

## **Rev 26-03-08a**

Greetings fellow members of Grace and Truth Bible Church, enthusiasts and students of the word of God. Those two things are pretty much synonymous. If you love the Lord and love his word, you're as good as a member here.

That's about as formal a process of application as we have. It's great to be with you this morning. This is the 8th of March, 2026.

We're in Revelation chapter 13. Looking at last, after 12 chapters of introduction, we are looking at the central figure that dominates all thought related to the time of tribulation, which is the beast and his mentor, benefactor and creator, the devil, Satan, the dragon, the serpent, the man of evil. And we are going to see yet another entity introduced this morning as we continue through the chapter.

Let's ask God's blessing on our time of fellowship and study and we'll begin. Father, we live in very chaotic times. They seem to move ever more rapidly as the days and weeks go by.

World events, national events, figures rise and fall. Technology is on the move and on the rise and is changing the landscape of human life and activity. We thank you for the anchor we have in our soul.

We thank you that our house is built upon the rock, your son, our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for him, the peace that he has granted to us, available on offer to anyone who will come to him and trust him for salvation, come to you through him and enter into eternal life. We're grateful for those promises.

We're grateful that we can be stable and fixed and confident in the face of whatever storms of life may come, whether they are personal or of a wider and greater variety. We thank you for this passage that is before us and all of your word that sustains us and stabilizes us, the opportunity to plumb its depths and mine its treasures across these many years. And we pray this morning as we look at this portion that the Holy Spirit will bless it to our hearts, help us to see its pertinence and application so that we can live the remainder of our lives in a way that pleases you and glorifies our savior.

We ask it in his name, amen. Let's take a quick look at our passage. Chapter 13 in your Bible and mine begins with, then he stood on the sand of the sea.

This refers back to the dragon. This dragon, as we know, has marked characteristics. He has seven heads and 10 horns.

This was given to us previously and we are going to see the echo of it. But the beast that he calls forth from the sea is gonna be followed by one from the land. And that's why he stands on the sand of the sea.

He's going to look to one hand and motivate and energize and empower a beast from the sea. Then he's going to look to his other hand and he is going to enable, empower, and energize a beast from the land. He stands between them.

He has his satanic hand on each of them and he is present in their midst. This is the unholy trinity. It mirrors and counterfeits the trinity in heaven.

Satan is endeavoring to fulfill several of his I will prophecies or claims that are in prophecy back in the Old Testament. So when people look at the sea, what is the sea? You would be amazed at the manifold ways, or maybe you wouldn't be amazed at the manifold ways that these scriptures can be interpreted. So some think that this is literally the Mediterranean and the beast is going to arise from a nation that is in that region.

Others think it's a symbol of unregenerate humanity, which is my belief. This is a consistent metaphor throughout scripture. Some think it means the Gentile nations, which I would also think pertains.

There is debate from time to time on whether the quote unquote antichrist is Jewish or Gentile because there are passages that talk about him blaspheming the God of his fathers. And that is something to take into account. He may have a history or a heritage.

There are people who have Jewish ancestry, but don't claim to be Jewish or practice Judaism, Orthodox or otherwise. And yet they have this in their past. Dr. Walvoord thinks that it is the Mediterranean area, the Mediterranean and Gentiles.

And some say that the ancient world associated the sea, the troubled sea with evil and Revelation 11, seven and Revelation 17, eight, when we get there, the beast comes from the abyss. And the abyss of course is as far away from God as you can get. And in metaphorical terms, it is the depths of evil.

And I think all of these are different blind men from Hindustan identifying the elephant and different aspects of it in prophetic terms. So it's hard not to see the strong connection between this beast and Daniel chapter seven, as we saw last time. And the seven heads, 10 horns, and also the identity of the four beasts that come out of the sea in Daniel chapter seven, verse three.

So we saw this last time just by way of review, one like a lion, one like a bear, one like a leopard, and a dreadful and terrible fourth beast. This is Daniel seven, three through seven. John sees one beast coming out of the sea with characteristics pertaining to all four of Daniel's.

This beast has seven heads, 10 horns, 10 crowns, and is like the leopard, bear, and the lion. So given this strong association, we are looking at the same entity and the same set of events surrounding that entity in both Daniel chapter seven and Revelation 13. So if you haven't already done so, or you don't have a cross-reference Bible, be sure and just put Daniel seven out in the margin because these two passages shed light on one another.

So in Daniel seven, the beasts were fairly clearly Babylon to begin with, then Medo-Persia, then Greece, and then Rome. So this beast that combines elements of all of them would be something similar to or derived from the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire absorbed the advancements, the technology, the art, the culture of those previous empires.

And this, what is often called the revived Roman Empire, is going to do the same and absorb everything that has happened in between as well. So the preterists want to say that in Revelation, it is the Roman Empire of John's day, and all of this is wildly overblown, hyperbolic language describing those days. I think it's clear without going into a lot of apologetics that you can't make that work.

And one of the strongest and most persuasive observations to make in that regard is look at the nature of prophetic fulfillment in the Old Testament day. When God said, I will bring you to a land flowing with milk and honey, to Israel, that's what he did. When he said, I will raise up leadership, when he made predictions about the Lord Jesus Christ, they were literally fulfilled.

It wasn't something that was supposed to motivate people in the day alone with no literal content in days to come. God said, I will take you into captivity. Jeremiah learned that it was going to be 70 years and said so.

Daniel in captivity decades later, read Jeremiah and understood that it would be 70 years. And it was 70 years to the day. It's very interesting if you look at the offset because there is a 70 year period that begins in 605, and there's another 70 year period that begins in 586.

And both of those had 70 year to the day releases. It's a fascinating topic. We don't have time to look into it now.

The point being that if God's previous prophecies received literal fulfillment and weren't just parabolic stories, such as the Aesop fables designed to teach a truth of some sort, this reflects on prophecy as we understand it today. Those prophecies came literally to pass. These prophecies will come literally to pass in the same way that Old Testament prophecy that is now fulfilled has wonderful application for us, even though we're not directly involved or directly related or those to whom or for whom they were fulfilled.

We learn from those because we see the expression of God's character, the way his plan unfolds. We see his standards of righteousness and justice. We see what he identifies as sin and that which is to be avoided.

We see what happens when people persist and are unrepentant. And there is actual judgment that takes place. People aren't just victimized by their own sins and make themselves miserable.

They are actually taken captive. They are conquered. They are robbed and pillaged by their neighbors.

As was predicted in Deuteronomy, this actually happened to the Israelites. And those who try to

argue that, well, this is a spiritual age and it's all just spiritual do not understand the passages that teach that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The Lord Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And the way God has acted in the past is the way he is going to act in the future. Companion to that and associated with that are the promises to Israel over and over and over again. Israel is promised a kingdom in the land that was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

My soul was not promised to Abraham. Your soul and the souls of the rest of us were not promised to Isaac. Jacob's sons were not going to inherit some part of our church age experience.

These are actual, literal promises made by God about actual, literal land and an age in the future that is actually literally going to take place. The millennial kingdom is useful to study for interpretation and application, but it isn't a metaphor. It's a real kingdom.

When Gabriel told Mary, your son is going to sit on the throne of his father, David, she knew that she was descended from David and she knew that David had an actual throne upon which he sat. And there's no way you can construe anything in the church age. I'm quoting elements of replacement theology that Israel rejected the Messiah and therefore the church inherits their promises and they are fulfilled to us in spiritual terms.

This is blasphemy. I'm sorry, but it's not just wrong and it's not just error. It's blasphemy to claim that God didn't mean what he said, he didn't say what he meant, and he deceived all of the Israelites who died in faith, like Abraham, Hebrews 11, waiting for a city whose founder and builder is God.

Abraham wasn't waiting for you and me to have kingdom work and a kingdom experience and work for King Jesus and say, look, the Old Testament is fulfilled in my life. Abraham, when he is raised, is fully expecting a city whose founder and builder is God. And he's going to see it because it is going to be Jerusalem in Zion, in the Israel over which the Lord Jesus as the son of David, David himself and the other sons of David are going to rule and rule the earth and rule it with a rod of iron.

Don't let anyone spiritualize away God's promises of grace and provision. What if he's spiritualizing our salvation? Some future group comes up and says, well, those promises he made to the church, that that was for me, they're not really going to be saved. If you were an Israelite and God said, you be patient and you sojourn in tents and you wait for the resurrection when you are going to live in a kingdom that is truly peaceable, your children will be able to play without fear, regardless of what animals are in the vicinity.

Some distant future generation enjoying a wonderful spiritual life has got nothing to do with fulfilling that promise to you. So with that, we dispense once and for all with replacement theology. God will raise his people.

Ezekiel prophesied to the valley of dry bones, they rose and they stood on their feet when breath entered them. Daniel 12, one and following, there is a literal resurrection, some to a resurrection of life and light, others, shame and contempt. And we should think about that when we order our priorities.

So a little bit of a spiel there to get us in the mood for the beast. So we've seen this tied back to Daniel and those promises that were predictions, this is what is going to happen. These beasts are going to rise, they actually came.

They weren't just spiritual temptations. There really was a Babylon and a Medo-Persia and a Greece and a Rome. Same thing here.

So we saw in verse three here of chapter 13, I saw one of his heads after he's given the dragons power, throne and great authority. This is everything Satan can confer. He is going to channel all of his influence into this human being.

This beast, as far as we know, is a human being. And this is why it can receive a mortal wound. I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded and his deadly wound was healed.

So one of the heads, this beast appears to be then a confederation. We saw in the past that the kings, the seven heads and so on, Daniel doesn't mention seven heads when he talks about his beasts, but John does. John will say in chapter 17 that the seven heads are seven mountains.

Mountains are prominences and they are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. I'm reading ahead in Revelation chapter 17, verses nine and 10.

The seven heads, they are seven mountains, they are seven kings, five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. In other words, according to Revelation 17, the seven heads are not contemporaneous, they are successive, that one follows another. And the last one has not yet come in the day that John wrote.

This again anticipates the future revived Roman empire, but it also reflects why, if it's just gonna be one guy, one king, one dragon entity, why does it have seven heads and 10 horns? This is to reflect continuity with the satanic influence in empire's past. Satan was active in these idolatrous and godless in the sense of not relating to the God of Israel empires. So the seven heads in this case are heads of the Roman empire, five have fallen, one now is, and there's one yet to come.

And this head that is to come, it will be the head of the Roman empire that has come back. You could say, is this the deadly wound that was healed? I think not. I think the individual who is the head that has not yet come is this individual that receives the wound that we saw in Zechariah 11, 17 last time.

The shepherd for fools that receives this wound that messes up his eye and his arm. Saw that last time. So there are some who say that the 10 horns are successive kings in the Roman

empire.

And the problem there is that the Roman empire has not had 10 kings. It's either had more or less, depending on how you choose to count them. The 10 horns in Revelation 13 here are kings who have not yet received their power in John's day.

And this is verses 11 and 12. So what are we to make of all of this? We saw last time that the description reflects characteristics. What is the leopard? This reflects speed, strength to overcome those who try to flee.

You can't escape it. It's too fast. It's too aware.

The lion mangles things with its teeth. The bear crushes things with its paws, pins it down and tears it. So there is violence associated with this entity.

Daniel looked forward in the order. John looks back. This beast has the craftiness and cruelty of the leopard.

It has the strength and power to crush like the bear. It has the roar and tearing teeth and scary, fearful visage of the lion. However you want to look at those, it's inescapable in terms of their earthly power.

The dragon, which is Satan, chapter 12, verse nine, is the one who will give this beast his power, his throne and great authority. Chapter 12, verse three, we saw that Satan had the seven heads and 10 horns and seven diadems on his head. And this reflects areas of power, kinds of power that Satan exercises.

And he is going to invest his agent, his son, if you will, with all of these powers and authority. Remember the Lord Jesus, just before he left, said, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. The father granted it to him.

Satan is counterfeiting and endeavoring to duplicate, like the magicians in Egypt, duplicate what God has done. So the beast has his horns crowned, not his heads, which is something to reflect on. It appears that in the same way that the horns are growing out of the heads of animals that have them, the heads would represent entities.

They could be nations, they could be confederations. And then the horns would be the kings themselves. And so they are the ones that wear the crown.

You don't crown a nation, but you can anoint or crown a ruler within the nation. And interestingly, you can have kings that don't really have a country to rule over, vastly influential individuals who are not heads of state. That's how you can end up with seven heads and 10 horns.

So if you're a history watcher and we're in the present and things are moving very quickly at this moment, one of the things to watch for in terms of alignment that will lay a foundation for

things to unfold after we leave is to watch for those who are influential and can be viewed as having head of state authority, and yet they aren't heads of state. They aren't actually a president or a prince or some other entity. And you could imagine that there are different domains, especially in the Middle East.

My personal belief is I think this reflects the difference between a state in the Middle East, such as Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, et cetera, Saudi Arabia, and these have leaders, but then you have different domains reflecting Shia, Sunni, Muslims who are headed by Mullahs or Ayatollahs and they have to be taken into consideration if you're trying to broker a deal for peace, trying to stop a war, trying to prevent a war, trying to end a war, and these individuals might need to be taken out. It would be a very notable eyebrow-raising come to pass if someone that you think you have slain suddenly appears and you thought you got me, but you didn't, deadly wound being healed. Maybe I was wounded, but I wasn't killed.

If some of the individuals that we have recently dispatched to Allah were to emerge and resume power, that would be quite remarkable. And I think it would be this kind of thing that will take place in a literal fashion in the future when we're no longer around. So the dragon gives this entity his power, his throne, and great authority.

It's a dragon, it's one thing, but it's got seven heads, which are subdomains, if you will. I think these are nations, countries, and I think the horns are the leaders of those countries, those heads, but there's 10 horns and there's only seven nations. So there are going to be some additional influential individuals who have not received a kingdom per se.

And each of these seven heads has a blasphemous name. You go to chapter 13, verse one, blasphemous name. What does this mean, blasphemy? You have to think in terms of putting something in the place of God, taking something that rightfully belongs to God, making claims and taking credit for things that reflect God and are not.

There is a direct confrontation with God. Blasphemy isn't social, it isn't civil, it isn't technological. Blasphemy is aimed at the truth of God.

Obviating, dismissing, scorning, twisting and setting on fire straw men or whatever that are related to the truth of God. This is going to be a time when if you're going to turn to God, you've got to do it now because this is the last gasp, it's the last opportunity. The door of the ark is about to swing shut permanently so.

And those who are opposing the testimony of the two witnesses, those who are dismissing and endeavoring to disappear the witness of scripture will be blaspheming. And these blasphemous names are different ways of explaining away the heritage of Israel with the God of the Old Testament, the history of the church with the Lord Jesus as its head and savior to give this short shrift to deceive people away from it in a time when they most need to pay attention to it and place their faith in it is blasphemy. So blasphemous on his heads, a blasphemous name.

This is going to be the substitute. I think the Harbinger, the first adumbration of this pattern happened back in the 1860s with the publication of the Origin of Species by Charles Darwin, who was a believer by the way and gave a seemingly valid alternative explanation for that which creation witnesses. I don't need a God, I don't need a designer, evolution, mutation and natural selection can explain everything.

And this is put for and in the place of God himself. And it is a single thing. It's the single set of ideas to which atheists now universally subscribe and appeal.

It's their reference point. Why do you believe these old dusty Hebrew myths and legends when we have science? Science says evolution, evolution says we can explain everything that's here, which it cannot. It honestly cannot.

If you are truly scientific and you want an inference to the best explanation, the best explanation is creation with design, agency and the allowance for diversity and adaptability that results in what appears to be imperfection. The straw man argument, let me just give you a one minute summary. If anybody ever brings this up to you, the argument is creation is nonsense because a perfect creator would never create creatures that have mistakes in their DNA or mistakes, birth defects.

What kind of a perfect creator could create a world where we can see broken genes in the DNA? We can see imperfections and bad design. Why is the plumbing and the procreation equipment all in the same place? This is a bad design. Why is there a vagus nerve that takes a long way around to get to the center of your chest? And why is there an appendix? Why this, why that? A perfect designer would never do it this way.

This is the physical equivalent of those who say a perfect God would never allow suffering. God has reasons. And by the way, imperfection in nature, imperfection in the accomplishment of a task is not sin.

Imperfection, something being incomplete, something that is in process or in progress is not by definition sin. Sin is rebellion against the moral law of God. It is disobedience.

Sin and evil. Evil is moral rebellion. Sin is disobedience, falling short of the standard in the moral arena.

If we've got patches and dormant sections and leftovers in our DNA from generations gone by, that doesn't reflect an impossibility. A perfect creator would never let that happen. It is the physical equivalent of the moral argument that there is no God and I hate him.

So don't let that throw you there. The best explanation is that God created everything and saw that it was good and has made it self-sustaining, has made it adaptable, has allowed it through generations and successive changes to persist, to continue and to reflect our own lives. We are declared righteous and fit for eternal life and yet we're imperfect.

And it isn't always sin that makes us imperfect. Sometimes we're just incomplete. We're not as competent or as capable.

God overcomes all of that and he has a plan and a purpose in it. How much more will we appreciate perfection having lived through and in and been a part of imperfection? So this is a substitute and it has a blasphemous name. So then when you get down to verse four, they worship the dragon who gave authority to the beast and they worship the beast.

Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him? Some commentators say that he is a warlike entity, this dragon. This could be a confederation of nations with leadership reflected by the horns and enabled and empowered and given the propaganda tools by Satan himself, the inspiration to justify and vindicate their behavior and their takeovers and their exercise of authority comes from Satan. But it says, who is able to make war? There appears to be such a dominance that no one dares.

It's not hard to look for examples. If you have an extremely strong and willing national entity with a strong and willing leader, agree with them or not, people and nations tend not to want to be opposed unless they have a death wish or are religiously blinded. You don't poke the bear.

And this appears to be so formidable that people say, well, we're not going to go against this because it's too powerful. So mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. The entity has a blasphemous name.

The mouth is going to continue to perpetrate blasphemies. This is discounting, attacking, and actually probably making illegal what we would call biblical faith. Faith in the word of God and in the son of God.

It will be state-sponsored suppression of genuine faith and belief with no doubt penalties attached. So he opens his mouth in blasphemy against God. Notice this is the third time now.

There's a blasphemous name in chapter 13, verse one. He's given a mouth speaking great things. When this dragon from the sea is given a mouth, this is going to be an entire propaganda department that is going to do nothing but spin and create the news feed that is going to go out via media to the whole world.

It's going to be a mouthpiece function that's way more than a single individual. So that's the second blasphemy. And then in verse six, he opens his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme his name.

That's four times. His name, his tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It's not just civil government.

It's not just the Roman empire. People say, well, the Romans considered the Caesars to be divine, and this was blasphemy. This is proactive, manifestly energetic attack on God and the

things of God.

We see this now, expunging any mention of God from public education, attacking it in the public arena for discourse and so on, but it will be far worse. Then in verse seven, it is granted him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. This blasphemy, this war of words and this propaganda is going to motivate and sponsor people turning in those who they see reading a Bible or mentioning Christian faith or praying as Daniel was.

Again, the connections back to Daniel are almost inescapable. So we see harbingers. We see advanced reflections of this even now.

These are practice runs. This is Satan testing out various parts of his strategy that he is going to synthesize and bring to full force in these days after we are gone, but there will be other believers here, other saints, sanctified ones is what saint means. And he will make war with them and overcome them.

This is why it is so essential to be faithful unto death. There are some times when God says, you're not gonna win this battle. You can get a disease and it's terminal and pray as you might.

You're not going to be restored to health function. You're not gonna start regressing and getting younger and younger. We all get older and older.

And this is the advance of the curse that accompanies sin. And sometimes it is in the plan of God for us to be overcome. There are Christians who are being murdered as I speak in places like Nigeria and they're overcome.

Being a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is not a guarantee of physical security and safety. We will never be spiritually overcome. If we are faithful and obedient and avail ourselves of God's grace, we will never be overcome spiritually.

But in the world, you shall have tribulation. And sometimes that tribulation results in death. There are souls under the martyr that we saw crying out how long, oh Lord.

That will happen here as it happened to the two witnesses a couple of chapters ago. Authority was given to him over every tongue and nation, people, tribe, tongue, and nation. I think this is a fourfold.

If you don't have people there in verse seven, you can add it. Tribe, people, tongue, and nation. Four is the number of universality.

All who dwell on the earth will worship him whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. So what do we learn from this? The spirit of Antichrist is already here, John tells us in his epistles. The pattern, the testing, the initiation and trial of a lot of the parts of this program are underway.

Anyone who's gonna launch a product, spend some time in alpha testing and beta testing. You

test different components. You see rocket engines before they ever put them in a rocket being tested, or aircraft engines.

You see parts of military components. You see just the weapons or just the guidance. Satan is already testing out parts of this program and has been.

And when we come into contact with those, we should have the same ability to resist, even to the point of danger to the human mind. Resist the devil, he will flee from you. We are promised.

Stand firm, stand fast, full armor of God. These bits and pieces all exist. They are going to be synthesized and brought together when this beast rises out of the sea.

Well, we will see more and we are going to see another beast when we come back from the break.