Do the the death of the beast, his descent into the abyss, and subsequent return from it refer to a future individual, or do they refer to the beast as the disappearance and revival of a world empire? Obviously, if the beast (the individual) is never killed, he will never descend into the abyss. Furthermore, if the beast (the individual) never descended into the abyss, he will never emerge from it.

For the sake of brevity, this article accepts the legitimacy of Revelation as canonical, its apostolic authorship, and the many valid reasons for holding the futuristic view of the self-attested and divinely-attested prophecy (Rev 1:3: 22:7, 10, 18-19).<sup>17</sup> It also presumes the future existence of a literal Antichrist and false prophet as human beings who will meet their demise at the return of the Lord rather than as symbols for some supposed system of thought which Christ will ultimately conquer at His return.<sup>18</sup> In that regard, then, most discussion relates principally to those who hold a premillennial understanding of Revelation. Also, since the Antichrist and false prophet are cast into the lake of fire at the Messiah’s return (Rev 19:20), the discussion does not support but presupposes the existence of hell, the Great White Throne judgment of Rev 20:11-15, and the eternal punishment of the damned.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Thomas, *Revelation 8–22* 93.

<sup>17</sup>For an excellent introduction on the Book of Revelation and related matters, see Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1–7: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1992) 1-46. Of special relevance for this article are the sections on “Prophetic Style of the Apocalypse” (23-29) and “Hermeneutics for Interpreting the Apocalypse” (29-39). For significant and severe ramifications of attempting to have the book’s prophetic events occur in the first century A.D., see Dennis M. Swanson, “International Preterist Association: Reformation or Retrogression?,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 15/1 (Spring 2004):39-58.

<sup>18</sup>Such as Herman Hoeksema, *Behold He Cometh* (Grand Rapids: Reformed Free, 1969) 634, who about the first beast and false prophet being cast into the lake of fire writes, “There is no question of the fact that they are here represented as very concrete and individual persons. But this does not necessarily indicate that there shall be but one person who is the Antichrist and another individual who is the false prophet. It denotes rather, in the first place, that here we have the end of the devilry and rebellion and antichristian power. Without any form of trial they are destroyed forever.” Actually, the two are not destroyed but cast living into the lake of fire, and are still tormented there one thousand years later in Rev 20:10. Hoeksema does not explain how a system itself can be tormented in the lake of fire, nor how a system could exist without its adherents who are killed at this time but not thrown into the lake of fire.

<sup>19</sup>The Master’s Seminary dedicated the entire issue of its Fall 1998 journal to presentations of the biblical doctrine of hell. It likewise responded to the alarming increase in the rejection of biblical tenets concerning hell by those who consider themselves evangelicals. For articles relevant to this study see Richard L. Mayhue, “Hell: Never, Forever, or Just for Awhile?,” *TMSJ* 9/2 (Fall 1998):129-45; Larry D. Pettegrew, “A Kinder, Gentler Theology of Hell?,” *TMSJ* 9/2 (Fall 1998):203-17; Trevor P. Craigen,

Further, previous articles have dealt with many arguments against the supernatural nature of signs and wonders repeatedly predicted for the Tribulation. This includes both the return to life of the beast of Revelation 13:3<sup>20</sup> and the authenticity of the satanic miracles during the Tribulation.<sup>21</sup>

Even though previous studies have dealt with this, one statement should not be lightly set aside as unimportant: the Tribulation will be a unique time in history and unparalleled in satanic evil, power, and worldwide deception.<sup>22</sup> The Bible not only presents repeated statements with specific details about the unprecedented deception that will occur during the period; it also presents multiple strong warnings regarding the coming deception and how avoid it. The worldwide magnitude and unprecedented nature of the predicted deception must be kept in mind when studying the Tribulation.<sup>23</sup>

### The Judgments of God's Enemies at Christ's Return

Since the ultimate fate of the first beast is not debated among premillennialists, his death is a useful place to begin in addressing other issues related to him. The return of Jesus Christ to earth begins a series of judgments and blessings that culminate with the Great White Throne judgment, followed by the new heavens and new earth. That the judgments commence at the Lord's return should not be surprising since Jesus had taught that in John 5:22: "[N]ot even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son" (ajlla; th;n krivsin pa'san devdwken tw'/ uiJw/'), the perfect active indicative *devdwken* indicating the permanency of the Son's right to execute "all judgment." Morris comments on this verse:

The thought moves on to that of judgment. Arising out of the life-giving activities of the Son comes the thought that the Father does not judge people. This was something new to Jews. They held that the Father was the Judge of all people, and they expected to stand

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"Eternal Punishment in John's Revelation," *TMSJ* 9/2 (Fall 1998):191-201.

<sup>20</sup>See Gregory H. Harris, "The Wound of the Beast in the Tribulation," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (October-December 1999):459-68, for different views concerning the fatal wound of the first beast and his return to life.

<sup>21</sup>Gregory H. Harris, "Satan's Deceptive Miracles in the Tribulation," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (July-September 1999):308-24. Since Hanegraaf and Brouwer particularly questioned the Antichrist's control of the sky and how this would severely undermine the deity of Christ (Hanegraaf and Brouwer, *The Last Disciple* 394), see within the article fire called down from heaven (314-15) and the giving of breath or spirit (not life) to the image (kai; ejdovqh aujtw'/ dou'nai pneu'ma th'/ eijkovni tou' qhrivou, 315-17).

<sup>22</sup>Gregory H. Harris, "Satan's Work as a Deceiver," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (April-June 1999):190-202. For biblical statements about the deception of the Tribulation, see 196-197; for the multiple warnings about tribulation deception, see 198-99.

<sup>23</sup>For a listing of the biblical references regarding the massive extent of the deception of the Tribulation, see *ibid.*, 199-202.

before him at the last day. Jesus tells them now that the Father will exercise his prerogative of judging for the express purpose of ensuring that people give the Son the same honor as they do to himself. . . . This is very close to an assertion of deity.<sup>24</sup>

Later in the same chapter Jesus expanded on the judgment that He will accomplish: “Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment” (John 5:28-29).

Revelation 19:19-21 describes the first judgment Jesus will perform after His return to earth:

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Only the first beast and the false prophet receive immediate eternal judgment at Christ's return as they are cast living (zw'nnte") into the lake of fire. This is the first biblical occurrence of the expression “lake of fire” as a description of hell. In the OT the Bible teaches that those who die without the Lord await a final judgment of being confined in *Sheol*, which is generally synonymous with the NT use of *Hades*.<sup>25</sup> Walvoord's point is valid and considered standard among premillennialists: “By comparison with other scriptures, it seems that the beast and the false prophet are the first to inhabit the lake of fire,”<sup>26</sup> and “These who were Satan's masterpieces precede Satan himself to this final place of everlasting punishment into which he is cast a thousand years later (20:10).”<sup>27</sup>

The final judgment of Satan occurs later, after one thousand years, at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, and after his final rebellion. Revelation 20:10 states, “And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” For those who do not incorporate their own theology or philosophical presuppositions and allow the text to speak for itself, Mayhue states the

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<sup>24</sup>Morris, *The Gospel According to John* 279.

<sup>25</sup>Harry Buis, “Hades,” in *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976) 3:7-8; see also idem, “Sheol,” in *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* 5:395. For a biblical basis of all terms related to the damned, including Tartaros and Gehenna, see Pentecost, *Things To Come* 555-61.

<sup>26</sup>Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* 280.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.



pertinent conclusion as it relates to the eternity of hell: “In Rev 19.20, the beast and the false prophet are thrown alive into the lake of fire. One thousand years later they are still alive (20:10). The phrase in 20:10, ‘tormented day and night forever,’ indicates that what their previous tormented experience had been for a millennium would continue throughout eternity.”<sup>28</sup> Walvoord concurs:

In the divine act of judgment which casts Satan into the lake of fire, he joins the beast and the false prophet who preceded him by one thousand years. The text should be understood as teaching that both the beast and the false prophet are still in the lake of fire when Satan joins them, a thousand years after being cast into it. It is most significant that the verb [shall be tormented] is in the third person plural, indication that the verb should be understood as having for its subjects not only Satan but also the beast and the false prophet.<sup>29</sup>

The final judgment depicting all the remaining lost will be the Great White Throne judgment of Rev 20:11-15:

And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Here is the final judgment of the eternally damned, as they are thrown into the lake of fire.<sup>30</sup>

Inasmuch as the first resurrection was completed before the thousand year reign began (Rev. 20:5), “the dead” referred to in Revelation 20:11-12 can only be those who were left behind at the out-resurrection [i.e. the resurrection of the righteous] from the dead ones and who constituted those that are raised up unto damnation. The second resurrection, better termed the resurrection of the damnation, includes *all who are raised to eternal condemnation*.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Mayhue, “Hell: Forever, Never, or Just Awhile?” 139.

<sup>29</sup>Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* 304.

<sup>30</sup>Hoekema considers this a judgment for both the saved and unsaved alike. “The Scripture future teaches that all human beings who ever lived will have to appear before this final judgment seat” (Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979] 257). “If all men are to appear before the judgment seat, this must include all believers” (ibid.). For rebuttal of a view of a single resurrection including both the saved and the lost, see Pentecost, *Things To Come* 398-407.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 398 (emphasis added).

Chafer concluded the same: “*All the wicked dead* are here resurrected and stand before God to be judged. That the Judge is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is clear from John 5:27, where it states that the Father ‘hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.’”<sup>32</sup>

It is also evident that with death and Hades emptied of all their inhabitants, no refuge will remain for the unredeemed to escape their final judgment:

The intermediate state, personified in the double title “death and Hades,” (20:13), releases its grip with the result that the unrighteous dead are raised for their individual accounting. The use of the personification a second time (v. 14) may simply refer to the end of death and the intermediate state, that is, death will meet its end and will not be there to disturb the new heavens and the new earth. Thus, none of the unrighteous dead will escape sentencing.<sup>33</sup>

Walvoord writes of the evident necessity for the unsaved to undergo a transformation of their bodies in order to endure eternal hell, similar to the resurrected bodies the redeemed will have received:

Like the righteous, they are given bodies which cannot be destroyed. But while the righteous receive bodies that are holy and suited for the presence of God, the wicked dead receive bodies that are indestructible and suited for eternal punishment. They are still wicked and still in rebellion against God. The Scriptures are very clear that if anyone’s name is not found in the Book of Life, he will be thrown into the lake of fire.<sup>34</sup>

With no additional details, Jesus had alluded to the body aspect of the final judgment in Matt 10:28: “And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” So the Great White Throne judgment concludes the totality of God’s judgments against Satan, his angels, and unredeemed mankind.

### **Impact of Revelation 19 on Revelation 13**

As already noted, enduring the lake of fire necessitates bodies fit to endure such punishment vastly beyond present human capabilities. However, in agreement with what has previously been written in reference to the unsaved receiving bodies fit for eternal damnation, the same thing must be true for the Antichrist and the false prophet. In order for the Antichrist and the false prophet to be two genuine human beings, at some time—either before or at Rev 19:20—they must likewise receive

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<sup>32</sup>Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Major Bible Themes* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1926, 1953; revised by John F. Walvoord, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974) 367 (emphasis added).

<sup>33</sup>Craigien, “Eternal Punishment in John’s Revelation” 195.

<sup>34</sup>John F. Walvoord, *The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor, 1990) 671.

bodies fit to endure the everlasting torment God has promised. Simply put, at some point the two beasts must change from human to superhuman capacity. This must occur or else the two could never endure the lake of fire for even a fraction of a second, and certainly they would not still be there one thousand years later when Satan is cast into hell, “where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (Rev 20:10).

The first beast being cast alive into the lake of fire and still being alive when Satan is thrown in makes the restoring to life of the slain beast in Revelation 13 much more plausible. Since the two designated agents of Satan must ultimately receive a supernatural transformation and do so before the transformation of the remainder of the damned, Revelation 13 has the best biblical answer for when this will transpire. Thomas shows the cohesion of these verses:

It is best to identify this restoration to life with an end-time satanically controlled king who will come to the world as a false Christ. This allows for the interchangeability of the head with the whole beast—i.e., the king with his kingdom—as vv. 12, 14 require. It coincides with further details to come in 17:8 [the beast coming out of the abyss]. It agrees with a final climatic appearance of the beast in history as a person, in concert with the vision’s focus on the future (Kiddle). This means a future sequence that will be a close counterfeiting of Christ’s death and resurrection. The climax of history will include a healing . . . of an individual that closely approximates the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The question as to whether Satan has the power to restore a dead person to life (Walvoord) requires no answer here. Whether the beast performs this marvelous feat through deception or through power permitted by God, it still brings him into the limelight as never before.<sup>35</sup>

In answer to Thomas’ question about the extent of Satan’s power, this article intends to determine whether God or Satan restores the first beast to life. Attempting to accomplish this may be extremely ambitious, but biblical references give clear indication of whether this is an authentic resurrection or not and of who accomplishes it. Beyond what has already been examined, one very significant deduction warrants consideration: *The Antichrist and the second beast are the only two unsaved individuals who will be permitted by God to bypass the Great White Throne judgment* (Rev 20:11-15). In keeping with the divine promise that *all* judgment (τῆ; κριβ; σιν πα'σαν) has been given to the Son, exempting these two from the Great White Throne judgment is solely God’s doing—not Satan’s. The devil has nothing whatsoever to do with God’s judgments other than enduring what God has prepared for him and his angels (Matt 25:41). Furthermore, Satan will already be in the lake of fire, joining the two previous inhabitants, before the White Throne judgment begins. Since all judgment has been given to the Son, this obviously is the Son’s ultimate will and accomplishment. He Himself will seize the Antichrist and the false prophet and cast them into the lake of fire. He Himself has already determined that,

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<sup>35</sup>Thomas, *Revelation 8–22* 158-59.

unlike the remainder of the unredeemed, the Antichrist and the false prophet—although genuine human beings—will not stand with all lost people before Him in judgment at the Great White Throne. Satan has absolutely no part in this; only God does. Certainly no “dualistic worldview” exists “in which God and Satan are equal powers competing for dominance.”<sup>36</sup>

Before being cast into the lake of fire in Rev 19:20 and before the Millennium, the two beasts must receive *from God* bodies fit for enduring such torment, as will anyone else thrown into the lake of fire. Just as those going to eternal torment must receive resurrected bodies in order to endure,<sup>37</sup> so also must the Antichrist and the false prophet. In fact, these two staunch enemies of God most likely will have received their resurrected bodies before this since no indication is made of any kind of transformation of the two beasts at the Lord's return. Instead of being slain with the remainder of lost humanity and then thrown into the lake of fire, the two will not be killed, but will be thrown living (zw'nte") into the lake of fire.<sup>38</sup>

That the two beasts must receive supernatural bodies one thousand years before the rest of the lost factors into the interpretation of related verses regarding the first beast. For instance, in part the rationale that the wound of the beast and his return to life cannot be an individual is based on the chronology of judgments in Scripture. In reasoning that a resurrection in Revelation 13 could not be a return to life of a human being, Pentecost asserts, “The wicked are not resurrected until the Great White Throne (Rev 20:11-15). If a wicked one were resurrected at this point it would set aside God's divinely ordained program of resurrection.”<sup>39</sup> But such would by no means disrupt God's chronology. Only a slight altering of the usual chronology of God's judgment among premillennialists is necessary to include the unique judgment of the two beasts, but often the specified judgment of the two beasts in Rev 19:20 is missing from lists of God's future judgments.<sup>40</sup> Revelation 19:20 is

<sup>36</sup>So Hanegraaf and Brouwer, *The Last Disciple* 394.

<sup>37</sup>Walvoord, *The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook* 671.

<sup>38</sup>“Some have supposed a discrepancy between the fate of these two and that of the man of lawlessness in 2 Thess. 2:8 (Beckwith), but harmonization of the two accounts of Christ's return is quite easy. The verb *ajnelei'* (*analei*, “destroy”) used by Paul does not necessarily mean physical death. It can also refer to relegation to the lake of fire, because the literal force of *avairéw* (*anaireo*) is ‘I make an end of.’ The agent(s) for casting the two to their fiery destiny is unnamed, but presumably it is He with whom they came to do battle” (Thomas, *Revelation 8–22* 397).

<sup>39</sup>Pentecost, *Things to Come* 335.

<sup>40</sup>For instance, though not arguing against the resurrection of the individual beasts in his chart on the judgments of God, Ryrie does not refer to the unique judgment of the Antichrist and the false prophet (Ryrie, *Basic Theology* 516). Chafer fails to also. In listing the different categories of the final judgments that will occur, including those of Satan and the demons, he makes no reference to the judgment of the Antichrist and false prophet (Lewis Sperry Chafer *Systematic Theology* [Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1948] 4:41 5-18). Likewise, Walvoord in his chart entitled “Major Divine Judgments,” omits the judgment of the Antichrist and false prophet (Walvoord, *The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook* 468). He does this also in his chart entitled “Order of Events of Biblical Prophecy” (*ibid.*, 385).

a part of end-time events that is not disclosed earlier in Scripture. Either the Son uniquely judges the Antichrist and the false prophet at His return in Revelation 19, one thousand years before any other humans, or else the two prophetic characters are only symbolic representations of evil systems. Of course, the two beasts will be genuine human beings, as their fate indicates.

The fact that they enter into this fate while alive (zw' nte" ) [zōntes, “living”] increases the horror of the picture (cf. Num. 16:30; Ps. 55:15) (Swete). This indicates that the warrior-King has captured them alive on the field of battle and sends them off to their eternal destiny in full consciousness and that the two are more than just human, because the rest of the lost will not enter the lake until the judgment of the great white throne (20:12-15).<sup>41</sup>

Probably the best biblical option for the time of this required change from human to a supra-human is Rev 13:3, which will have occurred three-and-one-half years earlier than Rev 19:20.

### **The Impact of Revelation 19:20 on the Ascent Out of the Abyss**

#### **The First Beast an Individual, Not an Empire**

If the Antichrist and false prophet attain a supernatural status before the events of Rev 19:20, the ascent of the beast from the abyss in Rev 17:8 should be reconsidered. This is particularly true since many of the arguments for the beast being an empire instead of a person apply here also. In other words, often the interpretation of Rev 13:3-4 influences the understanding of 17:8 (and vice versa) as well as the interpretation of Rev 9:11 and 11:7. Since Revelation 9 contains the first reference to the abyss in Revelation, who or what comes from it affects interpretations in related passages.<sup>42</sup> Specifically, part of the rationale for the empire interpretation regarding the abyss is the inference that no human could ever be in the abyss; that conclusion should be reconsidered. For instance, in proposing that the beast of Rev 13:3 is the future empire instead of an individual, Pentecost thus supports his interpretation: “Satan is called the ‘angel of the bottomless pit’ or the ‘abyss’ in Revelation 9:11, so that Revelation 17:8 does not teach that the head of the empire rose out of the abyss, but rather that the empire itself was brought about ‘from the abyss’ or by Satan.”<sup>43</sup> Walvoord agrees: “Only Satan himself actually comes from the abyss. The world government which he promotes is entirely satanic in its power and to this extent is identified with Satan. It is the beast as the world government which

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<sup>41</sup>Thomas, *Revelation 8–22* 397.

<sup>42</sup>An extended discussion of the identity of the leader of the demons who come from the abyss is beyond the scope of this article. For different views and their supports, see Thomas, *Revelation 8–22* 26-38. His conclusion is that Abaddon/Appollyon is not a name for Satan but for another demon.

<sup>43</sup>Pentecost, *Things to Come* 335.

is revived.”<sup>44</sup> It is further concluded, “[T]he thing that caused the world to wonder was the rise to power of an absolute monarch over the ten kingdom federation who wielded absolute power.”<sup>45</sup> This reasoning combines relevant verses from Revelation 9, 13, and 17: The beast’s return to life cannot be a resurrection in Revelation 13 because he cannot come from the abyss (17:8), because only Satan can come from the abyss (9:11).

However, the above approach has problems that need to be addressed. Part of its difficulty is in explaining how the totality of the unsaved world during the Tribulation, who will have strongly rejected God’s Word as truth, will even know the abyss exists or be cognizant of any activities related to it. Even if the first beast is a reference to the empire, without divine revelation no one would know that the beast descended into the abyss or that he arises from it. Humans will not witness anything related to this; such is a divinely revealed truth. Without the revelatory truth of God, a person has no way to know that this happens. Yet the unsaved of the Tribulation will not only know about the beast coming from the abyss, they will respond in utter amazement after they witness it, as Rev 17:8 reveals:

The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

Also, since, as noted above, the Antichrist and false prophet will have supernatural bodies no later than Revelation 19, and most likely in Revelation 13, the same could be argued about entering and leaving the abyss in Revelation 17. In other words the text does not require that Satan be the one uniquely linked with the abyss.<sup>46</sup> No human could ever go to the abyss; no human could survive the abyss; no human could escape from there—and yet the beast does just that in Rev 17:8, as Seiss notes: “Ordinary men do not come from thence. One who hails from that place must be either a dead man brought up again from the dead, or some evil spirit which takes possession of a living man.”<sup>47</sup>

The resurrected bodies the Antichrist and the false prophet will have (by no later than 19:20) make them suitable for this. If one can endure the final lake of fire, he can endure the abyss. As before, that is not Satan’s doing; God in His sovereignty

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<sup>44</sup>Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* 250.

<sup>45</sup>Pentecost, *Things to Come* 322.

<sup>46</sup>One item that needs to be explored by those who hold that Satan is current sovereign of the abyss is the response of the demons of Luke 8:31. When the legion of demons quaked before Jesus, “they were entreating Him not to command them to depart into the abyss.” If Satan were the current master of the abyss, it seems most improbable the demons would be fearful of going there. Besides, if Satan ruled the abyss, he could simply send them back out into another field of endeavor.

<sup>47</sup>Seiss, *The Apocalypse* 325.

permits it, ultimately even causing it. Since the beast and the false prophet have to receive a resurrected body at some point to endure the lake of fire, from the information disclosed in Scripture, this is the most feasible option.

### **Resurrection of the False Prophet**

Still one important item needs addressing: Rev 19:20 discloses that “these two [οἱ δύο] were thrown living into the lake of fire.” Yet only one beast has the fatal wound in Rev 13:3 and only one beast comes from the abyss in Rev 17:7-8:

And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. The beast [το; qhrivon] that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

Connected with this is one final matter that should be considered but is often overlooked. Although not specifically stated in the text, somehow the *other* beast which John saw (ἄλλο qhrivon), the false prophet of Rev 13:11, must have a supernatural status. Why does the text not say that the beasts (plural) instead of the beast (singular) come out of the abyss? The two, not just one, are thrown living into lake of fire. Thomas muses, “The joining of the false prophet with the beast in this doom is surprising, but not completely unexpected, though, because of his evil sign-working powers.”<sup>48</sup>

In attempting to understand this, one should remember that the Bible often presents the spiritual realities behind what takes place on earth. Those on earth, especially those who do not accept the revelation of God, see only the physical events, yet the spiritual side is the real reason that the events occur. One of the examples is the serpent (what Adam and Eve saw) and the serpent of old (the satanic reality behind the serpent) in the Garden Eden, showing both the physical and the spiritual realities. Two others are the events surrounding the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus in Luke 1–2 (the physical births and the supernatural action behind the births), and the earthly opponents (Luke 22:1-2) and the spiritual opponent (Luke 22:3) who lead to Jesus’ arrest.

So it is with Revelation 13. Revelation 12–14 is a unique segment within the book. In Revelation 12, God discloses the spiritual realities, totally hidden from the lost world, before the visible events of Revelation 13 occur:

The method of narration beginning at this point differs from anything previous, because it focuses on the secret maneuvers that lie behind the visible conflict to be portrayed under the seven bowls (Kiddle). That future struggle is merely the outworking of a conflict

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<sup>48</sup>Thomas, *Revelation 8–22* 398.

between God and Satan that has lasted throughout history since Satan's fall.<sup>49</sup>

Before the pinnacle of Satan's man of sin emerges in Revelation 13, God uncovers the spiritual background from which the events will emerge in Revelation 12:

Previously John has predicted the future objectively, but at this point he pauses to focus upon the inner movements that lie behind the conflict that will mark the climax of world history. He points out that the future struggle is merely the climax of a struggle that has gone on throughout earth's history and that what transpires on earth is a mere reflection of the conflict between the forces of God and the forces of Satan.<sup>50</sup>

Chapter 12 reveals the preliminary defeat of Satan as he is cast down from heaven and the woe to the earth that follows in Rev 12:7-12:

And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death. For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

To summarize, Revelation 12 includes (1) Satan being cast down from heaven, (2) the pronouncement of the pending kingdom of Christ, (3) the victory of the overcomers by the blood of the Lamb, (4) the woe to the earth because of Satan's wrath, and (5) Satan's realization that his time is short. By no means will the lost of the Tribulation know about any of these preliminary defeats of Satan, and by no means will the preeminent liar (John 8:44) disclose them to the lost world. The world will see only the physical beings and events before them; they will not ascertain the spiritual realities that precede the events, and especially will they not grasp their significance. Simply put, the world at large will marvel at the Antichrist and be amazed by the signs and wonders performed by the false prophet, as the predicted worldwide deception occurs.

That scenario presents a distinct possibility to consider: it may very well be that the false prophet is killed, perhaps at the same time the first beast receives his

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 117.

<sup>50</sup>Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John*, Moffatt New Testament Commentary (New York: Harper, 1940) 211-12, cited by Robert L. Thomas, "Exegetical Digest of Revelation 8-14" (N.p.: by the author, 1993) 207.



mortal wound, and that the first beast brings him back to life—that is, again, from the perspective of those on earth who will witness this. God will give the two resurrected bodies, but it will seem to a thoroughly deceived world that the first beast performs this by his own power. Such harmonizes with the uniqueness of the Tribulation as well as the multiple warnings of the deception of that period. Beyond this, it suits Satan’s design. Satan does not desire so much world dominion, which he does have to a degree and what the Antichrist will exercise because it will be given to him (Rev 13:4, 7). Both the beast—and ultimately Satan—desire to be worshiped as God, as seen in the temptation of Jesus (Matt 4:9), the worship of the beast and the dragon (Rev 13:4), and the Antichrist’s presentation of himself to the world that he alone is God (2 Thess 2:4).

Those deceived during the Tribulation will respond to the Antichrist in worshipful adoration, as Rev 13:8 shows: “And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.” Anyone who persuades the entire unsaved population of the world that he himself is God must support his claims by overwhelmingly convincing means. The Tribulation will be devoid of both atheists and agnostics. Since the Antichrist will present himself as greater than Jesus, he must at the very least equal what the Bible claimed about Jesus. For instance, when John the Baptist questioned Jesus about whether He was the promised one or should they look for another, part of Jesus’ answer related to the dead being raised: “Go and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Matt 11:4-5). For the Antichrist to present himself as God and be believed in by the collective lost, that he would bring one back to life (as the world views it) would not be unexpected.

Many have noticed that with Satan, the Antichrist, and the false prophet, a satanic trinity emerges:

It will be observed that the Revelation, in relating the second beast to the first, presents him as subservient to the first. He is called “the false prophet” (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10), who ministers in connection with the first beast as his prophet or spokesman. We are presented, then, with a Satanic trinity, the unholy trinity, or the trinity of hell: the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet (Rev. 16:13). That place occupied by God in His program is assumed by Satan, that place of Christ is assumed by the first Beast, that ministry of the Holy Spirit is discharged by the False Prophet.<sup>51</sup>

While often noted, members of this satanic trinity should not be taken lightly, nor should their capacities be automatically diminished, especially with the parameters under which they will operate during the last three-and-one-half years before the Lord’s return. If the Antichrist is supposedly to be God in the flesh and exalted above Jesus, whom the Bible repeatedly presents as raising the dead, that the

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<sup>51</sup>Pentecost, *Things to Come* 337.

Antichrist (again from the world's perspective) will raise the dead at some point should not be unexpected. The healing of the false prophet from the dead would accomplish this. It would also explain the latter's supernatural status that he has in Rev 19:20. Yet even beyond this, it would answer another question which must be raised: Why are only Satan and the Antichrist worshiped during the Tribulation and not the false prophet? He, too, will have a supernatural body when he is cast living into the lake of fire. That another heals him would also explain why the world will worship the first beast and worship the dragon (Rev 13:4), but not worship the false prophet. It would also harmonize with the previously noted Satanic trinity. One returns from the abyss; and one is returned to life in a supernatural form, giving worldwide witness and credit to the one who raised him from the dead and leading the entire lost world to worship him as God.<sup>52</sup>

All this ultimately originates with God. From the world's understanding, the Antichrist and the dragon accomplish divine acts and are worthy of worship and praise. From the biblical perspective, God alone does the acts and is worthy. In fact, the rise of the Antichrist in Revelation 13 comes only after the preliminary defeat of Satan in Revelation 12. No true dualism exists; only the erroneous perception of dualism by the lost during the Tribulation.

### *Conclusion and Significance*

The realization that the Antichrist and the false prophet will be judged uniquely and exclusively by the Son in Rev 19:20 and will be mandated by God to bypass the Great White Throne judgment has far-reaching implications. First, it permits a more natural understanding of the language of the Book of Revelation, something which those who hold to the premillennial reign of Jesus Christ frequently emphasize. Realizing that a change from the human to the supernatural must occur for the Antichrist and the false prophet by this point certainly adds to the possibility that it may be sooner, such as in Rev 13:3 and 17:8. It further explains the marveling of the unbelieving masses that is predicted for the Tribulation and how they will respond in abject amazement. Since the lost will marvel with abject wonder at the return of the first beast from the abyss, obviously they will not be expecting his return from the dead. Having brazenly rejected the truth of God, when the Antichrist returns from the grave, the deceived of the Tribulation will embrace the lie, "with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness" (2 Thess 2:10-12). This underscores the absolute sovereignty of God in all areas, including even a

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<sup>52</sup>However, even with this, something still needs to be addressed. A future article will perhaps consider why the beast from the earth went down to the abyss rather than to Hades, which is where lost humanity goes to await the final judgment.

supernatural return from the dead. Even in the pinnacle of Satan's reign on earth, God remains fully in control. Although Satan and the Antichrist will take credit for it, this will come about only by God's sovereign doing, something, of course, which the deceived world will in no way acknowledge at that time.

Second, premillennialists should amend slightly their theology concerning the final judgments of God, especially in reference to Rev 20:11-15. All the unredeemed will appear before Jesus at the Great White Throne judgment, all except two, and this by God's sovereign design and disclosure. This by no means undermines a premillennial understanding of God's judgments. It actually strengthens it in that it allows the text to speak for itself, as God has revealed a unique judgment in store for two of His unique opponents.

Thirdly, God being the ultimate source of the first beast's return and of the two resurrected bodies in Revelation 19:20 refutes every criticism and concern that Hanegraaf and Brouwer raise regarding the return to life of the beast. Only God has the power to raise the dead, not Satan. The Antichrist does not raise himself; God raises him. Satan by no means possesses creative power; God alone does, although Satan will lie about this in the future, receiving worship that is not properly due him (Rev 13:4). So though it will appear to the unbelieving world not so much that God has no equals but rather that Satan has no equals, Scripture plainly indicates that is never so. Satan operates only when God allows and only to the degree God allows. By no means whatsoever could such a view be considered a dualism between God and Satan whereby they exist as competing equals. They are not; they never have been; they never will be, even in the height of the Tribulation and the accompanying predicted deception.

When the unsaved masses respond in bewildered adoration at the return of the beast from death, asking in Rev 13:4, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?," God has already provided the answer in His Word. The One who is able to wage war with the beast is the one whose attributes have already been delineated in detail in Revelation 1-5, in particular in Rev 1:5 where Jesus is called "the ruler of the kings of the earth," which, of course, includes the Antichrist. Even more so, the one who is able to wage war with the beast is the one to whom *all* judgment is given. He is also the one who declares, "and I have [e [CW, present active indicative] the keys of death and of Hades" (Rev 1:18), which, incidentally, is further evidence that the return of the first beast from death is not Satan's doing, but solely God's.