

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The Dragon Makes War against the Woman and the Rest of Her Offspring (Revelation 13.1-18)



1. Review of Revelation 12

a. The women, her child and her offspring, and the dragon

i. The woman is a symbol of God's people, who experience agony despite heavenly adornment and identity (cf. Gen 3.15-16; Gen 37.9; Is 26.17-18; 52.2; 54.1-6; 61.10; 62.1-5; 66.7-13; Gal 4.26-27; 2 John 1, 5; 3 John 9)

ii. The Great Red Dragon: the great enemy of God and his people (cf. Ex 1; Matt 2; Ps 74.12-14; Job 26.12-13; Is 27.1; Is 30.7; 51.9; Ezek 29.3; 32.2-3);

Ancient serpent, the devil, Satan, the deceiver (Gen 3.1-6; Job 1.6-12; 2.1-6; Zech 3.1-5; John 8.44);

The great dragon thrown down (4 times 12.9 [twice], 10, 13)

iii. The Ascension and Rule of Christ (Psalm 2)

- b. Worship in heaven (12.10)
 - i. No condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus! (Rom 3.21-26; 8.1, 30-39; Col 2.13-15; Hebrews 2.14-15; John 12.31-33; Luke 10.17-20)
- c. Warfare and wayfaring (comfort and conflict) – and witness
 - i. The Church sojourning in the wilderness (a place prepared by God where she is nourished) (Ex 16.32; Deut 2.7; 8.3 [cf. John 6]; Deut 8.11-17; 1 Cor 10)
 - ii. The New Exodus and Wilderness Sojourn (Ex 19.4-6; Is 31.15; 35.iff; 40.3; 41.18; 43.18-20; 51.3; Jer 31.2; Ezek 34.25)

2. Revelation 13

12:17 Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

13.1 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. ² And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. ³ One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. ⁴ And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

⁵ And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. ⁶ It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. ⁷ Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, ⁸ and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. ⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear:

¹⁰ If anyone is to be taken captive,
to captivity he goes;
if anyone is to be slain with the sword,
with the sword must he be slain.

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

¹¹ Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. ¹² It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. ¹³ It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, ¹⁴ and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived. ¹⁵ And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. ¹⁶ Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be

marked on the right hand or the forehead,¹⁷ so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.¹⁸ This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.

3. The Beast from the Sea (13.1-10)

a. And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.² And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. (13.1-2)

- i. The description of the first beast: “out of the sea” (cf. Dan 7.1-7’ Rev 4.6; 21.1; Is 17.12; Rev 17.15); “ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems” (cf. dragon in 12.3); “blasphemous names” (reveal true character; cf. 13.6) – false claims to sovereignty against God

Isaiah 17:12 Ah, the thunder of many peoples; they thunder like the thundering of the sea! Ah, the roar of nations; they roar like the roaring of mighty waters!

Revelation 17:15 And the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.”

Revelation 12:3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.

Revelation 13:6 It [the beast] opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

- ii. Beastly Kingdoms (leopard, bear, lion)

Daniel 7.1-7: In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter.² Daniel declared, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.³ And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.⁴ The first was like a lion and had eagles’ wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it.⁵ And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, ‘Arise, devour much flesh.’⁶ After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.⁷ After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

b. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.³ One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.⁴ And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?” (13.3-4)

- i. Imitation and masquerading (self-deification)

The Lamb/God

5:6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

19:12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.

5:12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

5:6, 11-13: And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth ... Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” ¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

Exodus 15:11 “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?”

ii. Counterfeit Trinity (dragon, beast from the sea, and beast from the earth [false prophet])

iii. Counterfeit church (cf. harlot of Babylon in Rev 17)

iv. the “mortal wound” (*plēgē* – “plague” of death: cf. 13.12, 14; other occurrences of “plague” refer to divine judgment: 9.18, 20; 11.6; 15.1, 6, 8; 16.9, 21 [twice]; 18.4, 8; 21.9; 22.18); wounded by the sword (Rev 13.14; cf. Is 27.1)

c. **And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. ⁶It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. ⁷Also it was allowed to make war**

The Beast

Revelation 13:1 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.

13:2 And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.

13:7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation

13:3 One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound [lit. “as slain”], but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. ⁴ And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?”

on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, ⁸and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. (13.6-8)

- i. God's sovereignty: "it was given" (divine passive) (cf. Rev 13.5a, 5b, 7a, 7b, 14, 15)
- ii. "a mouth" – seven heads but one blasphemous voice
- iii. "42 months"
- iv. "blaspheming [God's] name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven"
- v. "it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them" (cf. Rev 6.9-11; 11.7-12; 19.11-21)
- vi. "And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain." (cf. Rev 7.1-17; 17.8; 20.12, 15; 21.27)

Revelation 17:8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.

d. If anyone has an ear, let him hear: ¹⁰If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints. (13.9-10)

- i. The voice of the Spirit, a call the endurance and faith (cf. 2.7, 11, 17, 29; 3.6, 13, 22 – *Rev 13.1-8 applies to present situation of the seven churches*)

John 16:33 "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

Jeremiah 15:2 And when they ask you, 'Where shall we go?' you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD: "'Those who are for pestilence, to pestilence, and those who are for the sword, to the sword; those who are for famine, to famine, and those who are for captivity, to captivity.'" (cf. Ezek 14.12-23 and Rev 6.2-11; 11.7)

Jeremiah 43:11 He shall come and strike the land of Egypt, giving over to the pestilence those who are doomed to the pestilence, to captivity those who are doomed to captivity, and to the sword those who are doomed to the sword.

4. The Beast from the Earth (13.11-18)

a. Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. (13.11)

- i. description of the second beast (a.k.a. “false prophet” in 16.3; 19.20; 20.10): “from the earth” (cf. James 3.13-18); “two horns like a lamb” (masquerade); “spoke like a dragon”

James 3:13-18 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. ¹⁵ This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

b. It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. ¹³It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, ¹⁴and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived. ¹⁵And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. (13.12-15)

- i. The second beast leads people to worship the first beast, just as the Spirit leads us to worship Christ.

John 16:13-15 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

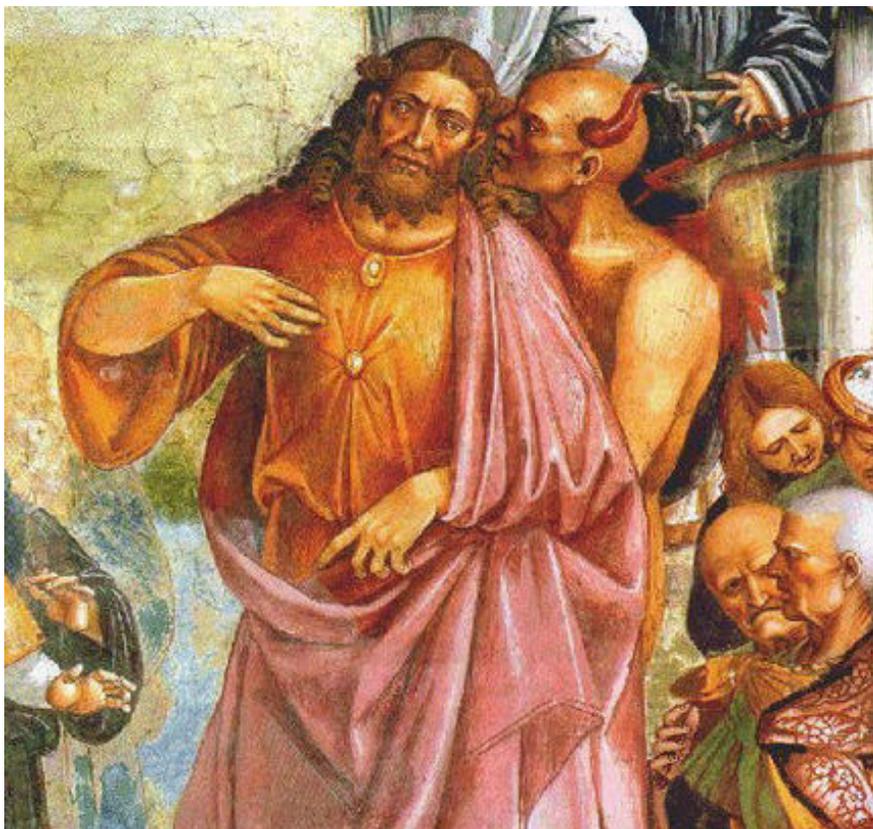
- ii. “performs great signs” (false prophet imitates Elijah [1 Kings 18.20-40]; cf. Rev 11.5 and Ex 7.11)

2 Corinthians 11:13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

Matthew 7:15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.” (cf. Rev 2.18-29)

- iii. “cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain” (cf. Dan 3)

- iv. Counterfeit religion: how is the second beast deceiving the world and the church today? (cf. Barmen Declaration, 1934)



Luca Signorelli, detail from *Sermons and Deeds of the Antichrist*

- c. Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead,¹⁷ so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.¹⁸ This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666. (13.16-18)

- i. “the mark” of the beast (cf. Rev 14.9, 11; 16.2; 19.20; 20.4) vs. “the seal” of God (Rev 7.2-3; 9.4; 14.1; 22.4; cf. Ezek 9.4)

Colossians 1:13-14 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Ephesians 2:1-3 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience –³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Acts 26:16-18 But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, ¹⁷ delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles-- to whom I am sending you ¹⁸ to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.⁷

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Revelation 14:9-11 And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he also will drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.”