
Interpreting Apocalyptic Symbolism in The Book of Revelation Within the Context of Contemporary Global Conflicts: A Hermeneutical and Theological Inquiry

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Abstract

This study explores the interpretation of Apocalyptic Symbolism in the Book of Revelation within the Context of Contemporary Global Conflicts; A Hermeneutical and Theological Inquiry examines how Revelation's symbolic language speaks to modern crises. The study employs historical-grammatical, symbolic, and preterist hermeneutical approaches to interpret key images such as the beast, the seal, the trumpet, the four horsemen, and Gog and Magog, by placing these symbols in dialogue with contemporary global conflicts. The study is guided by four research questions, aiming to address the complexity of the book of Revelation, written to 1st-century Christians under imperial pressure, and to examine the rich symbols it deploys that continue to shape how believers interpret crisis today. Both the dangers of sensationalist readings and the value of theological retrieval, offering eschatological hope amid chaos, have been assessed. It concludes that apocalyptic symbolism equips the church to interpret conflict theologically, fostering discernment, hope, and ethical engagement rather than fear or escapism.

Keywords: Revelation, apocalyptic symbolism, hermeneutics, global conflicts.

Introduction

The book of Revelation belongs to a class of literature referred to as apocalyptic. The Greek word for apocalypse is *Ἀποκάλυψις* (Apokalypsis), meaning: "Revelation", "unveiling", or "disclosure." While the root words and meaning are "apo" (away from) and *kalypto* (to cover, hide). Therefore, apocalypse points to the supernatural unveiling of that which is about to take place. It is generally true that an apocalypse is asserted to be a divine disclosure, usually through a celestial intermediary to some prominent figure in history, in which God promises to intervene in human history to bring times of trouble to an end and destroy all wickedness. The term "apocalypse" is derived from Revelation 1:1. In contemporary discussion, "apocalyptic" applies more broadly to a group of writings that flourished in the biblical world between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100.²¹⁵

D. S. Russell wrote that an apocalyptic is not a substitute for prophecy but a readaptation and development of the same message for a new historical situation. While the prophets were primarily preachers whose messages were written down at a later time, the apocalyptists were literary men who put their confidence in the written word as a method of propagating their point of view. The prophets are God's mouthpiece. The Greek word is *προφήτης* (prophētēs), meaning: "one who speaks forth" or "interpreter of divine will." Their message was properly prefaced with the open declaration, "Thus says the LORD." The apocalyptists, on the other hand, adopted a conventional literary style and adapted their message accordingly. Much of their basic material was drawn from a common tradition.

Apocalyptic is dualistic in nature; this dualism is not metaphysical but historical and temporal. For instance, there exist two opposing supernatural powers, God and Satan. There are also two distinct ages: the present age, which is temporal

²¹⁵ Robert H. Mounce, *the book of revelation: the new international commentary on the New Testament*, (Michigan/ Cambridge, U.K, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans publishing company, 1977), 34-37.

and evil, and the age to come, which is timeless and perfectly righteous. The first is under the control of Satan, and the second is under the immediate supervision of God. Closely related to the teaching of two ages is the idea of two worlds and two kingdoms of God, the present world and kingdom is this imperfect visible universe with partial rulership of God, while the future world and kingdom is the perfect world or kingdom that is to come.²¹⁶

Apocalyptic is also characterized by a rigid determinism in which everything moves toward a predetermined end as divinely preordained according to a definite schedule. St. Jerome, the Christian saint around A.D 400, when translating the Bible into Latin, exclaimed, “The apocalypse of St. John has many mysteries as words.”²¹⁷

The Use of the Old Testament in Revelation

The book of Revelation has extensively and multifacetedly made use of the Old Testament, especially through allusion, symbolic connection and thematic echoes. The key Old Testament books used by John in the book of Revelation are: Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah.

John alluded to the Old Testament in multidimensional ways, though without direct quotation. Examples:

Whom they have pierced: Rev 1:7 “Look, he is coming with the clouds” and “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him” So shall it be! Amen.” This scripture is alluding to Zech 12:10, which says, “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication.

²¹⁶ Alford Henry, “*Apocalypse of John*” in *The Greek Testament*, (Chicago: Moody, 1958), 544-750.

²¹⁷ Natasha O’Hear and Anthony O’Hear, “*Picturing the Apocalypse, the book of revelation in the arts over two millennia*” (United Kingdom, Great Clarendon Street, Oxford university, 2015), 56.

They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.”

The four horses: Revelation 6:2-8 informed us about the four horses with their riders (namely, the white horse, the red horse, the black horse and the pale-green Horse). Revelation 6:2-8 is alluding to Zechariah 6:1-2, which says, “the first chariot was pulled by red horses, the second by black horses, the third by white horses, and the fourth by powerful dappled-grey horses.

The two olive trees: Revelation 11:3-4 “And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will be clothed in burlap and will prophesy during those 1,260 days.’ These two prophets are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of all the earth.” The above scripture is alluding to Zechariah 4:11, which says, “then I asked the angel, ‘What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?’”²¹⁸

The Beasts out of the Sea: Revelation 13:1-2 informed us about the Beasts (namely, Beasts like Lion, Beasts like Leopard and Beasts like bear) which came out of the sea, alluding to Daniel 7:2-7, which talked about the same Beasts.

The Son of Man: Revelation 1:13, “And among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.” The above text is alluding to Daniel 7:15, which says, “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.”

²¹⁸ Michael S. Heiser, “*The Old Testament in Revelation*” (Good New Publisher; Naked Bible Press, 2021), 3-5.

Gog and Magog: Revelation 20:8, “And will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth “Gog and Magog, and to gather them for battle. In number, they are like the sand on the seashore.” The above scripture is alluding to Ezekiel 38:2, which says, “Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshek and Tubal; prophesy against him.”

The suffering Servant: Revelation 5:6-9 informed us about the Lamb of God that was slain, alluding to Isaiah 53:7, which says, He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.”

Thematic and the Symbolic Use of the Old Testament

The author of Revelation at times develops important Old Testament themes or topics. Some obvious instances would include the divine warrior theme, earthly cataclysmic language (e.g., earthquakes), and frightening celestial events (e.g., eclipses and hail) drawn from Old Testament “Day of the Lord” passages. Another example is: (Rev. 4-5) used thematic echoes such as “God’s Sovereignty”, which was derived from Psalms 93, 97, “Judgment” (Rev 6-20) derived from (Amos 3:7, Ezek 38-39), “New Creation” (Rev 21-22) derived from (Isa 65-66).²¹⁹

Some of the symbolic connections between the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation are as follows: Lamb (Rev. 5) - (Isa 53, Exod 12), Beasts (Rev. 13) - (Dan. 7), Trumpets (Rev. 8-11) - (Exod 19, Josh 6).

²¹⁹ Henry A. Virkler and Karelynn Gerber Ayayo, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed.” (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 181.

Interpreting Apocalyptic Symbolism in the Book of Daniel

The Book of Daniel is of great significance in this study because of its close connection with the book of Revelation. Two apocalyptic books in the Bible share a rich connection both in symbolism and interpretation. They both deal with God's plan for humanity, the end times, and the ultimate victory of God over evil. The Book of Daniel, written in the 6th century BC, contains prophecies and visions that are echoed and expanded upon in the Book of Revelation, written in the 1st century AD. The apostle John, the author of Revelation, drew heavily from Daniel's imagery, symbolism, and themes to convey his message to the early Christian church.

Below are some of the dreams and visions that shared the same symbols, Jesus' identity, end times and God's Kingdom with the book of Revelation:

The Statue with Metals and the Rock: (Daniel 2:31-35 NIV)

In studying apocalyptic texts from Daniel, the interpreter can see God's hand at work in the events of world history. Often, biblical symbols tell the reader far more about what God is going to do than about exactly how or when He will accomplish His ultimate purposes for the human race. In the above passage, it is clear that Nebuchadnezzar was an admirer of statues and had his gardens and palace adorned with them; however, he was a worshiper of images, and now behold a great image is set before him in a dream in which he desperately demands an interpretation.

According to Daniel's interpretation of the image symbol, the table below shows the fulfilment of Nebuchadnezzar's dream:

PART	MATERIAL	EMPIRE	PERIOD
Head	Gold	Babylonian	606 B.C - 539B.C
Chest and Arms	Silver	Medo-Persian	539 B.C - 331 B.C
Belly and Thighs	Bronze	Grecian	331 B.C - 146 B.C
Legs and Feet	Iron and Clay	Roman	146 B.C - A.D 476

Note: the rock that was cut out of the mountain but not by human hands, which struck the iron and clay feet and crushed into pieces the whole statue (gold, silver, bronze, iron and clay), leaving them away without a trace, but became a great mountain that covered the whole earth, signifies the Messianic age.²²⁰

The above table shows that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the symbolic image is concerned with Babylon and the future kingdoms that will successively bear rule among the nations and have influence on the affairs of the Jewish nation and the Church.

The Four Beasts and the Son of Man: The table below describes the interpretation of Daniel’s vision regarding the four Beasts as stated in Daniel 7:3-14

BEASTS	EMPIRE	PERIOD
Lion	Babylonian	606 B.C - 539B.C
Bear	Medo-Persian	539 B.C - 331 B.C
Leopard	Grecian	331 B.C - 146 B.C
Terrifying Beast	Roman	146 B.C - A.D 476

Note: the one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven, approached the Ancient of Days and was given

²²⁰ Matthew Henry, *“Commentary on the whole Bible”*, (Hendrickson, Inc, 1991), 1448.

authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom will never be destroyed, signifying the Messianic age.²²¹

As for the historical applications of the symbol of Daniel’s little horn, most interpreters, past and present, have maintained that this figure points to Antiochus Epiphanes, while some others have applied this symbol to Islam or the papacy. A good number of interpreters, such as Jerome, Augustine, and Luther, saw a dual application of this symbol in history. For such scholars, the persecution of the faithful Jews by Antiochus prefigured that which the end-time antichrist will inflict on God's church prior to Christ's second coming.

The Ram and the goat: The table below describes Daniel's interpretation of the vision of the Ram and the goat according to Daniel 8:20-22

ANIMALS	EMPIRE	PERIOD
Ram with two horns	Monarchy, Media and Persia.	539 B.C - 331 B.C
Goat, with large horns and four horns	Greece, Alexander the Great, and the four generals.	331 B.C - 146 B.C

The above vision is dated in the third year of the reign of Belshazzar, which proved to be his last year, as many reckon. The Ram that Daniel saw was the second monarchy, of which the kingdoms of Media and Persia were the two horns. The horns were very high, but that which came up last was higher and got the start of the former. So, the last shall be the first, and the first shall be the last. The kingdom of Persia, which rose under Cyrus, became more eminent than that of the Medes.

²²¹ Zdravko Stefanovic, “Daniel wisdom to the wise; commentary on the book of Daniel”, (USA, pacific press; publishing association, 2007), 245-293.

The Ram he saw pushing towards the west (Babylon, Syria, Greece and Asia), northward (Lydians, Armenians and Scythians), southward (Arabia, Ethiopia and Egypt) was the kingdom of Persia and Media.

Daniel saw the Ram overcome by a he-goat. The he-goat was Alexander the Great, the son of Philip, King of Macedonia. He came from the west, from Greece, which lay west of Persia. He fetched a great compass with his great army; he came upon the face of the whole earth; he did, in effect, conquer the world and then sat down and wept because there was not another world to be conquered. This he-goat or buck had a notable horn between his eyes like a unicorn. He had strength. Alexander pushed his conquests on so fast and with so much fury that none of the kingdoms he attacked dared to make a stand. The he-goat came to the ram that had two horns at verse 6 shows how Alexander, with his victorious army, attacked the kingdom of Persia with no more than 30,000-foot soldiers and 5000 horse. Alexander was about twenty years old when he began his wars. When he was about twenty-six years old, he conquered Darius and became the master of the whole Persian Empire, but when he was thirty-two or thirty-three years of age, when he was still in his full strength, he was broken. He was not killed in war, in the bed of honor, but died of a drunken surfeit, or as some suspect, by poison and left no child living behind him to enjoy that which he had endlessly laboured for, but left a lasting monument of the vanity of worldly pomp and power.²²²

His kingdom was divided into four parts. Alexander's four captains, to whom he bequeathed his conquests. The four notable horns were towards the four winds of heaven, the same as the four heads of the leopard and thus, the kingdom of Syria, Egypt, Asia and Greece. Syria lies in the east, Greece to the west, Asia Minor to the north and Egypt to the south. Cassander headed Macedonia, Lysimachus ruled over

²²² Seventh Day Adventist "Bible Commentary on Daniel and Revelation, volume iv, (Hagertown, MD, Herald 1955), 840-843.

Thrace/Asia Minor, Ptolemy I Soter was in charge of Egypt, and Seleucus I Nicator headed Syria, Mesopotamia (Seleucid Empire). The little horn, which became a great persecutor of the Jewish or church or people of God, was Antiochus Epimanes²²³

Seventy-seven, seven-sevens and sixty-two seven: (Daniel 9:24-26 NIV)

The opening verse of chapter 9 dates its contents to the first year of Darius the Mede, which would be 538 B.C. With the fall of Babylon, the world came under new rulership, that of the Medo-Persian Empire. Among the exiles from Judah, this event generated great expectations of being set free and being allowed to return to Palestine. The period of the seventy years of the exile, as foretold by the prophet Jeremiah, was coming to an end. Daniel was moved to gain understanding and to also pray for the forgiveness and liberation of the people of Israel from the seventy-year captivity as prophesied by Jeremiah. The prayer was answered at verses 24 -27 by a divine visitation through the angel Gabriel.

Therefore, to delve into the new revelation concerning “seventy sets of seven” that Gabriel brought to Daniel, and to clarify some of the elements from the previous visions that were particularly hard for the prophet to understand. Let's answer the following: The meaning of “seventy-seven,” “seven ‘sevens’” and “sixty-two ‘seven:’” When this concept is applied in the context of "the seventy weeks" expression, it multiplies the period of seventy years not days or weeks, which then becomes a much longer time. Examples: "Seventy 'sevens'" (Daniel 9:24) $70 \times 7 = 490$ years, "Seven 'sevens'" (Daniel 9:25) $7 \times 7 = 49$ years and "Sixty-two 'sevens'" (Daniel 9:26) $62 \times 7 = 434$ years.

²²³ Goldingay John, *“Word Biblical Commentary on Daniel, vol. 30”* (Dallas: Word Books Publisher, 1989), 66.

The purpose of “seventy-seven:” Just as the seventy years of Daniel 9:2 can be taken to be a period of ten sabbatical cycles, so this period of 490 years corresponds to ten jubilee cycles, "and so is an appropriate period to end in the ultimate deliverance from oppression. The 490 years aimed at finishing transgression (dealing with sin), ending sin by bringing forgiveness, causing atonement (Covering wickedness), bringing everlasting righteousness (bringing God's rule), sealing prophecy (fulfilling God's word) and anointing the Most Holy place (consecrating God's place).²²⁴

The fulfilment of “seventy-seven,” “seven sevens” and “sixty-two ‘seven:” one of the difficulties that arises about these seventy weeks is concerning the time when they are to commence, and whence they are to be reckoned. They are dated from the going forth of the commandments to restore and to build Jerusalem. Many scholars understood this to be the edict of Cyrus, as mentioned in Ezra 1:2-2, for by it the people were restored. The 69-week Timeline shows that the first 69 weeks (483 years) started with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, and that should be between 444-457 BC, which ended with the arrival of Jesus the Messiah. Concerning the 70th Week (The Gap Theory), many scholars, particularly in Dispensationalism, place a significant, ongoing gap (the church age) between the 69th and 70th weeks. The final "seven" (7 years) is often interpreted as a future tribulation period.²²⁵

Something to note again in terms of sevens and tens is their symbolic importance, especially in the apocalyptic literature like Daniel, using symbols and visions to speak about earthly realities of what is and what will be is very common. Remember,

²²⁴ Brian Dennert, “*The/A Key to the End Times*”, (2020). accessed on 09/April/2026 <https://wearefaith.org/blog/is-daniel-924-27-the-a-key-to-the-end-times/>

²²⁵ Carl Friedrich Keil, “*Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel. Translated by M. G. Easton*”. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1959), 341-343.

seven is the number of perfections, while ten is the number of completions; thus, 70 would be a complete and perfect time. In addition, seven had significances when it came to years in the Old Testament, as there was a sabbath year every seven years and a Jubilee after every seven sabbath years; that is, seven sets of seven years, which is after 49 years (Leviticus 25 and 26). In addition, we have to recognize some of the challenges involved in ancient calendars, for example, in our modern day, we think of 365 days in a year, but in the ancient world, there were 360 days; we thus might have difficulty pinpointing exact dates when dealing with the Biblical timeline or dating.²²⁶

The first group of seven (seven sevens, which is 49 years) is said to be, "From the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks." There is debate about whether the decree to rebuild the temple is (around 538 BC), Jerusalem (460 BC), or the city walls (445 BC). If the 490 years are to be taken as literal years, the events would thus be fulfilled either in 48 BC, 30 AD, or 45 AD. The first and the last of those years do not seem to have much significance, but the middle number does, as it is right around the time of Jesus's ministry (with his death either viewed as being 30 or 33 AD). Historical Fulfilment: 69 weeks (483 years) culminated in Jesus' crucifixion and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. A.D. 70, Roman emperor Titus marched into Jerusalem, destroying the city and the temple.²²⁷

Daniel's vision of seventy-sevens is classified into three groups as there is a group of seven sets of seven, a group of sixty-two sets of seven and a group of one set of seven, as it says: "From the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there

²²⁶ Keough, G. Arthur. *"Let Daniel Speak"* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald", 1986), 127-134.

²²⁷ Stephen R. Miller, Daniel. *"New American Commentary"*. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 240-245.

shall be seven weeks (49 years). Then for sixty-two weeks (483 years) it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. And after the sixty-two weeks (483 years), an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week (7 years), and for half of the week (3.5 years), he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”²²⁸

i. DANIEL PROPHETIC TIMELINE

605 BC - First captives (including Daniel) taken to Babylon

586 BC – Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple

539 BC - Medes and Persians Conquer Babylon

538 BC – Cyrus decrees that the exiles return

516 BC – Temple rebuilt under the ministry of Haggai

445 BC – Ministry of Nehemiah rebuilding the walls.

167 BC – Antiochus Epiphanes (Seleucids) desecrates the temple²²⁹

²²⁸ Charles Hewitt, *“The Seer of Babylon: Studies in the Book of Daniel”*. (Boston: Advent Christian, 1948), 130-140.

²²⁹ Samuel Rolles Driver, *“The Book of Daniel”* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1900), 130-140.

ii. DANIEL'S PROPHETIC SYMBOLS

S/N	CHAPTER 2	CHAPTER 7	CHAPTER 8	CHAPTER 11&12
1	Gold	Winged Lion	-----	-----
2	Silver	Bear	Ram	Persian Kings
3	Bronze	Leopard	GOAT	"A mighty king"
4	-----	Four heads	Four horns	Kings of the north and south
5	Iron	Terrifying Beast	-----	-----
6	Iron and Clay	Ten horns	-----	-----
7	-----	Little horn	Little horn	Contemptible ruler
8	Stone	Heavenly court	Sanctuary cleansed	The rise of Michael

The Biblical World Empires

It's crucial to know the history of biblical world empires as it's going to shape our understanding of today's Iran and Russia conflicts, especially in the context of biblical prophecy. The Bible mentions several empires, including Persia (modern-day Iran), that will play a significant role in end-time events. This narrative positions Iran and its proxies as the latest threat to Israel's existence, drawing parallels with ancient Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman empires.

Egyptian Empire (3000-858 BC): The first major kingdom that is mentioned in the biblical history is Egypt. There were times in ancient history when Egypt was friendly to God's chosen people, the Israelites. According to Genesis 46, the Jewish people had migrated to Egypt to survive a famine, but when they stayed and grew in number, the Egyptian king feared their potential and made them slaves. To further neutralize the

threat, the king instituted gender-based infanticide, where it became official policy to dump baby boys in the Nile River.²³⁰

The Egyptian inhabitants, who were the first world power, descended from Ham (Genesis 10:6), and their language was Hamito-Semitic. Its earliest writings were hieroglyphic (picture language of common objects). Its history was written by Manetho about 290 BC, dividing it into 30 royal dynasties; the first began about 300 BC. The “Old Kingdom” Dynasties III and IV had their capital at Memphis, and Zoser built the famous step pyramid at Suqqaro, the earliest stone structure in history. Other pyramids were built later and still stand in Egypt. The strongest era, the “Middle Kingdom,” lasted until the 12th Dynasty in 1750 BC, then followed the second Intermediate Kingdoms of 1750 – 1570. “The New Empire” lasted from 1570 to 1150 BC, during which the Exodus took place. Amenhotep IV was Pharaoh of the Exodus, reigning from 1456-1446 BC. The 12th Dynasty pharaohs were:

1. Sesostri III (ending 1534 BC, 90 years before the Exodus). Moses and Job were contemporaries in this period.
2. Amenhotep III – reigned 38 years (Exodus 7-8)
3. Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) – reigned 10 years, 1456 to 1446 BC according to Cambridge Ancient History and Petrie’s History of Egypt.²³¹

Assyrian Empire (858–612 BC): A brutal military superpower used as "the rod of God's anger" to punish the Northern Kingdom of Israel, resulting in its fall in 722 BC. The Assyrian Empire was established by Shalmaneser III in 848 BC. It

²³⁰ Alonzo Trevier Jones, *“The empires of the Bible; from the confusion of tongues to the Babylonian captivity”*, (Washington, D.C.; Herald ASSN. 1904), 94.

²³¹ Jean Gibson, “World Empires and End Time Events Coordinated with Scripture” (Plymouth Brethren Writings, 2004-2026) <https://plymouthbrethren.org/article/2836> Accessed on 12/April/2026

continued to Tiglath-Pileser III, mentioned in I Chronicles 5:6; II Chronicles 28:20-26; II Kings 17:3; 18:9. which again continued through Sargon II (721-705) mentioned in Isaiah 20:1, then Sennacherib (704-681) mentioned in II Kings 18:13; 19:16; 20:36; II Chronicles 32:1-2, 9-10, Isaiah 36:1; 37:17, 21, 37; then Esarhaddon (680-669) mentioned in II Kings 19:37, Ezra 4:2, Isaiah 37:38; then Assurbanipal (668-627) also spelled Asnapper, during whose reign Hezekiah was defeated (Isaiah 33) then to Assurbanipal II's kingdom ended 612 BC.²³²

Babylonian Empire (605–539 BC): This third-world superpower was led by Nebuchadnezzar II. They destroyed Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple in 586 BC, initiating the Babylonian Exile (2 Kings 25:8-12). It began after Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, defeated Pharaoh Necho of Egypt at Carchemish in 605 BC before destroying Jerusalem. He was succeeded by his son, Amel-Mardeck (562-560) then Neriglissar (560-556), then Nabonidus, who appointed his son Belshazzar (Daniel chapters 7,8) as commercial-ruler.

Babylon fell in one night in 539 BC to Media-Persia to the attack of Gobryas, one of Cyrus the Great's generals. The divided kingdom of Israel, North and South, both collectively rejected the God of their forefathers and followed other gods. As a result, both were conquered by other kingdoms. First, the kingdom of Assyria took over the North. Then, the kingdom of Babylon took over the South, destroying its temple and burning Jerusalem to the ground. Babylon was overtaken by the kingdom of the Medes and Persians.²³³

²³² Daniel McCoy, "How to Tell the Story of the Bible in 7 Kingdoms", (2026) <https://renew.org/how-to-tell-the-story-of-the-bible-in-7-kingdoms/> Accessed on 08/April/2026

²³³ Rich Choi, "The Bible and the Five Great Empires" (Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, 2024), <https://medium.com/@tothe21century/the-bible-and-the-five-great-empires-assyria-babylon-persia-greece-rome-eighth-9a9fa7e9ba92> Accessed on 12/April/2026

Medo-Persian Empire (539–331 BC): This fourth world superpower was initiated by Cyrus the Great. This empire conquered and defeated Croesus of Lydia, then overcame Babylon. Cyrus was the one who issued the decree to restore the Jews to their homeland (II Chronicles 30:22-23, Ezra 1:2-3). The ruins of Cyrus' palace are present today. Plutarch recounted the inscription on his tomb. Cyrus' son, Cambyses II (530-522), conquered Egypt, while Darius I (the Great) preserved the empire by suppressing a rebellion. Darius, the son of Ahasuerus (Daniel 9:1), was called "Darius the Mede" in Daniel 11:1. Ahasuerus was a descendant of Darius through Xerxes and Esther, his queen, was among several in his harem. Artaxerxes I Longimanus succeeded him in 485 BC. During the reign of Artaxerxes I, Nehemiah was his cupbearer and visited Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1). Successive kings were Darius II (423-404), Artaxerxes II (404-359), Artaxerxes III (359-338), Arses (338-335), and Darius III (335-331). Then began the Greco-Persian wars, where Darius III was defeated by Alexander the Great. As a whole, this kingdom was friendlier to the Jewish people than the Babylonians had been, for example, allowing them to return home and rebuild the homeland which Babylon had destroyed.²³⁴

Grecian Empire (331–31 BC): The 5th world empire, the Grecian Empire was established by Alexander the Great and lasted through the successors of his four generals. This empire has brought Greek culture and language (Hellenization) across the region. It was one Seleucid king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (the "God Manifest"), who persecuted the Jews and forced Hellenization (Greek culture) on them so heavily that the Jews rebelled in what is known as the Maccabean Revolt. This war for independence was successful and is celebrated by Jews today in the holiday called Hanukkah. The empire ended with

²³⁴ Baird Allen, "The 6 Empires That Shaped the Bible Story," (2025)
<https://www.thecollector.com/empires-shaped-bible-story/> Accessed
on 13/April/2026

being overpowered by the Romans at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC.²³⁵

Roman Empire (31 BC–New Testament): They are the ruling power during the New Testament period, providing the context for Jesus' life, ministry, and the spread of early Christianity. The reign of Octavian, who was the first emperor of Rome, lasted from 29 B.C. to 14 A.D. This includes the period before Jesus came to earth, his birth, and his childhood. Rome's second emperor, Tiberius, reigned from A.D. 14, that is, from Jesus' youth to A.D. 37, which corresponds to the crucifixion and the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip was tetrarch of Iturae and Trachonitis, and Lysania was tetrarch of Abilene (Luke 3:1). The kingdom of Rome commonly made use of a form of execution which combined torture, humiliation and crucifixion.²³⁶

There is a saying called 'Pax Romana.' Even today, when talking about 'peace theory,' it means peace by Rome and is always mentioned in the introduction. It refers to the peace that lasted for about 200 years from the time of Emperor Octavian, who established the Imperial Empire at the end of the 1st century, to the era of the Five Emperors. Afterwards, the term 'Pax Britannia' or 'Pax Americana' arose.²³⁷

Where Are We Today?

It is nearly impossible to pick up any nationally syndicated newspaper today or watch any national morning news

²³⁵ Jeremy McInerney, *"Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Age"*, (University of Pennsylvania; University of Texas press, 1999), 1.

²³⁶ Raoul McLaughlin, *"The Roman Empire and the Indian Ocean"*, (South Yorkshire; Pen and Sword, 2014), 1-3.

²³⁷ Donald L. Wasson, "Pax Romana; World History Encyclopedia", (2015), https://www.worldhistory.org/Pax_Romana/ Accessed on 09/April/2026

broadcast without hearing about the escalating unrest and impending conflict in the Middle East (Israel-Iran war), the Russian-Ukraine war, terrorism, tribal clashes and religious conflict. Many of these news stories deal with the conflict between good and evil or light and darkness. In this paper seminar, we shall be focusing more on the Israel-Iran war and the Russian-Ukraine war since they are often linked to biblical prophecy, particularly in the book of Revelation, Ezekiel and Daniel. Some believe the Ukraine war is part of the broader context, with Russia's actions potentially setting the stage for Ezekiel 38's prophecy.

Middle East Conflict: Middle East conflict, most especially Israel-Iran conflict, Israel-Lebanon conflict, Israel-Gaza conflict, Syrian civil war and Yemen conflict, is indeed making headlines today. Some of the causes of conflicts in the Middle East can be linked to:

1. Historical grievances or unresolved issues that resulted from past wars, colonialism, and displacement (Palestinian issue).
2. Geopolitical tension or Border conflicts: this deals with borders, resources (water, oil), and sacred sites conflicts.
3. Religious differences: this involved faith-based divisions or interfaith conflicts - Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and sectarian divisions.
4. Political power struggles: Governments, factions, and external influences.
5. Economic factors: Resource control, poverty, and inequality. External interference.
6. Nuclear ambitions: Concerns over Iran's nuclear development have led to tensions with Israel, the US, and Arab states. The acquisition of nuclear weapons

by developing countries such as India (1974), Pakistan (1998), and North Korea (2006) raised new challenges. While developing countries can acquire nuclear weapons, they lack the elaborate system of command and control that limited the risk of nuclear accident and conflict escalation in countries like the United States and the Soviet Union

In ancient times, the Middle East was a battleground between major powers such as Egypt, Babylon, and the Hittites. In the Middle Ages, the Middle East was the site of intense fighting between Christian and Muslim forces for control over the area popularly known as the Holy Land. As the area where the Abrahamic religions were born, and where trade routes from Africa, the Mediterranean, and Asia meet, this piece of land has been strategically vital for centuries. However, the current Middle East crisis has its roots in the decisions made as World War I reached its end. From the Middle Ages down to the end of the First World War, the Middle East had been under the control of the Ottoman Empire, which administered territories as diverse as Egypt, Lebanon, Mesopotamia, Syria, and the Holy Land. But the collapse of Ottoman power led to the collapse of Ottoman control over these territories, beginning with Egypt in the 1800s and including all of Turkey's Middle Eastern territories by the end of World War I.

The history of the Middle East is one of conflict, but the cause and nature of the conflict have changed mightily over time; the bottom line remains surprisingly similar: the struggle to control the resources and land by privileging one group over another. The current Middle East crisis is often presented as the story of Jews vs. Muslims, but there is a deeper underlying history of power dynamics that created this complex and seemingly insoluble situation. The situation remains tense, and it seems

that no solution will come about until all sides agree to give up some of what they want to achieve peace.²³⁸

Israel-Iran Conflict Today

This research paper is mainly concerned with the Israel-Iran war due to its connection with biblical prophecy (Ezekiel 38:5).

To understand how the Israel-Iran conflict in 2025 erupted into open war, we need to rewind the clock not just by months or years, but decades. Because what's happening now didn't come out of nowhere. The roots of this hostility run deep, tangled in revolution, ideology, nuclear fears, and clashing visions for the Middle East. It arguably began in 1979, with Iran's Islamic Revolution. The overthrow of the Shah and the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini marked a sharp pivot away from the West and from Israel. Before the revolution, Iran and Israel had enjoyed quiet but steady diplomatic and military ties. But the moment the Islamic Republic was born, those ties were not just severed, they were condemned. Israel became "the Zionist enemy," and Tehran began framing its foreign policy around opposition to Western influence and the Israeli state. Over the decades, this ideological rivalry hardened. Iran positioned itself as the leader of the so-called "Resistance Axis," arming and supporting proxy militias like Hezbollah in Lebanon, Islamic Jihad in Gaza, and, more recently, militant groups in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. They became extensions of Iran's strategy to pressure and encircle Israel without confrontation.²³⁹ That pressure has only intensified over time, contributing to

²³⁸ Cyber Gear, "Main Causes of the Middle East Crisis; middle east events", (2026),
<https://www.middleeastevents.com/news/page/main-causes-of-the-middle-east-crisis/27168> Accessed on 09/April/2026

²³⁹ Harper Ellis, "Israel-Iran conflict 2025 Explained: Timeline, Causes and What's next; Defense feed,"
(2025), <https://defensefeeds.com/analysis/conflicts/israel-iran-conflict/>

rising Middle East tensions. Israel, on the other hand, drew closer to Washington militarily, technologically, and strategically. With U.S. backing, it emerged as the most powerful military actor in the region. That alignment further deepened the divide, especially as Iran's nuclear program advanced. For Israel, an Iranian nuclear weapon was a red line. The Iranian nuclear threat, as perceived by Israeli leaders, became one of the driving fears shaping Israeli defense policy in the 2000s and 2010s. And while Tehran has repeatedly insisted its nuclear program is peaceful, many in the West, particularly in Tel Aviv and Washington, have viewed those claims with suspicion.

It's also worth noting that both sides have engaged in years of shadow warfare. Cyberattacks, assassinations of nuclear scientists, sabotage operations, and targeted strikes have all played out in the shadows. While these actions rarely made front-page headlines, they quietly moved both nations closer to direct conflict. So when Israeli fighter jets struck Iran's nuclear facilities in June 2025, it wasn't a bolt from the blue it was the culmination of decades of distrust, ideological opposition, and escalating brinkmanship. One might argue that this war was not so much started in 2025, but rather inherited from the unresolved tensions of the late 20th century.

On February 28, 2026, the Israel-Iran conflict was initiated by the United States and Israel, which has turned everything upside down in the Middle East. The opening salvo took out the heart of the Iranian regime, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and triggered a torrent of hundreds of retaliatory missiles and thousands of drones from Iran across the region. The conflict left enormous damage, thousands of people dead in Iran and Lebanon, dozens of dead in Israel and the Gulf Arab states and millions of people displaced in the region, including more than one-sixth of the population in Lebanon. Today, the news headlines show that after more than five weeks of fighting, on

7-8 April 2026, the United States and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire that included Israel.²⁴⁰

Russian-Ukraine Conflict: Israel the Prophetic Target

The Russian-Ukraine conflict, which began in February 2014 and is still ongoing, could be part of a broader end-time scenario involving Israel. The conflict, since its inception, has led to an increase in Jewish immigration from Ukraine and Russia to Israel, with over 13,000 olim from Ukraine and nearly 19,000 olim from Russia arriving in Israel since February 2022.²⁴¹ Following Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity, Russia occupied Crimea and annexed it from Ukraine. It then supported Russian separatist armed groups who started a war in the eastern Donbas region against Ukraine's military. In 2018, Ukraine declared the region to be occupied by Russia. The first eight years of conflict also involved naval incidents and cyberwarfare. In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine and began occupying more of the country, starting the current phase of the war, the biggest conflict in Europe since World War II. The war has resulted in a refugee crisis and hundreds of thousands of deaths.²⁴²

The Ukraine's President: His Jewish Background

The President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, is Jewish. He was born to Jewish parents in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine, and has

²⁴⁰ "Britannica Editors, 2026 Iran War; Middle Eastern History", (2026), <https://www.britannica.com/event/2026-Iran-war> Accessed on 11/April/2026

²⁴¹ Eran Lerman, "The war in Ukraine and its impact on Israel: The Jerusalem institute for strategy and security", (2022), <https://jiss.org.il/en/lerman-the-war-in-ukraine-and-its-impact-on-israel-an-interim-assessment/> Accessed on 11/April/2026

²⁴² "Ukraine declares Russian 'occupation' in eastern region" (Aljazeera, 2018), <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/1/18/ukraine-declares-russian-occupation-in-eastern-region> Accessed on 10/April/2026

spoken publicly about his Jewish heritage, including the fact that his great-grandfather and three of his grandfather's brothers were killed in the Holocaust. When Vladimir Putin met with Russian war correspondents on 13 June 2023, he said the following, in addition to the traditional distortions, outright lies, and insults, *"I'm actually surprised that a person with Jewish blood in his veins, who is the head of the state of Ukraine, can support neo-Nazis. I just don't understand it."* President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky said what he thought about these words, and thus, *"The impression is that he, Putin, does not fully understand his words. I'm sorry, but he seems to be the second king of antisemitism after Hitler. And it's the president who says these things. The civilised world cannot speak like this."*

According to Alexander Friedman, "Russia is working hard to create a negative image of Ukraine in the world. Zelensky and his ethnic background are both an offensive and defensive tactic for Russia. Russia is working not only with the image of Zelensky. They are actively using the image of Bandera, Ukrainian nationalists, the role of antisemitism in Ukrainian nationalist organizations in the 1930s, Ukrainians' participation in the Holocaust, and so on. All these topics are emphasized specifically to form the opinion that things are not so simple in Ukraine, to say the least. The message is that while Russia may be acting inappropriately, Ukraine is "not all so white and fluffy." Russian propaganda is making inroads in Israel, the European media, the Western media, etc. This is a severe problem for Ukraine. For example, the perception of Stepan Bandera in Ukraine today is very different from that in Israel. He is a hero in Ukraine, whereas in Israel, that time is generally perceived as a period when Ukrainians participated in the Holocaust. In fact, Russia has tried to use Zelensky's Jewish heritage to its advantage, portraying him as a "Nazi Jew" to justify its invasion. This narrative has been widely criticized,

and many see it as an attempt to exploit antisemitic sentiments.²⁴³

Interpreting The Apocalyptic Symbolism of John

In this seminar paper, we shall be concerned with exploring the symbolism in the Book of Revelation that has connections to current global conflicts, examining how ancient apocalyptic themes resonate with contemporary issues.

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (Rev 6:1-8)

The white Horse and its rider: *I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest (verse 2)*

Three main views exist about the interpretation of the white horse and its rider, and thus:

1. According to many modern commentators, this scene is literal and refers to a military power conquest in the first century. That white horse and its rider described the Parthians, a warlike people who lived in the eastern frontiers of the Roman empire and who were the enemies of a constant threat to the Romans. They were skilled in the use of the bow and arrow. The literal interpretation of the preterist view is problematic; the white horse does not fit into the Parthian view. The seals should be understood symbolically rather than literally.

2. According to the second view, the rider represents “the Antichrist and the forces of evil” as the opponent of the gospel.

²⁴³ “Putin’s path from philosemite to antisemite: what’s behind his statements about Zelensky’s Jewish background? Ukrainian Jewish Encounter”, (2023), <https://ukrainianjewishencounter.org/en/putins-path-from-philosemite-to-antisemite-whats-behind-his-statements-about-zelenskys-jewish-background/> Accessed on 09/April/2026

The proponent of this view argues that since the other three horses bring plague, so does this one.

3. According to the third view, the rider on the white horse symbolizes the triumphant spreading of the gospel initiated by Christ on the Cross and begun at Pentecost. In Revelation, white always and without any exception refers to Christ or His followers and is never used with reference to the force of evil. Example: as George E. Ladd observed, the exalted Christ is portrayed in the book as having “white hair, white as wool” (chapter 1:14), wearing white garments (chapter 3:4,5,18), the Martyrs are given white robes (chapter 6:11), etc.²⁴⁴

Apart from the above views, the context of the passage itself, where we derived the phrase “white horse”, will determine the right interpretation of the symbolic image. The context of the phrase then is the “seven seals,” and the “scroll” which contains the seven seals referred to the “Book of Truth” according to Daniel 10:21. This book of truth contains the complete secret of creation, both visible and invisible. Remember that number seven often symbolizes completeness, perfection, or fulfilment. The whole world itself has been programmed within the number seven. Everything ends at seven. e.g., God completes creation in seven days (Gen 2:2-3), the book of Revelation itself has so much emphasis on the number seven and thus, the seven churches, seven spirits, seven golden lampstands, seven stars, seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls.

The seven seals, therefore, symbolize God's plan for judgment and redemption. Each seal reveals a part of God's plan, building towards the end. The first seal broken by Christ, introducing the “white horse”, refers to the period of conquest which began

²⁴⁴ Ranko Stefanovic, “*Revelation of Christ; A comprehensive commentary on the Book of Revelation*,” (Berrien Springs, Michigan; Andrews University, 2002), 226.

from 3000 BC. The table below explains the biblical empires that ever ruled the entire world during the conquest period.

S/N	EMPIRE	MODERN DAY	PERIOD
1	Egypt	Egypt	3000 B.C - 858 B.C
2	Assyria	Mosul, Iraq	858 B.C - 612 B.C
3	Babylon	Hillah, Iraq	605 B.C - 539 B.C
4	Persia	Iran	539 B.C - 331 B.C
5	Greece	Greece	331 B.C - 31 B.C
6	Rome	Rome	31 B.C - A.D 476

Note: the above six empires are historical (preterit), but the seventh empire is that of the Antichrist, which Daniel 9:24-27 revealed as part of the prophecy of 70 weeks. The final week (7 years) is associated with the Antichrist, involving a covenant, tribulation, and God's judgment. These historical empires that reigned during the conquest era, as unveiled by the first seal was the foreshadow of the future Antichrist's reign.

The Red Horse and its rider: *“Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make people kill each other. To him was given a large sword.” (verse 4)*

The breaking of the first seal, which unveiled the white horse, signifying a war that’s aimed at conquering the whole world. While the breaking of the second seal represents war and bloodshed, echoing conflicts like the Russia-Ukraine war, the Israel-Iran war, global terrorism, and banditry. Some understood the “red horse” as the persecution that befell the Church of Christ, and others of the destruction of the Jews; they rather seem more generally to represent God’s terrible

judgments by which he avenges the quarrel of his covenant upon those who make light of it.

This second seal signifies a lack of peace on earth, which was taken away by the rider of the red horse as a result of sin. The lack of peace will lead to the killing of each other. Jesus Christ has affirmed it in Matthew 24:12, “sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold.” Remember, where there is no love, there won’t be peace and where there’s no peace, killing each other is inevitable.

As we said earlier, the seven seals are progressive events that are going to take place. Even after the conquest period, which was at the end of the Roman empire, there was still war and bloodshed everywhere till today because each seal is building upon another. This second seal represent the current conflicts such as; middle east regional war (involving Israel, US, Iran and Syria civil war with 200,000 - 285,000 casualties), Russian-Ukraine war which led to (500,000 casualties), Sudan civil war (150,000 casualties), Myanmar civil war, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Conflict, Haiti gang violence, Yemen war/Houthi conflict, Mexico Cartel violence and Boko Haram Insurgence and Banditry in the northern Nigeria with (200,918 casualties between 2009 - 2026).²⁴⁵

The black horse and its rider: *“When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come!’ I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, ‘Two pounds of wheat for a day’s wages, and six pounds of*

²⁴⁵ “Countries Currently at war 2026; World Population Review,” (2026).
<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-currently-at-war> Accessed on 09/April/2026

barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!" (verse 5-6)

The black horse symbolizes famine due to scarcity of food, inflation and economic instability in some parts of the world. The war unveiled from the second seal led to famine in the third seal. Today, there is famine in many places around the world as a result of the third seal.

The Pale Horse and its rider: "I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth" (verse 8)

This symbol represents death and destruction, reflecting the devastating impact of conflicts, pandemics, and natural disasters. Natural disasters such as floods, landslides, volcanic eruptions, snowstorms, droughts, tropical cyclones, heat waves and wildfires. Pandemics such as measles outbreaks, dengue outbreaks, cholera outbreaks, mpox outbreaks, coronavirus and Lassa fever.

The seven Angels and the trumpets (Revelation 8-9)

Remember, almost all the calamities and divine judgments depicted in the Seven Seals are a consequence of humanity's moral decadence and rebellion against divine sovereignty, precipitating catastrophic consequences, including conflict, famine, and pandemics. The seven trumpets symbolize the judgement of God that will be unleashed on humanity and the rapture that will take place at the sound of the last trumpet by the last Angel (Michael), as mentioned by Apostle Paul in 1Corinthians 15:52.

- i. First Trumpet: Hail, fire mixed with blood, destroys a third of the earth's vegetation, impacting ecosystems and food supplies (Revelation 8:7).

- ii. Second Trumpet: A great mountain of fire thrown into the sea turns a third of it to blood, killing marine life and destroying ships, disrupting global trade (Revelation 8:8-9).
- iii. Third Trumpet: A great star (a great Angel) called Wormwood poisons or Bitterness fell from the sky on a third of the freshwater sources, affecting human consumption and agriculture (Revelation 8:10-11).
- iv. Fourth Trumpet: A third of the sun, moon, and stars are darkened, symbolizing divine judgment on humanity's spiritual blindness (Revelation 8:12).
- v. Fifth Trumpet: Locust-like creatures torment those without God's seal, representing demonic forces unleashed on a rebellious world to bring diseases (Revelation 9:1-12).
- vi. Sixth Trumpet: An Angel was asked to release the four angels that are bound at the great Euphrates River in the middle east. The mission of the four angels is to cause war or conflict in the middle east region that will lead to the death of 200 million army and as well the killing of a third of humanity. This great conflict has been prophesied by prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 38).

Ezekiel has made some very clear and specific revelation in the Bible concerning the rise of a great power from the north of Israel that will destroy the peace and stability of the world at the end of the days. This great power or personality is going to be Russia according to Ezekiel prophecy. Gog is a word for “ruler” which literally means “the man on the top” the verse tells us that Gog was chief prince of the land of Magog. Chief which means “head” is the Hebrew word “Rosh” in his ancient Hebrew lexicon, Gesenius (1786 - 1842), the great Hebrew scholar identified the word Rosh as an ancient name for Russia²⁴⁶.

²⁴⁶ Jack Armstrong, “Shelby county sees first human case of west Nile virus in 2026; commercial appeal”, (2026), <https://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/local/2026/04/08/sh>

According to Ezekiel's prophecy in chapter 38:5, in a far distance time, Gog and Magog which represent Russia and its allies, including Persia (Iran), Turkey, and African nations like Ethiopia, Sudan and Libya will rise up against Israel. In Revelation 9:17 still under the sixth trumpet sound, revealed that horses and their riders wore armor that were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The colors listed signifies Russian flag which is the combination of this three colors including its logo as revealed by John. John revealed that out of the mouths of the horses came fire, smoke and sulfur. The horses whose mouth releases fire, smoke and sulfur, in our modern day symbolize armor tanks, propelled artillery, Rocket Launchers, vehicles launching explosive rockets (e.g., BM-21 Grad, HIMARS), Mortar Carriers, Combat Drones and attack helicopters.²⁴⁷

- vii. Seventh Trumpet (Revelation 11:15): Revelation 10:7 says, *"But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."*

The mystery of God here referred to the rapture or caught up plan of God as clarified by Apostle Paul in 1Corinthians 15: 52 which says, *"it will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to life forever. And we who are living will also be transformed."* According to Daniel chapter 12:1-3, it's the archangel Michael who will sound the Last trumpet.

The Beast (Rev 13:1-10): Symbolizes oppressive powers or governments that challenge God's authority, potentially linked

elby-county-tennessee-west-nile-virus/89517448007/Accessed on 08/April/2026

²⁴⁷ John Hagee, *"Jerusalem countdown; A warning to the world"*, (Lake Mary, Florida; frontline publisher, 2006), 101-105.

to authoritarian regimes or systems that suppress freedom and justice. According to the revelation of John, there are two beasts; one from the sea and the other from the land (still known as the scarlet Beast in Chapter 17:11)

The Dragon (Rev 12:3) represents Satan or evil, symbolizing the spiritual battle between good and evil. The two beasts will reign during the final week (7 years) as revealed by Daniel. They are associated with the Antichrist, involving a covenant, tribulation, and God's judgment. The tables below describe and interpret the seventh Beast and the eighth Beast.

The Seventh Beast

DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION	PERIOD
From the sea	Symbolizes the false Christ. His reign will be brief as Christ (Rev. 17:9)	42 months within the 7 years
Has seven heads	Symbolizes seven kings or seven hills (empires). The Beast can exercise the authority of all the six kings who held the six empires (Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Romans)	
Has ten horns	They are ten kings who has not yet risen to power, though they will be appointed to their kingdoms for a brief moment to reign with the Beast. (Rev. 17:12)	
It looks like Leopard, feet of Bear and the mouth as Lion.	His kingdom shall be like that of Greece (Leopard), feet of Persian (Bear) and mouth like Babylonian (Lion). That means this seventh Beast will exercise all the power	

	and authority of the Babylonian, Persian and Grecian (Daniel 7)	
Dragon a who gave the Beast power	The Dragon which is satan serves as the counterfeit of God the Father.	

THE EIGHT BEASTS

From the earth	Symbolizes a human king with supernatural power. Holy Spirit counterfeit	42 months within the seven years
Two horns like those of the lamb	Symbolizes a peaceful leader like the Lamb of God which is Jesus. This signifies the most highest deception of all times.	
He exercises all the authority of the first Beast	Jesus gave believers authority to perform miracles. The false Christ (the Beast from the sea) will imitate Jesus and give his authority to the human king (the Beast from the earth) to perform miracle as well.	
The mark of the Beast 666	Number 6 is the number of man or humans. Its symbolizes human imperfection or a specific identifier via technology.	

Conclusion

The Book of Revelation contains apocalyptic symbols, though rooted in a 1st-century context, offers insights into contemporary global conflicts. A hermeneutical and theological inquiry reveals that symbols like the beasts, the seals, the trumpets and Gog and Magog convey timeless truths about God's sovereignty, human rebellion, and ultimate redemption.

Applying these symbols to modern conflicts requires careful exegesis and contextual awareness. This study explores apocalyptic symbolism in the book of Revelation in connection to the current global conflict through a hermeneutical and theological approach. The researcher, therefore, recommends further research on the apocalyptic symbolism in the book of Revelation for a deeper understanding.

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