

Series	Gamma 16 – Study 12
Reference	Revelations 13
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Welcome back to Gamma. This is study 12. Today we will be looking at Revelations 13. So, before we start, let's have a word of prayer. Lord we just thank you for gathering us back together again. Help us understand this chapter in Revelations that it may glorify your name. We ask for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Now, we've gone through almost halfway, more than halfway in our study of the Book of Revelations, where there is a section which is called deeper conflict. We're looking at Revelations 12 all the way to 15 verse 4, and we're looking at a deeper dimensions of spiritual conflict between the church and the world. Now in chapter 11 we looked at the witnessing church being persecuted. In Revelations 12, we looked at the same church being persecuted, but cast as a pregnant woman. Today, we're going to look at the focus will be on satanic empires, controlled by Satan. Revelations 13 to 15. So this is the defeated Satan and the persecution is actually a sign that his time is short and today's chapter we'll focus on the two entities, the two beasts. All right. Let's look at the first beast.

The first beast is otherwise called the antichrist.

1 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. 2 And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth.

Now see monsters always represent evil kingdoms that persecute God's people. You see whenever the Jewish people looked at the sea, the swirling waters represented chaos and evil and loss of organization. So here you actually have a beast coming out of the multitude of a rebellious humanity against God. And this beast had 10 horns and seven heads and 10 crowns on its horns and this is the same kind of description for the devil. If you look at chapter 12, it says,

Rev 12:3 Another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven head and ten horns and on his heads seven diadems.

So this indicates complete of oppressive power and worldwide effect. So this is a worldwide power, just like dragon. And then later on verse 2 says,

2 And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth.

So where does this come from? Well, if you look back in Daniel chapter seven prophecy, the same imagery of animals are used. In fact, there is Babylon, which was the lion and Persia which was the bear and Greece which was the leopard. See, all of them were predicted to come one after another. And so therefore this particular beast has speeches of three of these particular kingdoms and a fourth beast Rome room coming out and you saw Daniel chapter 7:7

After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had a great iron teeth; it devoured and broke into pieces and stamped what was left on its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had 10 horns.

This is the fourth beast. And in modern times, we've seen the same. I've you look at this is a nice cartoon drawn years ago of China being populated and being oppressed by Western powers. China is like the dragon, which is on the floor, being taken advantage of by the bear which is Russia, England is represented by the lion. Then they've got Greece, Italy, Japan, and the United States all taking advantage of China in those days.

And again, in modern times, America is represented by the Eagle, Russia is by the bear, China is by the dragon, Asian countries are tiger. And today we have a trade war between the United States and the dragon, which is basically China. Now, are they just kingdoms or individual tyrants? I think there's evidence for both. If you look at Daniel chapter seven verse 23. As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom. So, it tells you there is a kingdom on earth that shall be different from all other kingdoms. And in chapter 13 verse five, the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous names and it was allowed to exercise authority for 42 months, which means this is a governmental system that exercises authority, verse seven, authority was given to it over every tribe, people, language and nations.

On the other hand, Daniel chapter 7 verse 17. On this side, there were four great beasts were actually four Kings that arise from the earth. And in Revelations 19 versus 20b there are two, the two beasts were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. So there is evidence that is both kingdoms and also tyrants. And in fact, if you look at the 2-Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 3-4

Let no one deceive you in any way for the day will not come until rebellion comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called gods or object worships, so that he takes a seat at the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God one,

1-John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrist have come.

So therefore is don't only kingdoms, but they are also actual people, tyrants. All right. In fact, the leader would actually mentioned the leader, you mean his kingdom. For example, this is a recent newspaper article. As Trump pulls out of Syria, his voters are following along and that's ominous. Is this Trump pulling up, Trump represents America. So if Trump pulls up means America pulls out as well. Now, if you look in 1 John chapter four verses 2 to 3

By this you know the spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is a spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

So which these antichrist people are successive people coming and at the time when John wrote it, the antichrist was already there. So what did he mean? If it was John during the reign of Domitian. If it was earlier, it'd be Nero or Augustus. Now these beasts were given authority.

And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. ...4And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast,

So this dragon gives his authority to this beasts. But again, if you look further down the passage, you can find

5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to

exercise authority for forty-two months. 6 It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

Here John writes, everything was given, which means this is in the divine passive, which indicates God's sovereignty. Although they had power where the devil does give it some power but the rest of it is actually given by God. That means his power, his terror, his evil was allowed by God, indicating God's sovereignty. Now, the next thing you notice about this beast, verse three

3 One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed,

What is a mortal wound?

If you have a gunshot to your heart or gunshot your brain, that's a mortal wound. You don't survive from that. But the funny thing is that it's a contradiction, it's a mortal wound you are supposed to die, but he didn't die. All right. What does it mean? Well, there are couple of possibilities. It could be in the past Nero committed suicide and then Domitian rose again as successive Kings, or it could be a particular nation, like for example, the fall of the British kingdom. And then the American kingdom came up, all successive rise and falls of antichrist and their governments and there will be one day in ultimate antichrist and this beast. This is possible. Or it could mean the symbolic defeat of Satan by Christ. Satan's beast is a defeated beast because he has got a mortal wound, but he's still carrying on for a while. So it most likely, uh, this either success, probably successive rise and falls off antichrist and their governments. And although they're already defeated.

Now this mortal wound that was healed is a parody of the lamb. You know what happened to the lamb? Jesus died, was sacrificed and he rose again from the dead. Same thing here with the beast. The beast is trying to parody that, which means he had a mortal wound and yet it's survived and it grew.

Now this beast demands worship

4 And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

So here is a world power, a tyrant that demands worship and we have seen this in real life. Look at North Korea, Kim Jong IL. He rules over that hermit nation and there are 35 thousand statues, just like this all over the country where the people actually worship him as god. World War II, Joseph Goebbels was the propaganda minister and he actually actively promoted this idea that Hitler was a God. And in fact Hitler diary, he writes himself that, today I've made a covenant with Satan.

So Hitler is a form of a beast. Looking at China today, the worrying trend, communist party gaining power. This is a church and you have to put on the church, these words, follow the party, obey the party and be grateful to the party. The church is now being hijacked to the party and if you look at the picture, here at the middle of the church is not the picture of Jesus Christ or the cross. It is a picture of dictator.

5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. 6 It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

So what are these blasphemous words?

Well blasphemy is making yourself equal to God. There's John chapter 5 verse 18.

This is why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own father, making himself equal to God.

So the Jews at that time were angry with Jesus, because Jesus was equating himself to God. And you're right. If anybody who is not God, if you're a man and give yourself the same status as God that is blasphemy and that is why they wanted to kill Jesus. At that time, Augustus called himself son of God, Domitian our master and our God. So here the empires and the tyrants that rule it, style themselves as God.

7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, 8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

So persecution is successful. He was allowed to conquer and the same thing happened in Revelations Chapter 11, the two witnesses, which is symbolic of the church.

Rev 11:7 And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them.

They are protected until their mission is over. Here is Revelations chapter 13, verses 9 to 10.

9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear: 10 If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain.

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints. It is a quotation from Jeremiah through equally troubling times. When you have the beast persecuting you, what do you do? John says, listen, if anyone is going to be taken captive he will be captive. If the going to be killed, he will be killed. Which means this is how God works. God allows evil to come on, both good and evil people in the world, but he has a purpose. Psalm 105 looks at the life of Joseph, verse 16

16 When he summoned a famine on the land and broke all supply of bread,
17 he had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave.
18 His feet were hurt with fetters; his neck was put in a collar of iron;
19 until what he had said came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him.
20 The king sent and released him; the ruler of the peoples set him free;
21 he made him lord of his house and ruler of all his possessions,
22 to bind his princes at his pleasure and to teach his elders wisdom.

Here God clearly describes that he actually send a famine into the land of Israel but before that he sent into exile, he sent into Egypt Joseph, sold as a slave. I'm sure Joseph didn't like to be sold as a slave. So those will be captive, they will be captive. Those who will be killed, they will be killed. This is God's divine plan. And in his captivity, God tested him and using this method God actually saved the nation of Israel because Joseph made Egypt prosper and saved them. He saved Israel from the famine.

Here's a letter from Pastor Jin who is a Chinese Christian pastor who was put in jail, during this time of recent persecution and he writes

Solitary confinement was dreadful, he remembers, being alone with your thoughts can be exhausting. I prayed a lot and sang worship songs as the days dragged on doubts crept in. I began to go over and over the same question. If I'm called of God, am I willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of the gospel for lord Jesus Christ. It was like God knew how long I needed in detention to make up my mind. By the last day of confinement, I made peace with myself and with God, it was settled. I knew without a doubt that no matter what has happened, I would serve the Lord.

You see the protection and the sealing of God does not mean you don't go to prison. There will be times when you go to prison, there will be times when others will be killed and the same persecution comes in test the people of God and make them actually stronger, and it implies, those whose name in the book of life will actually endure.

7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, 8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Which means everyone worships the beast are the ones whose name is not in the book of life, which means those who don't worship the beast their names are in the book of life. They are the ones who will actually endure.

10 If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain.

I've told you a story about Jim Elliot, a very famous missionary some time ago, who reached out to the Orca Indians in South America on the 8th of January of, you know, five of them landed on her plane. And before they actually got to open their mouth to talk about the gospel of Jesus Christ, they were killed tragically, but you know, he was killed. Didn't have much time for ministry, but what happened? You know, these are the words he said,

He is the fool that gives what he cannot lose to gain that which he cannot lose.

His life, however short it was determined by God spun off the effect on all his, the five of them their widows. Their widows actually carry on the work to reach out to the Orca Indians. Elizabeth Elliot, the most famous of them has written about more than 14 books to encourage and many of us have read that. He actually inspired thousands upon thousands of missionaries because of one man's death. This is his brother, Burt Elliot, not as dynamic as a brother, Jim. He studied at the Multnomah Bible College in 1949. He was invited by a missionary to work in Peru and he actually planted 170 churches over 34 years.

Now you look at the two of them. Somebody described Jim Elliot. He was a great meteor, streaking through the sky. Some people short-lived the meteor didn't last very long, just for a little while but great effect. Burt was described as a faint star in the distance that faithfully rises night after night, always there, always faithful, always doing the same thing, boring, but he planted 174 churches. So as persecution comes upon the church, we worry will I be captured? Will I be killed? You see, whoever is going to be captured is going to be captured. Whoever is going to be killed, is going to be killed. God has got you. And you have in front of you a testimony, a mission and it will be accomplished for the glory of God. And our response endurance and faith of the saints.

1 Peter 4:19 Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful

creator while doing good.

So we are not to be cowed, we are not to be afraid, we are not to give up and we are not to hide at home, we have to entrust our souls because no matter what happens he will determine our future, not the devil.

Now let's look at the second beast. This second piece is a kind of false prophet.

11 Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.

So therefore in form it may look like a Holy person but when he speaks deception like a dragon.

12 It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.

So therefore here we have a tag team, someone coming a false prophet actually encourages and moves people to basically support the first beats, they work in tandem. All right, and the primary role is religious. If you're looking in chapter 16,

And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, out of the mouth of the false prophet three unclean spirits like frogs.

Chapter 19 verse 20,

And the beast was captured and with it the false prophet.

So therefore the second beasts is a false prophet whose primary role is to point you in a religious, to give worship to the first beast and Jesus warns of this. When he was with the disciples, he says in Matthew 7 verses 15 to 16,

Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Chapter 24 verse 5,

For many will come in my name, saying I am the Christ and they will lead many astray.

And we see this time and time again, so many false prophets coming in terms of pastas or Pope's. So we have the first beast, loudly and defiantly is against God. The second beast are the false prophet makes the beast claim sound plausible and persuasive, which means it gives credibility and prominence to the first beast and it forces people to compromise with cultures and idolatrous institutions. So here we have a situation, you have got the father, the son and Holy spirit. And here you got the un-Holy Trinity, which is Satan which authorizes the beast, who has got a mortal wound and who lives just like the son who was crucified there is resurrected. So you've got Satan, the beast and the false prophet. So this is an attempt from Satan to parody God.

Now let's look at the other situation where everyone is all excited about the mark of the beast.

What is this mark of the beast?

16 Also 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, 17 so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. 18 This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.

What is this? Well in ancient times, people are marked. Today, a lot of people are marked, they mark themselves with tattoos. The significance of the marks were that there were tribal identifications. If you belong to a particular tribe, you have the kind of mark. Mark of ownership and if you are a particularly nasty person, they may actually mark you to disgrace you or the mark indicates loyalty to a particular pagan deity. And today we've got all sorts of people thinking that 666, the mark of the beast is, maybe your credit card or your IC card. If you've got barcodes, thought to be the mark of the beast or barcodes inside chips in your hands or your finger. Remember the finger identification that could be part because when your finger marks can be translated into a number of numerals, which you can use to identify people.

Here was actual marking on Jewish prisoners during World War Two, which is a sort of a Mark of the beast.

Is this physical or spiritual?

Well, there are two kinds of marks in Revelations. And so therefore they would have similar characteristics. If one is physical, the other will be physical. If one is spiritual the other will be spiritual as well. So here you have in this particular chapter, mark on the right hand and our forehead. So they cause it, no one can buy and sell. Revelation seven, you look back at the church,

do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.

Revelations 14. Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the lamb with him 144,000, who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

Now, if you're a Christian, can you look at each other's forehead today? Would you see anything written? Do you see big name Jesus Christ is it. It's not a physical mark, it is the mark of God and the lamb is not physical. You think the Mark of the beast will be physical. So that's not logical. And there's a binary nature of the book of Revelations. You either had the mark of the beast or the mark of God. So therefore the mark of God is either a seal or they got washed robes, or they conquer, they got white stones, hidden manna, morning star, pillar in God's temple, crown, name written the book. All these are symbolic ways of which we are given the information that we are belonging to God.

Now the other one is this is invisible, Ephesian chapter 1 verse 13.

In him, you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation and believed in him were sealed with a promised Holy spirit.

So the seal is the guarantee. So this seal is not visible. What is the purpose of this mark? Well, the purpose of this is to discriminate against people who do not worship the beast, is discriminating against Christians. All right. So if you look in verse 15,

15 And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.

So therefore it marks you out. If you don't have the mark of beast, you would be slain.

16 Also 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, 17 so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.

So therefore the purpose is to discriminate against the people who do not worship the beast so that they could be persecuted. Now if you look forward in the next chapter, which we'll be doing soon, Revelations 14:9

And another angel, a third, followed them saying with a loud voice. "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives the mark on his forehead or his hand, he will drink of the wrath of the wine of God's wrath.

The second purpose of the mark is to identify the people who actually worship the beast. If you worship the beast, you will receive the mark. If you don't worship the beast you won't receive them out. Marks, outward signs are signs of in what reality. For example, if you're a Jew, you'd be circumcised on the eighth day and means you're a Jew. If you're a Christian, you get baptized because you're a Christian. Now, if you're not a Christian, if you get baptized, doesn't mean you're a Christian. It doesn't because signs are outward signs of an inward reality. The mark of the beast is most likely a sign that identifies you as something that you already are. It does not make you something you wish you are not. And I've got so many people, basically coming to me and wonder what if you had a house in Glen Marie state, big bungalow and the number there is 666. Oh, I better not. You've given me free this house, also I won't stay. You know, why I'm the mark of the beast.

The mark is a sign of what you are, is a mark of loyalty and devotion of worship. So it doesn't matter what address you have or what Mark you have your hand. Because the mark is only a sign of an inward reality. If you don't worship the beast, the mark doesn't mean anything. All right the mark effects. The mark is causing economic exclusion, verse 17

17 so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.

We can see that happening most ominously in China. Why? Because China started a system of social credits. So everybody has a credit score and they use the we-chat ID to look at it and basically wherever you go, there are 200 million cameras that actually look at where you go. Okay. Everything is based on your We Chat ID and if your dog has walked without a leash, you will get a negative credit. If you didn't pay your rent, you get a negative credit. And up to this date, 17 million Chinese people have been denied even buying train tickets. And if you worship in a church that is not authorized by the state, you will be marked. If you actually let people use your house for a house church, that house you will incur a huge fine, and it is so huge, you cannot pay it right. Your two children can't get a scholarship, you can't apply for a bank loan. It's economic exclusion, and it is the face of persecution into the future.

What about the actual number 666. Some people thought was Ronald Wilson Reagan 666. Right. Actually, it's not based in that. Ancient times all alphabets have a numerical equivalent. If you can see this is Hebrew and every Hebrew letter has a numerical equivalent. This is simple English, A is equal to 1, Y is equals 25. If your name is James, it will amount to 39. And people have thought that this beast is Nero Caesar, but the trouble is Nero Caesar is the number. If it's a Hebrew transliteration of the Greek form of the Latin name, you really got to twist it around to make it 666.

Others have calculated the numbers for Martin Luther himself as 666. Caligula, which is the Roman emperor, the Pope or even Hitler. Some people recently have calculated to be William Jefferson Clinton, but if you look in verse 18 it says, this calls for wisdom. It means you have to think about it.

18 This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.

Because 777 is a perfection completion, God's number. 666 is man's number, which is imperfection and failure. Now more importantly, how do we apply today's lesson? You see, how do we as Christians live in a world of evil where persecution is ramping up and more effective. If you look at 200 million cameras in China, all you have to do is go to a football match in China and every single bad hat recognized by facial recognition is picked up immediately and they apply this for Christians. What can you do?

Our approach to government. Governments are authority for societal good. We are to be a law abiding. We are to submit as duties as citizens. You look at Paul. Paul says,

let every person be subject to governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Government is instituted by God, however evil and Paul is talking about a time when there were evil Roman emperors, much more evil than what we have today and yet he could say, we have to be subject to governing authorities, which have been instituted by God, which means Roman emperor was instituted by God. Romans 13:4

For he is God servant for your good. Nero is God's servant for your good, but if you do wrong be afraid for, he does not bear the sword in vain for he is the servant of God and avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

1-Timothy chapter 2

First of all I urge that supplication and prayers and intercessions and thanksgiving be made for all people, for Kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

So here Paul is saying we have to submit, we also to pray for whoever is in government because on the whole, the exercise God's authority so that they will have a peaceful, quiet, dignified life. What if you have got an ungodly government. We've got person like Nero who persecutes Christians on a whim. Well, if they are anti Christian we are to endure and preserve freedom. That is our role as Christians in society. Bersih for example, we've got a corrupt prime minister. The people came out, Malaysians and they demanded justice, they demanded freedom and that is a right thing to do. We have got people who are Christian pastors and others as well disappeared. All right. We hold them accountable. There is protest. We don't forget about them. We pray for them. They are always in our mind to support the family and you can see Susanna Koh is Pastor's Koh wife, even going up to appeal to the United States ambassador to Malaysia, keeping our government accountable, but we do not compromise with the governments.

Here's a really sad thing. China and the Vatican reach a deal on the appointment of bishops in 2018, which means this current Pope actually made a deal with Xi Jinping that he would appoint only the bishops appointed by him, which is completely losing the plot because the church is not subject, the

head of the church is not the Pope. The head of the church is not Xi Jinping. The head of the church is Jesus Christ. People have to be chosen based on godliness not on their loyalty to the state. You look at America, the recent debacle there with this president, all the pastors prophesying that Donald Trump would have a second term. Obviously they are all false prophets, isn't it.

This is where the Christian Church becomes too closely align with the governments. In fact, Cal Thomas, one of them actually regretted it. He actually wrote.

The evangelicals are missing a greater point. If you're not careful, the political activism overwhelms the primary message, which is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The only thing that is able to truly change a life and by extension change a nation and no politician can fill that role.

So therefore they regret. We have got now the dangerous idolatry of Christian Trumpism. The Christians have so bought into it that they've lost total credibility. Here's one of their evangelical leaders called Beth Moore. She says,

I've never seen anything in these United States of America. I found more astonishing, seductive and dangerous to the saints of God, the Trumpism, the founder of Living Proof Ministries sitting.

So here the most dangerous influence on the Christian church in America today is Trumpism. That's when the church aligns itself politically with someone. If you look here is a picture of the members of the Early Reign Church. They have continued to hold Sunday services sometimes at a bank on the river near the churches former headquarters because they'd been banned. The church have been torn down. What do Christians do? They endure. They continue. They will worship wherever they go. Here is Chengdu Xishuipang Reformed Church, their elders write,

If you see the police, national security or community workers, greet them with gentleness. If they try to grab the microphone, I asked the brothers sitting in front to stop them.

So there is resistance and yet you treat them with politeness and gentleness because we still love them. Pastor Timothy, a persecuted Christian pastor,

From our youngest children to our old brothers and sisters. Everyone knows the power of prayer. Timothy says it doesn't matter what we are facing or what we have been accused of we all pray. Everybody knows that as soon as persecution comes, we drop to the ground and pray. God is so faithful. He always answers us, sometimes the most wonderful, even bizarre ways. No one here wants darkness. They all want the light.

Lastly he writes,

Something really wonderful is happening. He says, I think government is actually scared of our church because of our determination, our love and our unity. A few years ago, we started out with a handful of believers. Now we are a few thousand. They are really worried.

So actually persecution is a sign that the devil has lost. It is a sign of their fear. What do we do as Christians when persecution, we endure and continue to go to good work. May God grant you comfort and protection as you understand these words and glorify him.