

I. The war comes to Earth (Rev. 12:13-17)

A. Enraged from being confined to the earth, Satan turns his full attention on destroying the woman (Ethnic Israel). All prophetic scriptures including the very words of Jesus himself proclaim that God bound His promise to usher in the Messianic Age to the descendants of Jacob (Israel). Satan will seek to destroy this group of people from the earth in order to keep Jesus from coming. (Is. 66:5-16; Luke 13:35; Rom. 9-11)

1. I believe Satan needs to use a human vessel to accomplish this task now that he has been cast out of the heavenly realm. For the first time in history he will give all his power and authority to a man, the antichrist who will set his heart to attempt destroy the people of promise. (Rev. 13:2)
2. God reveals His strategy to provide means of escape and protection for ethnic Israel. They will be preserved and nourished in the wilderness of the nations. They will be taken “from the presence of the serpent” supernaturally. I believe this is speaking of a literal flight from Jerusalem itself which is about to become a headquarters for the Antichrist and his “image” in the temple. Jesus spoke of the necessity of this flight in (Matt. 24:15-22) for the individuals who dwell in Jerusalem. The supernatural dimension of Exodus from Egypt is described as God giving them “Eagles Wings”. The same is now used to describe the “flight” from Jerusalem into the Nations during the last days. (Deu. 32:11-12; Ex. 19:4; Is. 40:31, 63:9; Ez. 20:36-38; Hos. 2:14-16)
3. This is the greatest time of persecution against the Jews that the world has ever seen. This time period will last 3 ½ years and God will preserve a remnant of this nation through supernatural means. (Jer. 30:6-10; Dan. 12:1; Amo. 5:18-20)

B. Satan’s rage will then be turned to the offspring of the woman. I believe we should understand the offspring of the woman to be the concept of the “One new man” or “Bride of Christ”. The end of the age people of God will constitute the people “who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”. The “offspring” of the woman is distinct from the woman herself. Both the woman (Ethnic Israel) and her offspring (One New Man, Jew and Gentile Believers in Jesus) are in view in this passage. I believe the woman represents the faithful remnant of Israel who brought forth Messiah. The individuals both Jew and Gentile who have come to faith in Messiah I believe are the offspring. Both cannot be the same group when there is a clear distinction made in the passage. (Rom. 9-11; Eph. 2:10-15; Gal. 6:15; Col. 3:10)

II. Waring through the Antichrist (Rev. 13:1-10)

- A. The war that Satan has waged upon ethnic Israel and the church will take on an interesting dynamic once Satan loses his authority in the heavens. His strategy to continue his assault on God's people will be to give his power and authority to a man who is referred to symbolically as the beast. There is universal agreement that the symbolic beast is the antichrist spoken of throughout the bible. (Dan. 7:6-11, 8:23, 9:26, 11:36-45; Jhn 5:43; 2 Thes. 2:3, 8-9; 1 Jhn. 2:18-22, 4:3; 2 Jhn 1:7; Rev. 11:7, 13:2-4, 14-18, 14:9-11, 15:2, 16:2, 10, 13, 17:7-17, 19:19-20, 20:4, 10)
- B. The prefix *anti* can mean either "the opposite of" or "instead of". Most people have focused on the idea of the antichrist being "opposite of Jesus." This has made them think that the Antichrist will appear as a supremely evil person. Jesus went around doing good, so he will go around doing evil, and his character will be ugly and repulsive. The Antichrist will instead be more of an "instead of Jesus." He will appear wonderful, be very intelligent, successful, persuasive, and powerful. He will be the ultimate winner, and appear as an angel of light. In this sense, the Antichrist will be a satanic messiah, instead of the true Messiah Jesus Christ. He will appear good on the outside but internally He is a untamable wild and dangerous beast.
- C. Up to this point in the book of Revelation the focus and of the entire book has been upon the beauty, glory, and leadership of Jesus. Just for a moment however we are focused upon the strategy and plan of Satan who seeks to stop, disrupt, and destroy the plan of God. Jesus wants us to know the battle plans of our adversary in order that we are prepared to overcome him. This section of the vision is meant to give us confidence and strength rather than produce fear in us concerning the strategy of Satan.
- D. Verse by Verse through (Rev. 13:1-8)
1. Rising up from the sea – The Bible uses the symbolic language of the sea to represent the sea of nations. In the parables of Jesus, the sea represents the unsaved that need to be caught by the fishers of men. In the psalms the sea represents untamed chaos. There are many who believe the antichrist will arise from a gentile nation originating from ancient Rome. (Ps. 74:12-13, 89:8-9; Is. 57:20; Dan. 9:26; Mat. 4:18-20, 13:47)

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(Rev. 12:13-13:8)

2. Seven heads – Though this beast is distinct from the Dragon he is closely identified with him. The dragon that represented Satan and his warfare against Israel in (Rev. 12:3) was described in almost identical terms. This beast will walk in the fullness of the satanic rage that the earlier nations walked in during their campaigns against Israel. The nation of Israel had to defeat seven different kingdoms in order to possess the promise land in the days of Joshua. Seven is also biblically associated with completeness. (Acts. 13:19; Rev. 17:10)
3. Ten horns with ten crowns – Thankfully, the interpretation of the 10 horns with 10 crowns is not up for debate. The ten horns are ten kings or national leaders to put it in our modern language. They have authority (crowns) in the earth and are in partnership with the beast to destroy Israel and the church. They start out as a alliance of equals with the beast but eventually they come to be his servants. (Dan. 7:7, 20-24; Rev. 12:3; Rev. 17:3-16)

“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. (Rev. 17:12)

4. Like a leopard, bear and lion – This refers to one of the primary visions of the prophet Daniel. In His vision, He was shown 4 different empires that would come against Israel through the symbolism of animals. Each animal expresses the characteristics of that particular historical kingdom. In Daniel’s vision the lion represented Babylon in its majesty, prestige, authority, and ferociousness. The bear represented Medo-Persia in its absolute crushing power and unstoppable brute force. The leopard represented Greece in the lightning speed, stealth, and cunning conquests of Alexander the Great. (Dan. 7:1-7)
 - a) What John was supposed to understand along with us is that the empire of the beast will carry all the characteristics of the historical kingdoms that have come before under the inspiration of Satan to crush Israel. This final world empire will have the catlike predatory skills of a leopard, the brute force crushing power of a bear, and the authority and majesty of a lion.
5. Dragon gave him his power, throne, and authority – This world leader unlike anyone who has ever lived will be empowered and directed by Satan. He will have all the resources and power of hell at his disposal. Satan and the antichrist are so connected that worshiping one is synonymous with the other. In this, the beast takes the offer from Satan that Jesus refused. (Mat. 4:8-10; Rev. 13:4)

6. Mortally wounded but healed – The beast will suffer a life ending head wound that will supernaturally be healed. His recovery from this wound will increase his fame and authority greatly. Twice His recovery from the wound that he suffers is attributed to the world wide worship and devotion that He will receive. Seemingly, the antichrist even imitates to a degree Jesus's death and resurrection. (Mat. 24:24; Rev. 13:12-14)
7. Men worship the Dragon and the Beast – Millions of people will praise and laud the policies and achievements of the antichrist and fully pledge their loyalty and support to his vision. There will be songs, books, and Facebook posts dedicated to his name. As people do this they will not only be worshiping him but they will unknowingly be worshiping Satan. Many do not understand that Satan is a deceiver and appears as a messenger light and truth, not as horror and wickedness like people expect. (Mar. 13:6; 2 Cor. 11:14-15)
8. Authority to influence – “Blasphemer” may be a more accurate title than “Antichrist” for this end-times dictator. This beast is a man who speaks against God and everything God stands for. One of his greatest weapons of warfare will be his oratory ability to deliver great speeches and statements as part of his leadership strategy. These speeches will inspire humanism, relative truth, and appeal to the intellect. He will influence not just a nation but the entire earth through his blasphemy. (Dan. 7:8, 25, 11:36; Jhn. 8:45; Gal. 4:16; 2 Thes. 2:7-12; 2 Tim. 3:2, 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:18; Jd 1:16)
9. Continue for 42 months – Once again we are given the time frame of this great persecution that will face Israel and the Church. It will be 3 ½ years. I believe there is a prophetic parallel between the imprisonment of Joseph, the drought of Elijah, Jonah in the wales belly, Jesus's time in the ground, and the death of the 2 witnesses to the 3 ½ year time frame that God will allow Satan to seemingly have victory over the church through great persecution. Just as in all those historical events God uses it for the greatest of Glory to his Name and our good. (Dan. 7:25, 9:27, 12:7, 14; Rev. 11:2-3, 12:6, 14, 13:5)