

A Study of the Book of Revelation

The Mark of the Beast-part 1

Chapter 13

Review

In our last study, we learned that God has always had a remnant that remained true and faithful to His Word. We saw that there would be a remnant that would exist at the end. The remnant would:

- 1) Worship the Creator God and keep the commandments of God which include the Seventh-day Sabbath.
- 2) Have the testimony of Jesus Christ which is “the Spirit of prophecy”.
- 3) Teach the Three Angel’s messages.
- 4) Become a worldwide movement.

We saw from Revelation 12:17 that “*the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ*”. Chapter 12 ended with the warning that the devil would come after the remnant to destroy them. Revelation 13 covers the final crisis facing the remnant---that is, the MARK OF THE BEAST.

Revelation 13:1-6

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast saying, who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell therein."

Daniel 7:17, 18, 23 tells us in no uncertain terms that a "beast" represents a kingdom. In Revelation 13, this beast not only represents a kingdom but a combination of political and religious power. The Bible says that this beast arises out of the sea. John tells us that water represents “*peoples, multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*”

Revelation 17:15

"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."

Notice that the beast in Revelation is made up of the combination of the first four beast of Daniel chapter 7, which also rises from the sea. This connection helps us the understand that the fourth beast and little horn from Daniel chapter 7 is the same that John sees in Revelation chapter 13.

Revelation 13:2

"And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."

Notice that the beast got its power from the dragon. Not only did it get the dragon's spiritual power, but also its geographical seat and political authority.

Revelation 12:4-7

*"And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and **the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born**. And she brought forth **a man child**, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,"*

Who is the Man child? The Bible teaches that it was Jesus Christ. When Jesus was born, who stood ready to devour him as he was born in Bethlehem? None other than the Roman Empire. It was Rome which condemned Christ, the Son of God. It was Roman soldiers who guarded the tomb. It was a Roman seal placed on the stone which revealed the purpose of Satan to keep Jesus in the grave. And friends, according to the book of Revelation, the dragon uses Rome to give its political seat of authority to the beast.

1. **So, the first characteristic of the beast of Revelation 13 is its political origins. The Bible says it receives its seat of government, power and authority, from pagan Rome.**

History tells us that as Rome grew less important in trade and political influence, power shifted to the East. Constantine moved the capital from Rome to Constantinople on the Black Sea in 330 A.D. In the year 331 A.D. the city of Rome was given by pagan Rome to papal Rome. This city was henceforth to be the seat of papal Rome. If you were to go to Rome and visit the Vatican Museum, you would see a giant picture 75 feet long. This picture shows Constantine giving Rome over to Pope Sylvester. Constantine gave over to Pope Sylvester the seat of pagan Rome as its center of worship and thought.

In 410 A.D., Barbarian hoards sacked Rome. A terrible state of upheaval followed. In 533 A.D., Justinian, the Emperor of Eastern Rome, sent word to the Bishop of Rome, known as the pope, that his hands were full in the East. He, therefore, declared by an imperial edict that the pope in Rome would become the political leader of the West.

From the succession of the Caesars came the succession of the Pontiffs. We read in Stanley's History,

"The popes filled the place of the vacant emperors at Rome, inheriting their power, prestige, and titles from paganism....Constantine left all to the Bishop of Rome...The papacy is but the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon its grave."(p. 40)

So it was, the papacy filled the void of the departed Roman Empire. Thus the dragon gave its seat, power, and authority to the Roman church as a direct fulfillment of Revelation 13:2

From Biblical prophecy and history, we can see that the papacy is the beast of Revelation 13. There is no mistaking it. The Bible is not pointing at sincere people in the Roman Catholic Church who love Jesus and wish to keep His commandments. The Bible is talking about a religious system which has blinded human minds to the gospel of Jesus Christ. **In the Bible, beasts only refer to political kingdoms. So the Roman church did not become a beast until it abandoned the gospel of peace and took the sword of the state to enforce religious authority.**

Revelation 13:3, 4

*“And I saw **one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast saying, who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”***

In 1798, when General Berthier took the pope captive, the papacy received what appeared to be a deadly wound. It lost its worldwide political influence and authority. Until 1929, the papacy’s civil authority was limited to the Vatican. However, in 1929, Cardinal Gasparri (representing pope Pius XI) and Benito Mussolini (representing King Victor Emmanuel III) signed the Lateran Treaty. Thus making Roman Catholicism, by national law, the official state religion of Italy. It also established the Holy See as a sovereign country, which made the Vatican the world’s smallest independent nation, at just 110 acres. They have their own money, postal system, radio station, internet domain, and exorcist. That event initiated the process of the *“healing of the deadly wound.”* The Roman Catholic system of religion again became a religious/political power. Thus the healing of **the “beast”** had begun. The papacy’s role continued to expand, until now it is the only religious power to receive special envoys and ambassadors.

2. The second characteristic of the beast is in Revelation 13:3,4,7 in which the beast is depicted as a worldwide religious system.

Revelation 13:3, 4, 7

*v. 3 “And I saw **one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.”***

*v. 4 “And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, **Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?”***

*v. 7 “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and **power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.***

It is a “Catholic” power. The word “Catholic” simply means “universal”.

3. The third characteristic of the beast is recorded in Revelation 13:5,6. Here the Bible teaches that the beast would reign supreme for 1260 years.

Revelation 13:5, 6

*“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and **power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.** And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.”*

42 month’s times 30 days in a month equals 1260 prophetic days. This is the same time period described in Revelation chapter 12, where the woman goes into the wilderness for 1260 prophetic days. As we have already discovered, a prophetic day is equal to a literal year (see Ezekiel 4:6 and Numbers 14:34). This principle of Bible prophecy has been understood by great Christian thinkers for two thousand years. It is nothing new. We used it in understanding the 2300-year prophecy of Daniel 8 and the 70 weeks of Daniel 9. Since this is a prophecy, we again use it here.

The Bible is clear. This power would be built on the foundation of the Roman Empire and continue for 1260 years. In March, 533 A.D., the Roman emperor Justinian declared by imperial edict that the bishop of Rome was head over all churches, the definer of doctrine, and the corrector of heretics. He also

declared him head of the empire in the West. But this edict at first did nothing. For the Pope could not exercise it while Rome was besieged by Ostrogoth's, the last of Daniel's three horns.

Remember Daniel's prophecy of the rise of the "little horn?" In Daniel 7:24, the prophet told us that the "little horn" would uproot three of the ten kingdoms of Europe. In A.D. 538 the last horn, the Ostrogoth's, disbanded from their siege on Rome. No more were they to exercise influence over that city again. So **the year 538 A.D. marks the beginning of the exercise of political authority by the Roman church.** This continued for 1260 years uninterrupted until the year 1798.

Revelation 13:9, 10

*"If any man have an ear, let him hear. **He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.**"*

In 1798, when God's time had come, Napoleon sent his French general, Louis-Alexandre Berthier, to the Vatican. Berthier took Pope Pius VI captive to France, where he died one year later in Valence. Just as God had predicted, at the precise moment in history, the political power of Rome was broken. God predicted in Revelation 13:10 the exact manner of the papacy's deadly political wound. The leader of the power who had taken the God's people into captivity, now goes into captivity himself. This didn't close down the Catholic Church, it took away its political power until the deadly wound was healed in 1929.

4. The fourth characteristic of the beast is blasphemy.

Revelation 13:5, 6

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."

The Bible's definition of blasphemy is two-fold. Jesus was accused of blaspheme twice.

A. A man claiming to be equal with God.

John 10:33

*"I and my father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of these works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but **for blasphemy; and because that you, being a man, maketh thyself God.**"*

B. A man claiming to forgive sin.

Mark 2:5-7

*"When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of palsy, son, thy sins are forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, why doth this man thus speak **blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only.**"*

In both of these instances Jesus is accused of blasphemy. But, Jesus was God, therefore, He could forgive sins. However, any other man that claims to be God or the ability to forgive sins, is speaking blaspheme. So the question arises, **does the papacy claim the privilege and prerogatives of God?** Unfortunately, the facts indicate that it does.

Reading from the Roman Catholic Ecclesiastical Dictionary,

"The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God....He is likewise the divine monarch and supreme emperor and king of kings so that if it were possible that the angels err the faith, they could be judged and excommunicated by the pope."

Again reading from the National Catholic Counsel, Pope Leo XIII says,

"We hold upon the earth the place of God Almighty."

From the book, Duties and Dignities of the Priest by Antonio Leguori, a book used in Catholic seminaries to train priests, page 39, the following is quoted

"Were the Redeemer to descend into a church and sit in the confessional to administer the sacrament of penance, and a priest to sit in a confessional, Jesus would say over the penitent: "Ego te absolvo." The priest would likewise say over each penitent: "Ego te absolvo." And the penitents of each would be equally absolved."

Key Point:

Only Jesus can forgive your sins, and wash your record clean.

Acts 4:12

*"Neither is there salvation in any other: for **there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**"*

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, he [Jesus] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

5. The fifth identifying characteristic of the beast is oppression. The beast is a persecuting power.

Revelation 13:7-10

*"And it was given unto him **to make war with the saints, and to overcome them:** and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth **shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.** If any man have an ear, let him hear. **He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.** Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."*

Here is a picture of a counterfeit religious system that uses the sword to enforce its beliefs and bring people into line. It is a simple fact of history that between 50 and 200 million men, women, and children were martyred (killed) during the Dark Ages because they did not conform to papal claims. I think of John Huss and Jerome of Prague. I think of the simple living **Waldensian's who died by the thousands rather than give up their faith.** My mind goes to the inquisition, the tribunal of the Jesuits, that massacred millions in the name of doctrinal purity and clerical order.

The Roman Catholic Western Watchmen declares:

"The Church has persecuted; only a tyro [one who is uninformed in church history] will deny that."

In the History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe, Vol 11, pg 3537 W. E. H. Kecky declares...

"That the church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a complete knowledge of history."

You see, friends, it is possible to believe with all of our hearts that we are on the right side, but be wrong. Even the Apostle Paul persecuted the church thinking he was doing the right thing for God. And then one day Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus and said, "Paul, why are you persecuting Me?" Paul was shocked to discover he was persecuting Jesus.

Revelation 13:9, 10

*"If any man have an ear, let him hear. **He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.** Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."*

This reveals that the papacy's political authority would end around the year 1798 when the church, who took into captivity the faithful Christians of the Middle Ages, would experience captivity. "**He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.**" God's people are immediately identified following Rome's captivity in 1798, "*Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*"

Revelation 13:11, 12

*"And I beheld **another beast** coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed."*

This second beast represents the rise of another kingdom with lamb-like qualities that arises around the year 1798, when the first beast is going into captivity as recorded in Revelation 13:10. **Four characteristics identify the second lamb-like beast to be the United States of America.**

1. The first characteristic is its location on the earth.

All the other beasts of Revelation come up out of the sea. The sea represents multitudes of people. The multitudes of people is John's day were in what we would call Europe today.

Revelation 17:15

"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."

The other beasts rise out of the populated areas of the world. The lamb-like beast comes out of the earth. The earth, in contrast to the sea, is significant. It represents an area of scarce population with few peoples. It is a fitting symbol of the New World in America.

2. The second characteristic of this lamb-like beast is the period of its rise to power (around the year 1798).

Revelation 13:10, 11

*"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience of the faith of the saints. And **I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.**"*

The lamb-like beast arises during the same time that the first beast is going into captivity. The papal supremacy was broken by the French in 1798 when the pope was taken into captivity. This marked the end of the 1260 years, or the 42 prophetic months, mentioned in verse 5. Thus, the second beast must rise to prominence around 1798. What other world power was arising in the New World around this time? Your right, the United States of America.

3. The third characteristic is the global influence of its power.

Revelation 13:12

*"And **he exerciseth all the power of the first beast** before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to **worship the first beast**, whose deadly wound was healed."*

The papacy received its deadly wound in 1798 from secular atheism in the French Revolution. After the pope was taken into captivity, the secularism of the French Revolution, championed by men like Voltaire, spread like cancer throughout Europe. It was eventually adopted by Marx and Engel who became the intellectual fathers of Communism. The influence, which the Papacy had enjoyed in the European theater, was overtaken by atheistic secularism and materialism. It seemed as if it would never be regained. Indeed, it looked like the mortal wound inflicted by Napoleon was fatal. In 1929, a subtle shift occurred in the tide of events. In the famous edict which resulted in the restoration of the papal state, the Italian dictator, Mussolini, bequeathed to the Vatican both the land and the right to operate as a political entity within the small confines of Vatican City. But still, the influence of the Papacy was not fully restored. When the Berlin wall fell in 1989 and communism collapsed in the U.S.S.R. during the summer of 1991, the geopolitical influence of the papacy had triumphed. The papacy had defeated the ideology that inflicted the deadly wound on it. Once more, Rome was free to operate in Europe as it did during the Dark Ages. Friends, the deadly wound is now healed.

The Bible speaks of another beast which empowers the first beast (papal Rome). Since the Gulf War and the collapse of communism, geopolitical thinkers recognize the fact that there is now only one super power. That power is the United States. And, oddly enough, this super power has an **unnatural affinity** for Rome. In the February 24, 1992 issue of **Time magazine**, the cover story featured the title "*Holy Alliance - How Reagan and the Pope Conspired to Assist Poland's Solidarity Movement and Hasten the Demise of Communism.*" In this article, Carl Bernstein depicted The United States of America and the Roman Catholic Church in a close alliance on matters of religion and world politics. In the November 26, 2015 special edition of **US magazine**, entitled, Pope Francis His Journey To America, the author writes, "*To curry favor with Pope John Paul II, Reagan (President Ronald Reagan) defied the protest of groups as varied as the Moral Majority and the American Civil Liberties Union and established diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The result, as one national-security adviser put it, Was one of the great secret alliances of all time.*" Through the political muscle of the U.S. operating covertly, Rome was able to bring communism in Poland crashing down. There is no disputing the fact that Rome and the United States brought communism to a premature end.

The Bible says the lamb-like beast will exercise global power and authority like Rome did in the Middle Ages. Remember the Roman church did not have total world dominion. But, as the great religious superpower of Europe, it led the other nations to persecute God's people. Friends, there is only one

nation on earth who has the power to do that again. The only super power in existence today is, without a doubt, the United States of America.

4. The fourth characteristic is the lamb-like manner of its rise to power.

The Bible calls the second beast a lamb-like beast. A lamb represents a young animal. It is not an old beast. Thus it is not an old nation. It is a new power that arises to dominance. The lamb has two horns. Horns represent power in prophecy. The first beast had ten horns with crowns on it. But these horns are uncrowned. This indicates that there is no king associated with the lamb-like beast.

The lamb is a symbol of freedom and innocence. You have heard the expression if you live in the south, "free as a lamb." This expression aptly describes the carefree, joyful existence of a lamb. It is the opposite of the tyranny of the old world. It speaks, not of bondage, but of liberty. It speaks not of chains, but of freedom. It speaks not of oppression, but of tolerance. Thus, it is a democratic power.

In Revelation 5:6, the lamb is also a symbol of Christ. Therefore this power has its beginning as a Christian movement. Also remember, Christ alone is the One who offers true freedom. Likewise, this power pretends to offer freedom to the nations of the world.

It is a wonderful thing for this nation to be founded on principles of religious and political freedom. But the Revelator sees a change in this lamb-like quality of the second beast. He sees a union with the other beast, representing Rome, who was wounded in 1798 and whose wound was later healed.

Revelation 13:13-17

*“And he doeth great wonders, so that **he maketh fire come down from heaven** on the earth in the sight of men, And **deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by [the means of] those miracles** which he had power to do **in the sight of the beast**; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power **to give life unto the image of the beast**, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, **to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads**: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”*

This Lamb-like beast causes “**fire**” to come down “*out of heaven,*” and he “**deceives**” **men** by the “**miracles**” that it did “*in the sight of the beast.*” There are two notable examples when FIRE CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN. One is in the New Testament. The other is in the Old Testament.

1. At Pentecost, tongues of fire came down and empowered the disciples to win many for Christ. (Acts 2:1-4)
2. The Old Testament event was when Elijah withstood the 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. God sent fire to devour the sacrifice he offered. (1 Kings 18)

In both cases, the “*fire from God*” was used to help draw God’s people back to Him. In contrast, the “*false fire*” brought down “*in the sight of the beast*” is used to deceive and draw men away from God.

We see that this second beast will **give “life” (power) to the image of the beast**, and will cause those who don’t worship the image of the beast to be persecuted and killed. Thus, we see prophecy predicting

a time when false worship will be required. We saw the type or prophetic example of this in Daniel chapter 3, with the story of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image. Here we see Revelation's end-time application of this story.

Verse 16 speaks of receiving the mark of the beast "*in their right hand, or in their foreheads*". Those that receive the mark "*in their foreheads*" are those that "*accept*" it in their minds and follow it willingly. Those that have the mark "*in their right hands*" are those who, though they may not mentally ascribe to it, choose to follow or obey it for convenience sake.

The mark of the beast is placed on the parts of the body that are reserved for God's law.

Deuteronomy 6:1, 6-8:

*"Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the ordinances which the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it...And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. **And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.**"*

6. The sixth characteristic of the first beast is the number of his name. In Revelation 13:18, the Bible says it is 666.

Revelation 13:18

*"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count **the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.**" [The old English for 666.]*

In the Douay version of the Bible, which is the official version of Rome, the note under Revelation 13:18 says: "***The numerical value of the letters of his name shall make up this number.***"

In Our Sunday Visitor, a Catholic weekly printed in Huntington, Indiana, on Nov. 15, 1915, we read:

*"The title of the Pope of Rome is **Vicarius Filii Dei**. This is inscribed on his miter."*

The title of the Pope of Rome inscribed on some of his miters is the official title of a man who represents the Catholic Church. Using the Roman numeral system and assigning the value of the letters that have numeral equivalents (and "0" for the others), we get the following:

V	= 5	F	= 0	D	= 500
I	= 1	I	= 1	E	= 0
C	= 100	L	= 50	I	<u>= 1</u>
A	= 0	I	= 1		501
R	= 0	I	<u>= 1</u>		
I	= 1		53		112
*U	= 5				53
S	<u>= 0</u>				<u>501</u>
	112				666

(* The U and W were created from the V, therefore, they're value is the same as the V.)

There is absolutely no question about it. The first beast power of Revelation chapter 13 is the papal system of worship, and the second beast power is the United States which makes an image to the first

beast (Papal Rome) by uniting church and state. Since it is an image to the beast and not the resurgence of the first beast (Papal Rome), we see that it is the union of Protestant America joining hands with the government of the United States to enforce laws to worship the first beast (Papal Rome).

Let's summarize the six identifying marks of the first beast of Revelation chapter 13.

1. *The papacy received its seat of government, its power, and authority from pagan Rome.*
2. *The papacy is a worldwide system of worship.*
3. *It reigned supreme for 1260 years.*
4. *It speaks blasphemies, by claiming to be God on earth and the ability to forgive sins. By taking the privileges and prerogatives of God*
5. *By its own admission, it has persecuted and destroyed those who did not accept its teachings.*
6. *The pope's title (Vicarius Filii Dei) clearly adds up to 666.*

Since we have clearly identified the first beast as Papal Rome, the question that would remain, is what is their Mark and how do we avoid it? This will be the subject of our next study.