

Revelation 13

John is a spectator

“I stood and I saw...”

- 36 times this phrase is found in the book
 - Another 12 times we read “I looked”
 - 27 times we read I heard

It is clear that John is providing a first-hand account of events he witnessed

John sees numerous Biblical prophecies unfold before his very eyes.

Remember the book of Revelation is the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy.

John is describing what he saw when he was translated into the future.

It is here in Revelation that we have an explanation given to much of what the Bible has been addressing since it's beginning

In the opening chapters we are introduced to God and man and the rise of the enemy of God who seeks to destroy those who are following God.

This conflict will build and develop until its climax recorded in Revelation

Here in chapter 13 we will see the rise of 2 beasts that will drive the final opposition against God and His kingdom

As the pages turn, we watch as the beasts are defeated and the Eternal Kingdom of God is established

Let's start with simple **observation** of what John describes

Revelation 13:1-2

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.

John saw a beast rising out of the Sea

- It had 7 heads
- It had 10 horns with 10 crowns

- It looked like a leopard, bear and a lion
- It was blasphemous
- And it received its power from the Dragon who has been previously identified as the devil

Revelation 12:9

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Later John will see this beast again

Revelation 17:3

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.

When John saw this he marveled to which an angelic message responded;

Revelation 17:7-14

But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

"Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

"The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful."

This is not the explanation I was hoping for but we do learn that

- The beast will come from the bottomless pit and end up in perdition

- The beast had 7 heads which are 7 kings one of which has not yet risen to power
- The 10 horns are 10 kings that have not yet ascended to a throne
- When they do they will give their power to the beast
- These kings will fight against Christ and be defeated by Him

We can conclude that John sees a person who will rise to power in the Tribulation to whom the nations of the world will concede their power. This king and his kingdom will be directly opposed to the kingdom of God and His Christ and will wage war against the saints even prevailing against them until Christ returns and defeats His enemies

Application Point

We experience that conflict today

- God is seeking to spread His kingdom, this happens today when a person comes to Christ, is filled with the Spirit and begins to allow Jesus to conquer them. Their private life, family life, community life, work life, church life and citizenship are slowly transformed
- And the individual Christian faces tremendous opposition from this taking place.
 - We face Internal opposition as the flesh resists the work of improvement set in motion by the Spirit and the Word
 - And we face external opposition as those who are opposed to God oppose the child of God
- But God will soon bring all things to their culmination and set up His eternal kingdom

Revelation 11:15

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

- But before this is accomplished there will be rising opposition from Satan and his forces.

Revelation 12:10

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God, day and night, has been cast down.

Revelation 12:13

Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child.

Revelation 12:17

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- The closer we get to the end the greater the resistance from the enemy will become
 - It is not surprising that we are seeing rising, perhaps even global resistance to Christ, Christians and the Christian message
- But John will also watch as the Dragon and the beasts will be defeated and Christ will set up His eternal kingdom

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.

Revelation 20:1-2

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

Remember John is watching the fulfillment of things predicted earlier in Scripture

- **This is the culmination of all the Bible has been building toward.**
- This is particularly true of the prophecies of Daniel
 - Daniel described these events 600 years before the book of Revelation was written.
 - John will interpret what Daniel predicted by providing us with the details of how they are fulfilled

What Daniel Predicted

Daniel 7

Daniel had a dream. In it he saw 4 different beasts arise on to the world scene. Each beast represents a different world governing empire

- He sees a lion with eagle wings

- He sees a Bear lifted on one side with ribs in its mouth
- He sees a Leopard with 4 heads and wings like a bird that conquers rapidly and divides
- Then He sees a grotesque beast with ten horns one of which is more notable than the others which began to speak blasphemous words

Daniel then watched as this beast was slain, cast into the fire and God set up His kingdom that will reign forever

This vision greatly troubled Daniel and sought answers. He was told;

Daniel 7:17-18

‘Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.’

- Nations will rise and fall until the time of the end when God will set up His eternal kingdom

Daniel then pressed the matter further and asked about the 4th beast with the 10 horns

Daniel 7:19-20

“Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows.

To which he was told

Daniel 7:23-27

“Thus, he said:

‘The fourth beast shall be

A fourth kingdom on earth,

Which shall be different from all other kingdoms,

And shall devour the whole earth,

Trample it and break it in pieces.

The ten horns are ten kings

Who shall arise from this kingdom
And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from the first ones,
And shall subdue three kings.
He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
And shall intend to change times and law.
Then the saints shall be given into his hand
For a time and times and half a time.
'But the court shall be seated,
And they shall take away his dominion,
To consume and destroy it forever.
Then the kingdom and dominion,
And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,
Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

From this point the saints of God would be anticipating kingdoms rising and falling until the rise of a final kingdom more horrific than those who have come before which will persecute the saints of God until Christ comes to bring victory and set up His eternal kingdom

Daniel chapter 8 provides further insight

- Daniel sees yet another vision.

This one includes a Ram with 2 horns that seemed unstoppable until the rise of a goat with a notable horn between its eyes that moved with tremendous speed and defeated the ram.

After the Rams defeat the horn was replaced by 4 horns one of which became more notable than the others and turned against the Holy Land and the Temple sacrifices

- As Daniel was seeking meaning Gabriel the angel explained the vision

He emphasizes the fact that this vision has to do with the time of the end. In other words, this is all leading to what Daniel saw happening in the previous chapter when 10 kings will rise out of the beast and attempt to defeat the saints of God

Daniel 8:17

So, he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end."

Daniel 8:19

And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be.

- He then provides meaning behind the images in the vision

Daniel 8:20

The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia.

Daniel 8:21

And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king.

Daniel 8:22

As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.

Daniel 8:23

"And in the latter time of their kingdom,
When the transgressors have reached their fullness,
A king shall arise,
Having fierce features,
Who understands sinister schemes.

Daniel gives us further insight into these events in chapter 11 where he records in advance some of the conflicts between the Ptolemy and the Seleucid Empires.

- His primary focus is upon one particular king of the Seleucid empire who will turn his forces against Israel and the people of God

Daniel 11:31

And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.

- And will even exalt himself as a god

Daniel 11:36

“Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.

(Remember Jesus spoke of the A of D as something further)

(Jesus saw him as a type of the Anti-Christ)

History records the rise of an individual from northern Greece who in the 4th century BC united the city states of Greece and marched against Persia. With unprecedented speed Alexander’s forces defeated the Persian army and spread the Grecian Empire from Europe to India and as far south as North Africa. After His death the empire was divided into 4 parts. Later, towards the end of Grecian dominance a king from the Seleucid Dynasty named Antiochus Epiphanies attempted to defeat Egypt. His efforts were stopped by threats from the rising Roman power. Enraged he took out his frustration on the Jewish people by defiling the Temple, burning the scriptures and killing the Jews.

Now here is where careful observation will help us have a better understanding of the text.

- The little horn of chapter 8 grew out of the nation of Greece
- The notable horn of chapter 7 came from the final empire to rule in the latter days
- The character in chapter 8 and 11 foreshadows the rise of the beast in Revelation 13

He is a type of the Anti-Christ

- Jesus saw him that way when he referred to the Abomination of desolation spoken by Daniel

That was an historical event recorded in history and even somewhat celebrated in Hanukkah

But this pictures a future event when the antichrist will defile the rebuild temple of God

- The Bible writers warned of a coming antichrist

Jesus said

Matthew 24:24

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

John put it like this

1 John 2:18

Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

He suggests that the church had been well taught regarding the concept of a coming antichrist in the last days but that in the mean time many antichrists would arise seeking to deceive

Paul put it like this

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 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.

This is the Abomination of Desolation that Daniel spoke about

Matthew 24:15

“Therefore, when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand)

Matthew 24:21

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

And that this character receives his power from the devil himself

2 Thessalonians 2:9

The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders

And Jesus adds that after the rise of this character Christ will come and set up His eternal kingdom

Matthew 24:29-31

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and

then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

And He tells us what to do

- Be ready

Matthew 24:36

“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

Matthew 24:37-39

But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Matthew 24:42

Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

Matthew 24:44

Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.