

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.
Rev. 1:3

Verse by Verse Through the Book of Revelation

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Microsoft Publisher

REVELATION CHAPTER 13

Revelation 12 ends with a warning about a war between Satan and God's people. Chapters 13 and 14 detail that war and the results it brings to both sides.

The time frame these chapters cover begins essentially with the start of the 1,260-year prophecy (A.D. 538) and extends through end-time events right up to Christ's second advent.

The war described in these chapters will allow no neutral parties. Eventually all the people of the world will follow and worship the first beast described here in verses 3, 12, 16—all, that is, except the "virgins" who have not fallen for the seductions of the "woman" Babylon and her harlot daughters, the "saints" who have kept "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. (See Chapter 14:4, 12).



1. **And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea,** The sea here doubtless represents peoples, nations, tongues (See Rev. 17:1, 2, 8; and Dan. 7:2)

and saw a beast rise up out of the sea. This means that the beast is arising where there are multitudes of peoples.

having seven heads and ten horns See Revelation 12:3.

and upon his horns ten crowns and upon his heads the name of blasphemy These crowns on the horns confirm the identification of the horns as political powers. The blasphemy represents the titles assumed by the beast (See Dan. 7:25)

2. **And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion:** Same symbolism as Dan. 7. The beast seen by John had physical characteristics drawn from all three beasts of Dan 7 (the leopard, bear and lion). The power represented by this beast of Revelation possessed characteristics prominent in the kingdoms of Babylon, Persia and Greece.

and the dragon Satan

gave him his power and his seat and great authority. Out of the ruins of political Rome, arose the great form of the Roman Church. This is confirmed in the following verses.

When Satan saw that he couldn't annihilate the followers of Christ through persecution, he altered his tactics and sought to lure the church away from Christ through the establishment of a vast counterfeit religious system. Instead of working directly through paganism the dragon now worked behind the façade of a professedly Christian organization, hoping thereby to disguise his identity.

3. **And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death;** This prediction met its fulfillment in 1798 when Berthier, at the head of a French army entered Rome, declared the political rule of the papacy at an end and took the pope prisoner to France, where he soon died.

and his deadly wound was healed: A significant event occurred in 1929 when the Lateran Treaty restored temporal power to the pope, who was given the rule of Vatican City, a section of the city of Rome about 108.7 acres in extent.

and all the world wondered after the beast. The prophet envisioned a much greater restoration. He saw the wound completely healed.

This is still in the future. Though many people show the pope favor, vast populations show no deference. This is to change! The beast of verse 11 will cause everybody on this earth to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed.

4. **And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?** Worshipping the beast is in fact worshipping the dragon—for the beast is the agency of the dragon carrying out his program. Apparently resistance to the demands of the beast meant war. The suggestion is that he ruled by force of arms and that resistance would be futile.

 5. **And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.** This power and the power of the little horn of Dan. 7 are clearly the same power. Among the parallels the following may be noted: 1) the beast of Rev. 13 had a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies — so did the little horn of Dan. 7 (v.8). 2) The beast was to continue 42 months and the horn was to continue until a time, times and the dividing of time (Dan 7:25) 3) The beast was to make war with the saints and to overcome them Dan 7:21 says the same thing.

 6. **And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.** Blasphemes God's name by assuming divine titles. This power presumes to set up his temple on earth and thus draws the attention of the people away from the sanctuary in heaven, the "true tabernacle" where Jesus ministers as high priest (Heb. 8:1,2) This power, therefore, blasphemes the true tabernacle of God in heaven.

This power seeks to cast down the work of this sanctuary (see Dan 8:11, 12, 13) The heavenly ministry of the sacrifice of Christ is discounted, and the sacrifice of the mass on earth is substituted.

The third aspect of the blasphemy touches the Godhead in the Catholic claim to have power to forgive sins, also in ascribing powers and virtues to Mary that apply only to Christ. Thus the minds of men are turned away from the heavenly mediatorial work of Jesus to the confessional on earth.

 7. **And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them:** The language here is almost identical with that in Dan. 7:21.

and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations. This refers to the sphere of operations and while it applied to the Middle Ages it also refers to the future when the power of the papacy will be more fully revived.

 8. **And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.** (1 Peter 1:19, 20 says that the decision that Christ would die for the guilty race was decided before the foundation of the world. See Eph 1:4. Matt 25:34.
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9. **If any man have an ear, let him hear.**
10. **He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.** This text assures the persecuted children of God that those who pursue them and condemn them to exile and death will themselves meet a similar fate.

Some commentators interpret this verse as a warning to Christians not to use force against the anti-Christian power.

11. **And I beheld another beast** in addition to the one we've been discussing.

coming up out of the earth; coming up out of the ground indicates a sparsely settled region. Arising from the 'water' indicates a densely populated area. The only nation that arose at this time from a sparsely populated area was the United States of America.

and he had two horns like a lamb This represents the two notable features of the American system of government, civil and religious liberty, both of which are guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States. Civil liberty found its expression in a republican form of government and religious liberty in Protestantism.

and he spake as a dragon. This is still future! A great change is coming in our government! The manner in which a change in policy will be brought about is outlined in this prophecy. The change comes in connection with the final crisis immediately preceding the second coming of Jesus.

12. **And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.** This is still future! For the second beast to exercise all the authority of the first beast, it will have to enter the field of religion and seek to dominate religious worship.

For the United States to take this step will mean a complete reversal of its present policy of granting full freedom of religion to its citizens. Nevertheless, it is here predicted. (After the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center Buildings in New York and the subsequent laws passed by congress giving the government unlimited phone tapping privileges, etc., it is easier to believe that the 'rights' of freedom will be taken away from American citizens in the name of 'public safety.'

There will obviously be more strict laws guarding Sunday as a day of worship. The present prophecy predicts that the institution of Sunday as the Sabbath (See Dan. 7:25) will one day be enforced by law under threat of economic sanctions and ultimately death (see Rev. 13:12-18).

causeth the earth That is, the inhabitants of the earth. The movement here described is more than a national enterprise; it takes on international proportions.

A hint as to the nature of the enactment is found in Rev. 14:9-12. These verses contrast the saints with the worshipers of the beast and his image and note that one of the distinguishing characteristics of the saints is the keeping of the commandments of God. (Rev. 14:12.)

What is here envisioned is a universal movement under the leadership of Satan, who is seeking to secure for himself the allegiance of the inhabitants of this earth. He will succeed in uniting the various religious elements and in securing the loyalty of men to the new organization patterned after the old. Satan is the power behind the beast. (Rome).

13. **And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.** This text tell us how Satan will secure the allegiance of earth's inhabitants. These miracles will deceive men into believing that the new "Christianity" has the blessing of God on it.

The position of the Seventh-day Adventist church is that these miracles will take the form of spiritualism. They will most likely occur in the heavens and possibly will portray the virgin Mary as having some role in our salvation.

Fire came down from heaven on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:17-39) and gave evidence of the power of the true God.

Please note this quote from Ted and Maureen Flynn's book, *The Thunder of Justice*, p. 3 *This is supposedly information that the virgin Mary gave to Father Don Gobbi in a vision on September 15, 1987 at Akita, Japan.* "A chastisement worse than the flood is about to come upon this poor and perverted humanity. Fire will descend from Heaven and this will be the sign that the justice of God has as of now fixed the hour of His great manifestation."

14. **And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast;** Jesus warned concerning "false christs and false prophets" who would arise and "show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24:24

saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by the sword, and did live. The church will prevail upon the state to enforce its dogmas. State and church will unite, and the result will be the loss of religious liberty and the persecution of dissenting minorities.

This “image” will be to reflect the very actions of the church of Rome in the Middle Ages. Once again, the civil authority will seek to compel men and women to worship as dictated by the government.

15. **And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.** This beast “speaks” through its laws. Force will be exercised in the carrying out of these laws.

This is the story of the ages: Legislation in matters of religion has ever been followed by persecution. In its attempt to make all earth’s inhabitants give allegiance to the first beast the second beast will issue a decree threatening with death all who maintain their loyalty to God.

16. **And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads.** This is not a literal brand but some sign of allegiance that identifies the bearer as loyal to the power represented by the beast.

The controversy will center on the law of God, particularly the 4th commandment. Those who receive the “mark” in their right hand means that they don’t really believe it, but consent to go along with the law. The “mark” in their foreheads means that they believe it.

17. **And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.** We don’t know what this mark is. We don’t believe it is an actual mark. We believe that it is allegiance or going along with the laws.

18. **Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.** It should be noted that the beast has already been identified. The number provides confirmation of this identification. The number is 666.

It is the number of a man: This means that the beast represents a human organization.
