

“It’s About Time:”
Chronological Indications in Revelation 13

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To Gregory King and William Shea,
two men I profoundly admire.

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St. John the Revelator,
pray for us

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Preface

My embrace of the Catholic faith was a very public matter throughout my three years at Southern Adventist University. In the eyes of my 2,000 peers, I was enigma—among certain individuals, one especially resented. Adventist eschatology is confident in its identification of the papacy as the Antichristian power foretold in Revelation 13:1-10. Most of my peers began their inquiries into my spirituality with a reference to this conviction. “What do you believe about Revelation 13?” Answering that question on the spot was never quite possible: the chapter is complex in its structure, and requires a detailed analysis. This book, on the other hand, provides me the time I needed to issue a thoughtful response to the inquiries and concerns of my friends.

The process of interpreting prophecy requires us to do two things. First, we must grasp the prophecy itself (what details the inspired writer expects will be fulfilled); then, we must isolate the (historical) fulfillment of those prophetic details. The primary contention of this paper is not that Adventists have failed in the latter respect, that is, identifying the Catholic Church as the fulfillment of the prophecies in Revelation 13. I believe they have, but my concerns are deeper. I am convinced that Adventists have misunderstood many details in the prophecies themselves. For example, the idea that Revelation predicts the emergence of a power that would reign for 42 (prophetic) months before receiving a “deadly head wound” is wrong. The prophecy demands the opposite: the “deadly head wound” precedes the 42-month persecution. And so on.

If you are an Adventist, I invite you to engage my journey, and prayerfully consider the evidence I present in this paper. If you are a Catholic seeking to dialogue with your Adventists friends, I would like to express my delight in your commitment to the New Evangelization. It is my hope that the contributions of this paper will enrich not only future theological studies, but the dialogue between the Catholic and Adventist communions as well—towards their final reunion.

Hugo Mendez
Feast of the Ascension, 2006

Introduction

In the 1980s, the General Conference appointed gifted theologians to an ad-hoc committee assigned to research challenges to the historic Adventist interpretation of Daniel and (in later years) Revelation. Publishing their findings in a seven volume series, the Daniel and Revelation Committee (DARCOM) defended the received reading of Rev 13 in an essay entitled “Time Prophecies of Daniel 12 and Revelation 12-13,” authored by William H. Shea (then associate director of the Biblical Research Institute).

In that paper, Shea criticized certain interpreters who, assuming that Rev 13:1-10 reads in a strictly chronological order, defended the notion that the mortal head wound precedes the 42-month period prophesied in the text. This superficial handling of the passage overlooked deeper structural units (useful in determining the intended succession of events), evident only after a detailed analysis of the parallelisms and chiasms embedded within the text itself. Shea introduced a structural scheme that proved helpful in defending the historic Adventist reading of the passage.

This survey, following Shea’s methodology, nonetheless criticizes many of his conclusions. A more refined and detailed survey of the structures embedded in Revelation 13 definitively excludes three hallmarks of Adventist interpretation:

1. The infliction of the mortal head wound upon the First Beast follows the 42 months.
2. The activity of the Second Beast follows the 42 months.
3. The termination of the 42-month period does not coincide with the coming of Christ.

Although the structural schemes proposed in this paper remain open to further revision, the chronological indications noted in its survey of the chapter are glaring. If validated, these findings will have terminal repercussions upon the prophetic paradigm assumed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and proclaimed in its evangelistic efforts.

As this survey was written for the informed lay reader, it places a priority on readability, and prefers in-text citations. I also avoid citing the Greek of Rev 13, except where necessary (more frequently than I might have liked). The text of the paper is richly complimented by figures, visually representing the features of the text.

1

Analysis of Revelation 13:1-8

Issue 1: Temporal Relation of the Mortal Wound to the 42 Months

The relation between the time when the mortal wound is inflicted upon the Beast to the 42-month period of his authority is of enormous consequence to Adventist eschatology. Adventists believe that the 42-month period spoken of in the prophecy (lasting 1260 literal years) ends with a mortal blow to the Beast's power (the humiliation of the pope in 1798); a blow that will yet be healed, and demonstrate a final resurgence of the Sea Beast. A closer examination of Revelation 13 contests this assumption.

Verses 1-2

The chapter begins with the emergence of a Beast from the sea. Verses 1 & 2 may be outlined as follows:

Figure 1.1

Verse 1

A: Introductory Action

Emerges from the sea

B: Description

Feature	Adornment
7 heads	blasphemous names
10 horns	10 diadems

Verse 2

A: Description (cont.)

Segment	Appearance
Body	Leopard
Feet	Bear
Mouth	Lion

B: Action

Dragon gave Beast throne, authority

Verses 3-4

The next verse begins with a second description of the Beast, followed by a second series of action:

Figure 1.2

Verse 3

A: Description

Subject	Appearance
1 head	Mortally wounded
	BUT
	Mortal wound healed

B: Action

The world marvels
AND follows the Beast

Verse 4

Action (cont.)

AND worshipped the Dragon
(b/c he gave him authority)

AND worshipped the Beast
(b/c no one can fight him)

The description of the Beast in 3a expands that of 1-2b. John's comment has a complimentary character: adding yet another detail about the creature's heads (one of those heads had once been wounded, but was now healed), and is thus a continuation of 1-2a:

Figure 1.3

A	B
v.1-2	v.3-4
Description (1-2a)	Description (3a)
Action (2b)	Action (3b-4)

The relationship between the events (Action A & B) described in v. 2b and vss. 3b-4 will be especially important when understanding the chronological succession of events prophesied in Revelation 13.

According to the sequence in vss. 3-4, the Beast’s assumption of political power and authority comes as a result of his “resurrection.” The healing of the creature prompts the world to marvel at his strength. No one dares fight against the Beast in view of his miraculous power of recovery; he is seemingly invincible. Instead, all men decide to follow, praise, and worship Him. The very mantra of their adoration, “who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?” (v. 4) alludes to beast’s power to recover from even terminal injuries. (Note: since the beast’s recovery inspires their worship, it also temporally precedes it.) The capitulation of every global power to the superiority of the beast marks the beginning of his near universal reign of terror. It is at this at this point that the authority granted to the Beast in 2b is exercised.

Thus, the events described in v. 3a and vss. 3b-4 exist in a causal relationship. Likewise, v. 2b and vss. 3b-4 are related in that the first action sequence (Action A) describes the bestowal of great authority; the second action sequence (Action B) describes the realization of that authority. Figure 1.4 illustrates the relationships:

Figure 1.4

A	B
v.1-2	v.3-4
Description (1-2a) Emerging Beast	Description (3a) Healed Head
Action (2b) Bestowal of Gift	Action (3b-4) Exercise of Gift

Verses 5-6

Succeeding verses lack any descriptions of the Beast; they are focused on the actions of the Beast. Nonetheless, one should also notice that v. 5 is parallel to v. 2b, describing the same action (the Dragon’s “giving”):

Figure 1.5

v. 2b **And** the Dragon **gave him...**
[power, throne, **great authority**]

v. 5a **And** it was **given to him...**
[mouth speaking **great** things, **authority** to exercise for 42 mo.]

These parallels are also conspicuous in the Greek text: v. 5 expands the action of v. 2b, providing more detail. In particular, this section describes “the authority” the Beast received in v. 2b. Verses 5 and 6 are charted below:

Figure 1.5

Verse 5

Bestowal of Faculties

A: Beast **given** arrogant and blasphemous **mouth**
B: Beast **given authority** to exercise for 42 months

Verse 6

Exercise of Faculties

Beast **opens mouth** in blasphemies,
against God, Name, temple, celestial beings

In the first verse, a blasphemous mouth “is given to him” (i.e. the Beast); in v. 6, the Beast “opens his mouth.” One describes the bestowal of faculties, while the other describes the use of those faculties.

Verse 5 adds that the Beast is also given “authority” (*exousia*) to act (*poiesai*) for 42 months. The referent action is uncertain. The verb *poiesai* later appears in v. 7 beside the word “war” (to make war against the saints), referring to persecution. In the following verse (8), the word *exousia* also appears, referring to the dominion of the Beast over all peoples. The pairing of both terms in v. 5b may allude to both these grants. At the very least, these parallel suggest that the 42-month period also limits the activities of the Beast in vss. 7-8, as does the inherently blasphemous nature of the events described in vss. 3-4 and vss. 7-8 (false worship). Additionally, Dan 7 (the Old Testament passage inspiring Rev 13) identifies the “time, times, and dividing of times” (42 months) as the limited period in which the saints will be persecuted while the little horn blasphemes (Dan 7:25,26).

However, contextual indications suggest another referent. Given that the following verse (6) speaks exclusively of the Beast’s blasphemous attack against heaven (as does v. 5a), the “authority to act” granted him in v. 5b likely provides the liberty to sustain that attack. The Beast is granted license to continue blaspheming over the specified period of time (cf. *exousia* as limited permission to act over period of time in Rev 9:10). The

KJV reflects this interpretation, reading “it was given him to continue for 42 months.” So does the NKJV, adding in a marginal reference to v. 5b that the M-text reads “*make war*” (that is, against heaven: cf. Dan. 8:10-12,25). The whole textual unit of vss. 5-6 would then refer to the Beast’s belligerent actions towards Heaven.

Verse 7-8

Notice that the words of v. 7a parallel those of v. 5a (and therefore, also are related to those in v. 2b):

Figure 1.6

-
- v. 2b **And** the Dragon **gave him...** [**power**, seat, **great authority**]
 - v. 5 **And** it was **given to him...** [say **great** things,
authority to act/make 42 mo.]
[X]
 - v. 7 **And** it was **given to him...** [**to make** war..., **authority...**]

Observe the chiasmic (reversed) distribution of the terms “authority” and “to do/make” in v. 5a and v. 7a (indicated in Figure 1.6 by an [X]), both of which words also appear in v. 2b. The lexical parallels in these three texts demonstrate that they describe a single act of conferral—not multiple ones. In this light, vss. 7-8, as also the previous unit (vss. 5-6), recapitulates the events of vss. 2b-4. Each of these three units begins with a reference to the dragon’s conferral of certain powers to the beast, and proceeds with a description of the execution of those powers. This occurrence of this parallel structure in vss. 5-6 and vss. 7-8 is illustrated from Figure 1.7, below:

Figure 1.7

Verse 7

Bestowal of Faculties

A: Beast given **power** to persecute saints and overcome them

B: Beast given **authority** over every tribe and nation

Verse 8

Exercise of Faculties

All who dwell on the earth will worship him

[that is] those whose names are not in the Book of Life

As before, the Beast is given authority in one verse, and exercises it in another. In v. 7, he is given temporal dominion on earth in two forms: the ability to persecute the saints, and the ability to have all nations subjected to his reign. Verse 8 expresses the realization of this authority: prophesying that the entire world will inevitably worship the Beast, and thus submit temporal authority to him. (Parallel to vss. 3-4 where the healing causes men to worship and fear the Beast). The second half of the verse qualifies the statement that “all the world will worship” the Beast, adding that this group is limited to those not destined for salvation (not “written in the book of life”); by implication, the saints will refuse to adore him (and thus provoke their persecutors).

Also noteworthy is the fact that the content of vss. 7-8 compliments that in vss. 5-6. Whereas the earlier verses speak of the Beast’s attack against the celestial realms (God, celestial beings, etc), vss. 7-8 recount the Beast’s power upon the earth (his power to harass God’s people on earth, and political authority). Read together, they describe a two-fold battle: the Beast wages war both against heaven (vss. 5-6) and upon the earth (vss. 7-8). All of these facts reinforce the conclusion that the two units are parallel.

The structural and literary parallels between vss. 5-6 and vss. 7-8 have direct implications upon our study:

1. Inasmuch the events described in both vss. 5-6 and vss. 7-8 follow a reference to the same act of conferral, they are set within the same time period.
2. Similarly, inasmuch as the events described in vss. 5-6 and vss. 7-8 are complimentary (one describing the Beast’s war against heaven, the other his war on earth), they must describe the same time period.
3. Therefore, the 42-month reign of the Beast embraces all the details mentioned in both vss. 5-6 and vss. 7-8, as united in Figure 1.8 below:

Figure 1.8

Characteristics of the Beast’s reign:

- Blasphemy against God and heaven (vss. 5a, 6)
 - Extends 42 months (1260 days) (v. 5b)
 - Marked by persecution of saints (v. 7a)
 - Worldwide power/authority (v. 7b)
 - Worldwide worship (v. 8)
4. The global worship of the Beast is a clear trait of this 42-month period. Yet, all other verses in the chapter that refer to the

world's worship of the Beast (cf. vss. 3-4, 12, 14) identify it as a response to the Beast's miraculous healing (Figure 1.9, below.) It follows, therefore, that the 42-month period of global worship follows the healing of the deadly head wound.

Figure 1.9

-
- v. 3-4 ...deadly wound had been healed... **and the whole world... worshipped the Beast**
 - v. 12 ...and made **the earth and its inhabitants worship the First Beast**, whose fatal wound had been healed.
 - v. 14 ...telling **those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the Beast** who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

(Figure 1.9 Summary: The first verse explicitly identifies the global worship of the Beast as a response to the healing of the deadly head wound. The other verses that mention this global worship (with the exception of v. 8) all refer to the Beast with the epithet “whose deadly wound had been healed,” recalling this past event.)

Adventists contest the identification of the worship mentioned in 8 (which does not explicitly identify the deadly head wound as its inspiration) with the worship mentioned in vss. 4, 12, and 14 (which does). One model was previously discussed; other Adventist interpreters assign v. 8 to the 42-month period, and the other verses are said to refer to the revival of the Beast's power following the end of the 42 months, thereby dividing the worship into two distinct phases. Although we will devote more specific attention to vss. 12 and 14 in third chapter of our study, the chronological relationship between vss. 3-4 and v. 8 deserves immediate attention.

Recalling that vss. 2b and 7a parallel to one another (cf. Figure 1.6), the sequence of events described in the verses following each may be compared (Figure 1.10):

Figure 1.10

Sequence (vss. 2b-4)	Sequence (vss. 7-8)
<p>Power/Authority given (v. 2b) Deadly wound healed (v. 3a) Therefore,</p>	<p>Power/Authority given (v. 7) ?</p>
<p>World worships Beast (3b-4)</p>	<p>World Worships Beast (8)</p>

5. Vss. 2b-4 and 7-8 are parallel units of the passage, as evidenced by the direct correspondence between their opening (2b and 7) and closing verses (3b-4 and 8). Both units begin with the granting of authority, and end with the First Beast receiving worship. The similarities strongly suggest a temporal correspondence between them, in which both units refer to the same events (or sequence of events).
6. Also, the first unit describes the deadly head wound as the cause of the worship, while the second unit does not identify any specific cause. However, the temporal correspondence between the two textual units recommends the conclusion that the worship described in the second is also a consequence of the Beast's healing.

Note: It is true that the verb "worship" appears in the aorist tense in v. 4 ("[the whole world] worshipped"), and in the future tense in 8 ("[all on earth] will worship). However, this change in tense should not cause difficulties in assigning the two verses to the same event. As Shea noted in 1992, most interpreters assign the discrepancy to one of two possible Hebraisms (Shea 1992, 358). (1) The aorist verb form in v. 4 may represent an instance of the "prophetic perfect," (used throughout the classical prophetic texts of the Old Testament) in which a past tense verb is used to describe an event still in the future. (2) A more common interpretation of the verb form in 8, considers it "a Hebraism for a verb which equals an imperfect [past] or present tense" (*Ibid.*)

Unfortunately, Shea has more recently chosen (in unison with Ed Christian) to attach a greater deal of significance to the tense shift:

There is a difference in the tense of the verbs involved here, for the two references to worship at the end of the first section, in v. 4, are put in the past: "Men worshipped the dragon, for he had given authority to the beast, and they worshipped the beast...." When verse eight is reached, the reference is to the future, "and all who dwell on the earth will worship it...."

My understanding of these verbs is that they point in two directions. The worship verbs at the end of the first section, in v. 4, point backwards to what happened during the 42 months before the beast received its almost deadly wound. In the second passage, vs. 5-8, and especially in the worship verb in v. 8, the focus is forward, after the deadly wound was healed. (Shea 2000, 223-224).

In order to avoid coordinating the worship verbs in v.4 and v.8, Shea assumes that the former text refers to a time before the infliction of the deadly head wound. This interpretation blatantly disregards the clear causal sequence from v 3a to vss. 3b-4, where the beast's miraculous healing inspires the universal awe and worship. Equally irrational is Shea's decision to relegate *all* the events recorded in vss. 5-8 (most of which verbs

occur in the aorist) to a time after the deadly head wound, simply on the basis of a single verb in v.8.

Moreover, Shea's argument from the disparate tense of 8 conveniently fails to mention that John shifts between the prophetic perfect and the future tense when using the verb "worship" in vss. 11-18 as well. As in vss. 4,8, the verb appears once as a future form (v. 12b, following a present-tense verb), and once in as an aorist (v. 15b). However, when surveying 11-18, Shea does not use the correspondence of certain verb tenses, or lack thereof, to correlate the temporal setting of vss. 11-14 with 5-8, or differentiate the temporal setting of vss. 11-14 and 15-17. Either decision would have disastrous consequences on the received Adventist interpretation. Furthermore, Shea interprets "worship" in 14:7 as a reference to "the time of the revived beast" (correlating its "orientation" to that 13:8), despite the fact that 14:7 renders the verb in the aorist. His inconsistent citation of varying verb tenses in the chapter exposes the prejudiced application of the same standard to 13:8, and suggests the inappropriateness of citing varying tenses as chronological indications in general.

Ranko Stefanovich, evidently recognizing the impossibility of interpreting all of vss 5-8 by a single verb in 8, instead chooses to interpret that particular verse in isolation from vss. 5-7:

Before describing the role and activities of the sea beast during the "forty-two months" of the Christian age (13:5-7), John first in 13:1-4 identifies the beast in general terms. Then, with 13:8, he moves to describe the role and function of the beast in the final crisis. (Stevaonvich, 29)

Nevertheless, a comparison of Figures 1.5 and 1.7 exposes the structural transgressions inherent in this new reading. The reoccurrence of a bestowal → exercise cycle (as in vss. 5-6) mark vss. 7-8 as a single unit, parallel to vss. 5-6. The decision to combine vss. 5-7 into a single unit, by dividing v. 7 from v. 8, violates the internal structures in the text.

Mueller's proposal is no more convincing:

In 13:1-4, "blasphemy" and "mouth" are mentioned prior to the fatal wound. In 13:5-8 the blasphemy is connected to the 42 months. Universal power and universal worship seem to follow this period. It is interesting that the deadly wound (13:3) in just one of the heads of this creature leads to the deadly condition of the whole dragon 13:14). The beast is a counterfeit of the Lamb that also was deadly wounded ("slaughtered"—13:8; 5:9-12) and was resurrected (1:18; 2:8). The beast experiences a resurrection as well, leading to its universal worship (13:14). (Mueller, 197)

The weakness of this interpretation lies in its failure to recognize the structures of bestowal in vss. 1-8. Although several mentions are made of the dragon granting the beast certain powers, it stands to reason that all these powers were granted at once. The parallel language of the passage's three "bestowal" texts (Figure 1.6) demonstrates that a single act of conferral is in view in vss. 2b, 5, and 7. Consequently, one cannot read vss. 5-8 as a strictly temporal sequence of events (blasphemy —> healing —> worship), as Mueller assumes. Rather, as has been already observed in this survey, vss. 5-6 and 7-8 are parallel units, describing events within the same time period (that is, the period following the conferral of certain powers to the beast).

Conclusion

At this point in our survey of Revelation 13, we have noted that the structure of the vss.1-8 indicates that the deadly head wound precedes the 42-month reign of the First Beast. In the next chapter, we will address two verses (v. 9-10) cited in favor of the Adventist outlining of the passage, and attempt to consolidate our findings on the structure of the first half of the Rev. 13 (v. 1-10).

2

Analysis of Revelation 13:9-10

Our survey of the first half of Rev 13 (vss. 1-10) concludes with a look at the final two verses of the chapter. The latter verse has historically been invoked by Adventists as a critical key to properly sequencing of the prophetic events described in Rev 13 chronologically. After grasping its significance, final conclusions may be drawn with regards to the structure of vss. 1-10.

Verse 9-10:

The final verses of this passage are addressed to the Christian readers of John's prophecy, encouraging them to remain faithful:

Figure 2.1

Verse 9:

Call

He that hears let him hear!

Verse 10

Prophecy

Anyone destined to captivity must be taken captive
Anyone who is to be killed by the sword will be killed by the sword

Comment

Such is the patient endurance and faithfulness of the saints.

A textual-critical issue obscures the meaning of v.10b, which is variously rendered by nearly a dozen manuscript traditions. Most manuscripts render the word "kill" (v. 10b) in the active voice: "those who kill with the sword, will be killed by the sword." Following this reading, the text encourages the faithful to remain steadfast in the knowledge that those who harm them will receive commensurate punishment (v. 10c).

However, the current Nestle-Aland Greek text favors the reading of codex A, which renders the verb in the passive voice: "those who are to be killed by the sword, will be killed by the sword." This form appears original in view of two factors:

1. Thematically, v. 10a speaks of the passive fulfillment of destiny (not commensurate retribution), omitting any reference to a provocative action. As vss. 10a and 10b are structured as parallel, complimentary verses, a passive form is expected of the first verb in 10b.
2. The text almost certainly alludes to Jeremiah 15:12, which speaks of the inevitability of the Exile: “when they say to you, ‘Where shall we go?’ you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord: Those destined for pestilence, to pestilence, and those destined for the sword, to the sword; those destined for famine, to famine, and those destined for captivity, to captivity” (NRSV). In this light, the text properly refers to the trials God’s people will face before their promised redemption (15:19-21). A passive thought is in view: the entire text referring to the victims of persecution, not the oppressors themselves.

Isolating the saints as the subjects of v. 10a-b proves especially valuable in refuting the traditional Adventist claim that the verse refers to Beast (and particularly, to the reception of the mortal wound). Following the active reading of the verb in 10b, they find the prophesied “captivity” and “killing” as retributive punishments upon the Beast. William Shea, representing the Daniel and Revelation Committee (DARCOM) of the late 1980s, cited this text as pivotal evidence that the mortal wound is inflicted at the end of the 42-month period (Shea 358). He reduces Rev. 13 to a series of two chronological sequences, both ending with a description of the world’s worship, and a reference to the infliction of the mortal wound (a structural scheme he inherits from traditional Adventism; Shea 1992, 355-8; full discussion: 352-359).

Figure 2.2 visually diagrams this scheme as he presented in 1992; note his superficial grasp of the elements and construction of Revelation 13. (As previously mentioned, his view was later revised; my criticism of that new position is recorded on p. 9-10.)

Figure 2.2

Sequence 1	Sequence 2
Description (1-3)	Explanation (5-7)
Worship (4)	Worship (8)

Shea's belief is based upon the parallel features of vss. 2b and 5a (i.e., the granting of "power" and "authority"), which he believes divide the chapter into parallel two halves. Sequence 1 (vss. 1-4) would consist of an introductory survey to the Beast, and Sequence 2 (vss. 5-10) would function as a second survey of the events of Rev 13, providing further details. (Although he does not refer to them as "sequences," that they are clearly such is evident from the way he extrapolates details from them [see block quotation below].)

Shea then uses this proposed structural scheme to support the view that the mortal head wound *follows* the 42-month period:

In the description section (vss. 1-4), the wounding of the Beast comes towards the close of the passage (vs. 3). In the explanation section (vss. 5-10) this wounding is also alluded to at the end of the passage ("If anyone slays with the sword, with the sword must he be slain," vs. 10; cf. vs. 14, "the Beast which was wounded by the sword"). In both cases the literary structure and relations involved indicate that the authority that the Beast exercises comes *before* the wounding. (Shea 358)

Shea's confidence in v. 10 as a reference to the Beast's mortal head wound (a critical assumption) was already considered suspect for the reasons cited above (in our textual-critical discussion of the verb in 10b). Nonetheless, two more considerations support the conclusion that the saints themselves are in view in v. 10:

1. In the Greek, the Beast is described as "wounded" unto death (*sphazw*; 13:3)—the same verb used to describe Christ's crucifixion (Rev 5:6,12; 13:8; perhaps in view of the temporary nature of each). Conversely, the Greek word for "kill" (*apoketinw*), used in 10b, is not used of the Beast. Instead, it describes the fate of the martyrs in 13:15. It is therefore likely that this text also refers to the persecuted saints.
2. It seems unlikely that the *temporary* mortal wounding of the Beast would call for "patient endurance and faithfulness" on the part of the saints. The text cannot call for endurance *during* the period of the wounding, as that period should provide them partial relief from their sufferings (not additional trials). On the other hand, if one interprets the infliction of the mortal head wound as the *hope* to which the saints aspire, that hope seems misplaced. The mortal wound provides no lasting release from their suffering of the saints (it is temporary); moreover, its healing only leads to the climax of the Beast's power (vss. 3b-4). Properly, the call for patient endurance refers to the trial of the saints in times of persecution, so that it mirrors 13:15 (which, as we already noted, the text does on the lexical level by employing the verb *apoketinw*).

Moreover, vss. 9-10 appears to provide a closing commentary on the entire passage (13:1-10). The cry “he that hears, let him hear!” is used in 2:7,11,17,29; 3:5-6,12-13, 21-22 to conclude individual passages by transmitting a message to believers (in most cases, a promise), encouraging them to remain faithful until death in the face of their trials. This also seems to be the intent in 13:9-10, where the passage (13:1-10) concludes with a call for the saints to be patient and faithful (again) in the face of their trials (related throughout 1-10): the captivity and sword they must endure.

These facts exclude the opinion that vss. 9-10 represents another event in the sequences observed in 1-10 (that is, the infliction of the mortal wound). Rather, the two verses close the completed first half of Rev 13: demarcating the passage’s natural boundary, and encouraging fidelity through the persecutions introduced in 1-8. In short, the structural scheme assumed by Adventist interpreters misinterprets 9-10 and violates the obvious boundaries of the passage.

And yet, Shea’s proposal is fraught with further difficulties, immediately evident if one simply includes his chronological placement of the verses deadly head wound within his original chart (Figure 2.3):

Figure 2.3



In the proposed Sequence 1, the infliction of the mortal head wound (v. 3a) is directly followed by the world’s worship (v. 4); by contrast, in sequence 2, a reference to the world’s worship (v. 8) directly precedes John’s presumed mention of the head wound (vss. 9-10).

Of course, this discrepancy may simply represent a chiasmic reversal in S2, but its presence militates against drawing chronological conclusions from the order of events in S1,2. This is especially true in view of the fact that the healing of the wound (v. 3a) is identified as the inspiration of the worship in vss. 3b-4. Since vss. 3-4 represents a cause and effect sequence, then, we should interpret the less defined chronological sequence of S2 according to that in S1, so that the healing of the wound *precedes* the world’s worship (as we have in the last chapter; cf. Figure 1.10). In that case, the 42 months would also *follow* the healing of the wound (the intolerable conclusion Shea seeks to avoid).

Unfortunately, the claim that mentions of the “the wound” appear “at the end/close” of each sequence is far too imprecise to definitively recommend Shea’s position. In reality, Shea’s entire structural scheme (restricted by the need to uphold a traditional Adventist interpretation of Rev 13) suffers from a superficial treatment of the features of 13:1-8. Issues related to the temporal positioning of the events prophesied in 13:1-8 have already been discussed in the last chapter; those proper to 11-18 will be outlined in the next chapter.

And yet, more fundamental concerns illustrates the artificiality of Shea’s structural scheme. Considering the cause and effect sequence of vss. 3-4, the worship described in S1 (v. 4) follows the healing of the wound. By contrast, the worship in S2 (v. 8) is concurrent with the 42-month period of blasphemy, in light of the parallelism between vss. 5-6 and 7-8 (and perhaps, the pairing of the terms “authority” [*exousia*] and “to act/make” [*poiesai*] in v. 5b, versus their [chiastic] distribution in v. 7a,b [cf. Figure 1:6]). Therefore, no second period of worldwide worship following the healing of the mortal wound appears in 13:1-10, a conspicuous absence if S2 is supposed to provide further detail to S1. Sequence 2 must discuss the healing of the wound, and the consequent exaltation of the Beast (consuming interests in Sequence 2 [vss. 3b-4]). Likewise, within this structural scheme, any details related to the 42-month period would remain unmentioned in S1—a fact equally dubious.

Figure 2.4 outlines these two issues, arising when one interprets Shea’s S1,2 chronologically. (As before, the diagram assumes that v.10 as a reference to the infliction of the mortal head wound for the sake of argument.)

Figure 2.4

Sequence 1	Sequence 2
Beast introduced (vss. 1-2a)	
Bestowal by dragon (v. 2b)	Bestowal by dragon (vss. 5, 7)
???	First Reign (42 mo., vss. 5,8) (<u>world worships</u>)
Wound healed (v. 3a)	Wound inflicted (v. 10)
Second Reign (vss. 3b-4) (<u>world worships</u> [vss. 3b-4])	???

The above gaps illustrate the harm that is done to the passage if the descriptions of global worship in S1 and S2 are disassociated. Such a decision disturbs the natural parallels intended by the biblical writer himself, and ignores numerous lexical features earmarking the structure of 13:1-8. It also artificially (and unnecessarily) creates two “reigns” of the Beast—each of which is absent in the other sequence. The healing of the deadly head wound does not necessitate a two-stage reign (as a restoration of authority demanding the existence of two reigns—one before the wound, and one after). This view overlooks the natural sense of the passage, in which the Beast receives originally receives worldwide acclaim *in view* of his “resurrection.” No internal indications demand the Adventist interpretation—only the will to preserve the idea that mortal wound follows the 42-month period.

The only possible solution to the latter omission, assumed by most Adventist interpreters, is that the parallel unit to vss. 3b-4 is in fact vss. 11-18. This identification is accomplished by extending the chronological flow of S2 into the chapter’s second half. A century ago, Uriah Smith voiced this position, as did all the pioneers:

It was at the time when [the First Beast] went into captivity, or was killed with the sword (verse 3), that John saw [the Second Beast] coming up. (Smith 573; cf. White 438-9)

This solution only further exposes the inherent weaknesses in his structural scheme assumed by historic Adventism. Extending Sequence 2 into the chapter’s second half transgresses the natural structure of the chapter, in which vss. 1-10 and 11-18 are distinct passages. The parallels between vss. 1-2a and 11, inherent in the text itself, demarcate the intended division of the chapter: subsuming the latter under a division of the other is untenable. Adventists are forced to disregard the natural boundaries within Rev 13 (as well as many other textual features) to salvage their contention—an embarrassing reflection upon their grasp of the chapter’s structure in general.

3

Review of Revelation 13:1-10

Having completed our survey of the first passage in Rev 13 (encompassing verses 1-10), it is time for us to assemble our conclusions into a single chart. 13:1-10 is divided into five units, including the closing call for fidelity. Figure 3.1 provides a birds-eye view of the whole passage:

Figure 3.1

A vss.1-2	B vss.3-4	C vss.5-6	D vss.7-8
Description Bestowal	Description Reign	Bestowal Reign	Bestowal Reign
 E vss. 9-10 Address to the Reader			

A and B may be further combined, as they represent a single chronological sequence (in which v. 2b describes the bestowal of gifts, and vss. 3b-4 describes their exercise/use), parallel to the sequence of bestowal —> exercise in vss. 5-6 and 7-8. Figure 3.2 illustrates these three sequences:

Figure 3.2

S1 v.1-2	S2 v.5-6	S3 v.7-8
Description Bestowal	Bestowal	Bestowal
Description Exercise	Exercise	Exercise

Figure 3.3 lists the same sequences, but in additional detail: citing specific verses:

Figure 3.3

S1: Activity, emphasis Earth

vss. 1-4

Description (vss. 1-2a)
Seven heads and ten horns
Composite body (leopard, etc.)

A. Bestowal (v. 2b)

Dragon gives Beast great power, throne, authority

Description (v. 3a)
One head had been healed

B. Exercise (vss. 3b-4)

“the whole world” worships Beast

S2: Activity, emphasis Heaven

vss. 5-6

A. Bestowal (v. 5)

Given blasphemous mouth
Given liberty to blaspheme for 42 months

B. Exercise (v. 6)

Blasphemes against “those who dwell in heaven”

S3: Activity, emphasis Earth

vss. 3-4

A. Bestowal (v. 7)

Given power to make war against saints
Given authority over every nation

B. Exercise (v. 8)

“those who dwell on earth” worship Beast

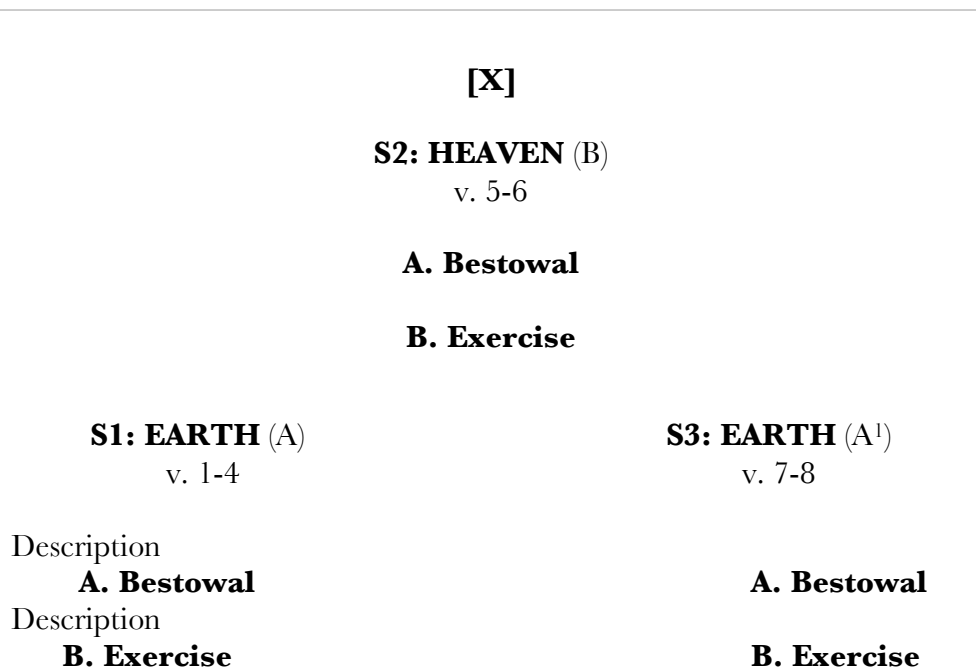
Earlier, we observed that the latter two sequences are complimentary: S2 describing the Beast’s activities against heaven (vss. 5-6), and S3 describing the Beast’s activities against the earth (vss. 7-8). A review of S1 (vss. 1-4) reveals that its emphasis is also directed towards the Beast’s activities on earth. Note again (as we did last chapter) that S1:B directly parallels that in S3:B, predicting the same event: namely, the world’s worship of the Beast.

The only exception to this generality is the mention of the “blasphemous names” upon each of the Beast’s heads in S1’s first descriptive section (v.1). However, as an introductory description prefacing the entire passage, it lies immediately outside of the parallel sequencing of bestowal → reign (vss.2b, 3b-4), which structures S1,2,3. Instead, the first descriptive section corresponds more neatly with the original “rising” of the Beast in 1a, which precedes both the bestowal and reign of the Beast. (Likewise, this introductory description juxtaposes symbols of earthly [“crowns”] and heavenly [“blasphemous names”] warfare, also indicating its generality [and distinction from the sequences in subsequent verses].)

On the other hand, those events that constitute the descriptions of bestowal (v. 2b) and exercise (vss. 3b-4) in S1 correspond only to aspects of earthly dominion: the Beast is given “power,” “throne,” and “great authority,” so to receive the world’s fear and worship. Again, these elements also correspond directly to the events related in S3 (whose are also oriented towards earth).

Therefore, a chiasmic scheme emerges through the entire passage (earth—heaven—earth), which Figure 3.4 captures visually:

Figure 3.4



The discovery of this chiasm does further damage to the received Adventist structural analysis, refined by Shea:

1. The natural shift in the passage's orientation (earth—heaven—earth) militates against attempts to remove S2,S3 into a second chronological sequence distinct from that related in S1. The events (bestowal → exercise) related in S1 are oriented towards the earth; S2,S3 describes events occurring in heaven and earth. This lack of correspondence between the orientations in S1 and S2,S3 militates against the arrangement Shea proposes; the three are best left in a balanced position.
2. In fact, this balance supports the view that the three sequences proposed here are parallel. We already noted that S1 and S3 describe the same events, and that S2 and S3 were complimentary passages. Especially in view of the chiasm embedded in 13:1-8, all three sequences appear to be temporally correspondent.

4

Analysis of Revelation 13:11-18

Issue 2: Temporal Relation of the Activities of the Second Beast to the 42 months

Adventists believe that the Second Beast (The United States) arises after the healing of the deadly head wound, and will enforce the mark of the Beast (Sunday veneration) in the time of the end, rather than during the 42-month period. This section will refute that conclusion.

Verse 11

Verse 11 marks the beginning of the chapter's second passage; as we noted in the last chapter, the distinction between the two halves of Rev 13 urges us not to assume a temporal relationship between the two (continuity, etc.) until we have ascertained such details from the text itself. The opening verse of Revelation 13's second half introduces another character in the cosmic drama: the Earth Beast (Figure 4.1), also known as the False Prophet (c.f. Rev. 16:13).

Figure 4.1

A: Introductory Action

Emerges from the earth

B: Description

Feature		Comparison
2 horns	like a	Lamb
Voice (spoke)	as a	Dragon

By way of simile, each characteristic trait of the Second Beast relates this creature to one of two primary contending figures in Revelation: the Lamb or the Dragon. His appearance mirrors that of a full-grown ram, though he is compared to a lamb to reinforce his external Christ-likeness. However, his voice reveals he too has been given a mouth from the Dragon, with which to speak blasphemies. This is the only description of the Beast; the remainder of the passage describes his activity.

Verse 12-18

Verses 12-18 (especially vss. 13-15) reads as a single continuous sequence, which events do not appear to directly correlate to the succession of events prophesied in vss. 11-18. Also lacking is the familiar pattern of bestowal and exercise, such as structured vss. 1-8 into three chronological sequences (an act of conferral appears only in vss. 14,15). Nevertheless, three key indications assist the reader in ascertaining the temporal setting of the events described in the passage.

The first is present in v. 12a: a text vital in relating the activities of the two Beasts chronologically. Figure 4.2 outlines the verse's contents:

Figure 4.2

Verse 12

A: He exercised all the authority of the First Beast in his presence.

B: And made all the earth worship the First Beast,
whose deadly wound was healed.

The text states that the Second Beast exercises “all the authority of the First Beast in his presence.” In other words, all the powers of the First Beast (described in vss. 2b,5, 7) are actually wielded by the Second Beast.

1. This implies that all the events of the chapter's first half are accomplished through the instrumentality of the Second Beast, whose activities are recounted in the second half.
2. Therefore, the two Beasts are contemporaries of one another, inasmuch as their activities are concurrent.

For example, the “authority” of the First Beast was explicitly limited to a period of 42 months. (v. 5b) If the Beast exercises “all the authority” of the First Beast, then he must be active during this 42-month period. Notice the sequence illustrated in Figure 4.3:

Figure 4.3

v.5a
... And [the dragon] gave to him
authority to exercise months forty
and two.

v.12a
And he exercises all the authority
of the First Beast in his presence;

3. Thus also, the chapter's two halves (vss. 1-10 and 11-18) are parallel to one another, describing the same events (temporally correspondent).

Direct parallels between the content and language of the two passages supports their temporal correspondence—a second indication of the temporal setting of the events in vss. 11-18. These parallels are visible in Figure 4.4:

Figure 4.4

<p>vss. 7-8 ... and gave to him <u>authority</u> over all nations, and peoples, and tongues and tribes, and <u>all the</u> <u>inhabitants of the earth will</u> <u>worship him...</u></p>	<p>v. 12 And he exercises all <u>the authority</u> of the First Beast in his presence; and he compels <u>the earth and the</u> <u>inhabitants in it to worship the</u> <u>Beast, whose deadly wound was</u> <u>healed.</u></p>
<p>vss. 3b-4 ...<u>and his mortal wound was</u> <u>healed.</u> Amazed, <u>the whole world</u> followed the Beast... <u>and</u> <u>worshipped the Beast...</u></p>	
<p>v. 7 <u>And it was given to him to make</u> (ποιῆσαι [poihsai]) war with the saints and overcome them.</p>	<p>v. 15 <u>And it was given to him to give</u> spirit to the image of the Beast, so that the image of the Beast could speak and <u>make</u> (ποιήσῃ [poihshe]) it so that whoever would not worship the image of the Beast would be killed.</p>

Each half of Revelation 13 describes the same events from the perspective of one or the other major character in the drama: the Sea Beast and the Earth Beast. The division allows the writer to recount the activities of both Beasts as they contribute to this apocalyptic period of universal worship and persecution.

A comparison of v. 12b (the verse's second half) to vss. 7-8 illustrates this point. In v. 7b, the dragon grants the First Beast authority to persecute and reign over the earth, which authority the Beast realizes in the period of universal worship described in 8. Verses 3-4 described the role

the healing of the mortal head in rallying the masses to submission to the Beast. The second passage now provides still further detail, identifying the Second Beast as the principal catalyst in moving the world to the worship of the Beast. The False Prophet is viewed as the instrumental cause (the motivator, enforcer) of the world's worship of the First Beast. He is the one who "makes/compels" the world to respond in worship to the miraculous healing (v. 12b): facilitating that worship (by erecting the image to the Beast in v. 14), and oppressing those who will not worship (vss. 15-17). The twin actions of receiving worship and persecuting dissenters place vss. 11-18 in parallel to the "Exercise" segments in each of the sequences that describe the First Beast's activities against earth (S1,3; and accordingly, in parallel with all three sequences, which are themselves temporally correspondent). All references to the world's worship and the Beast's power to persecute in the first half of the chapter (vss. 3-4, 7-8) are thus facilitated through the direct intervention of this Second Beast.

Verses 12b and 14b may implicitly provide a final indication of temporal setting. The Second Beast urges men to worship "the First Beast, whose deadly wound was healed" in v. 12b, the latter qualification possibly referring to the healing as an event already completed. Of note, the second passage had already used the term "First Beast" without such qualification in v. 12a. Hence, the use of the qualification appears intentional: as the inspiration for the global worship. Similarly, in v. 14b, the Second Beast urges the masses to erect an image to the First Beast, "who had been wounded by the sword, yet still lived;" Verse 14a had already named the First Beast without such qualification. The erection of the image appears to be an act of worship in honor of the latter's "resurrection." Accordingly, the events prophesied in vss. 11-18 occur *after* the reception of the deadly head wound, and in view of that event (precisely as in vss. 3-4).

Having therefore established the temporal correspondence of vss. 11-18 to S1,3, we may also note that v. 12b confirms many of the conclusions we arrived earlier in this survey. For example, the parallels between the language of vss. 8 and 12b (Figure 3.4) correlate these events temporally. As vss. 7-8 is also the complimentary parallel to vss. 5-6 (which predict the 42-month period), our conclusions in the first chapter are confirmed: the head wound precedes the 42-month period (cf. our findings in Figures 1.9,10).

One easily notes that the repercussions of this assertion are terminal to the Adventist eschatological paradigm. Unfortunately, Adventist interpreters have historically overlooked the significance of v. 12a in bringing together the many parallels from across Rev 13, such as those listed in Figure 3.4. Resolutely maintaining that the deadly head wound *follows* the 42-month period, they have assumed that vss. 11-18 is the continuation of the chronology (presumably) developed in vss. 5-10: the Second Beast's exercise of the powers of the First Beast occurring during the latter's second reign (post-1798). (Adventists consider the healing of the wound implicit in v. 10, and evident in that the First Beast

has power to share with the Second Beast in v. 12a.) All our former criticisms of these positions remain.

Conclusion

The internal indications noted above suggest that all the events in 13:11-18 occur after the healing of the deadly wound. Therefore, the remainder of our survey will be abbreviated in light of its limited significance to the questions presented by Issues 1,2.

Figure 4.5 outlines the entire passage (full text from the NRSV), noting a few principles of organization utilized by the inspired writer. 13:11-18 apparently reviews the period of the First Beast's reign in successive stages: adding more detail with each expansion. The second part of the passage may be read as a chronological sequence, especially vss. 13-17.

The body of the passage (describing the events in which the Second Beast participates) is divided between the Second Beast's encouragement of mass devotion to the First Beast (worship) and his oppression of the saints (persecution). These halves are further divided into pairs of subunits, each marked by their cause-effect organization (action → result). The prophet lists an action (or series of actions) performed by the Second Beast [C], and then lists its resultant effect [E]. This relationship is especially observable in vss. 15,17, which preface the resultant action with the preposition "so that," and in vss. 13-14 by the preposition "through."

Figure 4.5

I. Description (v. 11)

Then I saw another Beast that rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.

II. Actions (vss. 12-17)

A. Encourages Worship (Wicked)

1: Global Worship (v. 12)

[C: Non-Miraculous] It exercises all the authority of the First Beast in his presence, **[E]** and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the First Beast, whose mortal wound had been healed.

2: Erection of Image (vss. 13-14)

[C: Miraculous] And performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of all; **[E]** and through the signs that it is given

to exercise/perform in the sight of the Beast, it deceives the inhabitants of earth, telling them to make an image for the Beast that had been wounded by the sword and yet lived.

B. Encourages Persecution (Saints)

1. Killing of Saints by Image (v. 15)

[C: Miraculous] And it was granted [the ability] to give breath to the image of the Beast, **[E]** so that the image of the Beast could even speak and cause those who would not worship the image of the Beast to be killed.

2. Economic Sanctions against Saints (vss. 16-17)

[C: Non-Miraculous] And it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, **[E]** so that no one can buy or sell who does not have the mark, that is, the name of the Beast or the number of its name.

III. Concluding Appeal (v. 18)

This calls for wisdom: let anyone with understanding calculate the number of the Beast, for it is the number of man. Its number is six hundred and sixty-six.

The uses of the word “worship” in A:1:[E] and B:1:[E] (in the second instance beside the negative “who would not”) evidence the thematic shift from a discussion of the Beast’s actions towards the wicked (winning their devotion) to a discussion of the Beast’s oppression the saints (who will not surrender their devotion). The former class is referred to in both A:1 and A:2 as “the inhabitants [of the earth].”

Of note, the actions of the Second Beast in A:2 and B:1 are both supernatural, whereas his activities in A:1 and B:2 are not. Likely, this observation introduces another chiastic principle, reflected in Figure 4:5 by the qualifications “miraculous” and “non-miraculous” within the markers of causal statements [C]. Intriguingly, A:2 and B:1 (the heart of the chiasm) also coincide with to references the image to the First Beast.

Figure 4.5 also represents John’s use of the prophetic principle of “review and expansion” in Section II. When predicting the Second Beast’s attempts to promote the First Beast’s worship, he first speaks of the exercise of the First Beast’s authority to coerce the masses into worship (A:1). Then, he adds further detail: the Second Beast perform miraculous signs to promote his global agenda, and that the worship of the First Beast

(predicted in A:1:[E]) is intimately tied to the erection of an image (A:2). Intriguingly, John organizes much of A:1,2 as a chiasm (Figure 4.6):

Figure 4.6

v.12a

And he exercises (*poiei*) all the authority of the First Beast in his presence; (A)

v.13-14a

And he performs (*poiei*) great signs, so to make (*poih*) fire come down from heaven in the presence of men, and deceives the inhabitants of the earth through the signs (B¹)

(X)

v.12b

And he coerces (*poiei*) the earth and its inhabitants so that they will worship the Beast, whose deadly wound was healed (B)

v.14a (cont.)

which were given to him to exercise in the presence of the Beast (A¹)

The chiasm begins and ends with a reference to the powers granted the Second Beast to exercise in the presence of the First Beast (vss. 12a, 14a). Between them is a description of the Second Beast's activities before men. Notice the use of the phrase: "in the presence of;" it is first used with regards to the Beast (v. 12a), then men (v. 13), then to the Beast again (v. 14a).

Doubling as a structural marker, the final verses of both A:1 and A:2 conclude with a reference to the Beast and his mortal head wound. The worship of the beast (v. 12) is thereby placed in parallel to the erection of an image to the beast (v. 14): the latter verse detailing the first (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7

v.12b

And he coerces (*poiei*) the earth and its inhabitants so that they will worship the Beast, whose deadly wound was healed

v.14b

[Encouraging] the inhabitants of the earth to make (*poieisai*) an image of the Beast, who had the wound of the sword but lived

Section II:B details the “war against the saints” foretold in 7, listing the two primary methods of oppression: (1) a death sentence for those who refuse to worship the Beast (B:1), and (2) economic sanctions for those who refuse to accept the enigmatic “mark of the Beast” (B:2). Urging the first (and perhaps, the second) measure is the image to the First Beast, whose animation represents the greatest achievement of the Second Beast’s miraculous power (as the “resurrection” represents the summit of the First Beast’s abilities).

Figure 4.8 provides an approximate reconstruction of the chronological sequence implied in vss. 12-18:

Figure 4.8

(Implied: Mortal Wound of First Beast healed: vss. 12b,14b, cf. 3-4)

1. Exercises Authority of First Beast, and Performs Miracles (vss. 12-14) to Secure Global Devotion to the First Beast
2. Orders of Erection of the Image to the Beast (v14b)
3. Animates Image to the Beast (v. 15a)
4. Image of the Beast orders Death Decree against Saints (v. 15b)
5. Masses Receive Mark of Beast on Pain of Economic Sanctions (vss. 16-17)

Inasmuch as the features of vss. 11-18 are more complex than those in vss. 1-10, the scheme I have proposed remains open to revision; nevertheless, I remain confident in its grasp of the text. Ed Christian submitted the following alternative scheme for vss. 11-18, also organizing the passage’s materials into a single chiasm (Figure 4.9; reproduced from Shea 2000, 226):

Figure 4.9

- A Exercising the authority of the first beast (1-2a)
 - B Worship (12b)
 - C The deadly head wound that was healed (12c)
 - D Miraculous signs, how (13)
 - D¹ Miraculous signs, why (14a)
 - C¹ The deadly wound that was healed (14b)
 - B¹ Worship (15)
 - A¹ Exercising the authority of the first beast through his image (16-18)

Christian frames his chiasm around the references back to the deadly head wound in 12 and 14. D and D¹ follow the same principle of organization I observed above, that is, the pairing of action and resultant or intended effect. Unfortunately, Christian does not note the same principle at work in 15 and 17, so as to distinguish them as distinct textual blocks.

Christian's model also fails to the larger division of 12-17 into two halves, the first referring to the "inhabitants of the earth," and the second to the saints. I believe this shift from worship to persecution is a critical turning point in the passage.

I also find his correlation of 1-2a and 16-18 as references to the exercise of the First Beast's "authority" (albeit in the second instance through the image) dubious. Although the use of thought parallelism is acceptable, it would seem that a parallel appearance of the word "authority" (or another key word/phrase) should be present in 16-18. As earlier noted in Figure 4.6, the proper chiastic parallel to 12a appears in 14a, where the miraculous signs themselves are given the Second Beast "to exercise in the presence [of the First beast]," which qualification is also used of "authority" in 12:4. The miraculous powers compliment the ruling authority exercised through the Second Beast: the former a gift from (presumably) the Dragon, and the latter from the First Beast.

5

Analysis of Texts Outside Rev 13

Issue 3: Temporal Relation of the Second Coming to the 42 months

An additional chronological note will complete our study of the prophetic period under discussion. At stake is the relationship of the Second Coming to that 42-month reign of the Beast.

Although Rev 13 does not describe those events that terminate the 42-month reign of the Beast, later chapters do. Those events occur in the following sequence:

1. In response to the persecutory activities of the two beasts, angels pour out seven “bowl judgments” to condemn the kingdom of the First Beast (cf. 16:10 where the fifth judgment falls upon the “throne” and “kingdom” of the Beast).
2. The two Beasts and the Dragon gather the masses to battle the heavenly hosts at the eschatological battle of Armageddon (16:13-14; 19:19).
3. Christ and the celestial armies emerge victorious (19:21). The Beasts themselves are captured and cast into the eternal fire (19:20; cf. 20:10).

The battle of Armageddon (or, the Second Coming Christ: 19:11-18; a direct celestial intervention in the history of earth) marks the end of the Beast’s dominion. In that the precursory “bowl” judgments attack the “kingdom” and “throne” of the beast, which Revelation 13 assigns to the 42 months: 13:5, the 42-month period must be understood as extending to the Armageddon event.

Summary

Having completed our survey of Rev 13 and related texts, we may now review our five, principal conclusions:

1. Any event interpreted as the prophetic fulfillment of “the healing of the wound” must precede the period assigned as the fulfillment of the prophetic period of “42 months.”
2. As a corollary, Adventists should acknowledge that only one prophetic period is in view in 13:1-18, commonly referred to as the “42 months.” This is the reign granted on a limited basis to the First Beast.
3. Any entity identified as the prophetic fulfillment of the Second Beast of Rev 13 must exist concurrently with the 42-month reign of that entity identified as the First Beast.
4. That entity identified as the Second Beast exists as a key figure in the events defining the period of the 42 months: namely, the universal worship of the Beast (especially through his “image”), the universal persecution of the saints, and the distribution of the mark of the Beast.
5. Adventist theologians should acknowledge that the 42-month period terminates at the very conclusion of human history (Armageddon).

The implications of these conclusions upon the historic Adventist eschatological paradigm are profound. Below are just *a few* of the corollary repercussions:

1. The traditional assignment of the period from 538-1798 as the 42 months proves impossible on the basis of point 5.
2. The traditional assignment of the deadly head wound to the year 1798 is untenable in view of points 1 and 5.
3. The United States can no longer be considered the Second Beast if Adventists assign the 42 months to the period stretching from 538-1798 on the basis of point 3 and 4.
4. On the basis of points 2 and 5, the Adventist Church must come to acknowledge that we are either anticipating a future period equivalent to the prophetic 42 months, or are currently living within that period.
5. The inspiration of Ellen White must be critically re-examined in the light of her “prophetic/inspired” embrace of an eschatological paradigm that proves exegetically untenable.

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