

Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. (Rev 12:7-9)

“So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—**then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.**” (Matt 24:15-16)

When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. **The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the wilderness,** where she would be taken care of for **a time, times and half a time**, out of the serpent’s reach. Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent. But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God’s commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus. (Rev 12:13-17)

Allegorical Character Studies: The Beast

Daniel's Vision of the Beast

“After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had **ten horns**.

“While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a human being and a mouth that spoke boastfully.

“As I looked,

“thrones were set in place,
and the Ancient of Days took his seat.
His clothing was as white as snow;
the hair of his head was white like wool.
His throne was flaming with fire,
and its wheels were all ablaze.
A river of fire was flowing,

coming out from before him.
Thousands upon thousands attended him;
ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.
The court was seated,
and the books were opened.

“Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.)

“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. (Dan 7:7-14).

The Vision Interpreted

1. The four beasts are four kings (i.e., kingdoms) (Dan 7:17).
2. The ten horns are ten kings which will arise from the fourth kingdom (Dan 7:24).
3. After the ten kings, another will arise which will be different than the others, and in his bid for power he will subdue three kings (Dan 7:24).

After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. He will speak against the Most High and oppress his holy people and try to change the set times and the laws. The holy people will be delivered into his hands for **a time, times and half a time**.

“But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.” (Dan 7:24-27).

John's Vision of the Beast

The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with

wonder and followed the beast. People worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, “Who is like the beast? Who can wage war against it?”

The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for **forty-two months**. It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. It was given power to wage war against God’s holy people and to conquer them. And it was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb’s book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world. (Rev 13:1-8).

The Vision Interpreted

1. The ten horns are ten kings (or kingdoms) which do not have authority at the time of John's vision, but will share authority with the beast in a future time (Rev 13:1; 17:12).

“This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for only a little while. The beast **who once was, and now is not**, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.

“The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast. They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.” (Rev 17:9-14)

2. The seven heads are seven successive kingdoms; five of these had already ended at the time of the vision (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece), one was still in existence (Rome), and one was yet to come (the Antichrist’s kingdom, Rev 13:1; 17:10).
3. The beast is a kingdom that exists, then does not, then does again (Rev 17:8). This beast is identified not only as a kingdom, but as an eighth ruler (Rev 17:11), who appears to arise after one of the rulers receives an apparently fatal wound (Rev 13:3).
4. The beast and the ten kingdoms will destroy the harlot halfway into seventieth week (Rev 17:16), at the same point the beast is worshipped (Rev 13:4) and has achieved worldwide power (Rev 13:7).