

# The 1<sup>st</sup> Beast of Revelation 13

Who is the beast? Those who receive the mark of the beast will be subject to the wrath of God. Yet those who refuse to receive the mark of the beast will receive the wrath of the beast. Thus it is most important to identify the beast of Revelation 13.

The Protestant reformers, including Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Knox, Wesley, and many others, recognized that the beast power was mentioned under various synonyms in Scripture. It was the little horn of Daniel 7, the man of sin, the son of perdition who introduces the mystery of iniquity in 2 Thessalonians 2, the antichrist of 1 John 2 and 4 and 2 John, Babylon of Revelation 14, 16, 17, 18, and the whore and scarlet beast of Revelation 17. (See Part 6.)

The Scripture provides us with so many identifying features of the beast power that there is left to us no possible doubt whatsoever. Remembering the synonymous terms used for the beast as listed above, we find the following identifying factors of the beast.

1. Arose from the fourth beast (the Roman Empire) of Daniel 7:7,8.
2. Displaced 3 of the 10 kingdoms into which the Roman Empire disintegrated — Daniel 7:8, 24.
3. Possessed human qualities — Daniel 7:8.
4. Spoke great words — Daniel 7:8.
5. Made war against God's saints and prevailed against them — Daniel 7:19-21, 25-28.
6. That war ceased when the saints possessed the kingdom of God — Daniel 7:22.
7. Is a kingdom — Daniel 7:24.
8. Will be different from the other 10 kingdoms — Daniel 7:24.
9. Shall speak great things against the Most High — Daniel 7:25.
10. Shall change times and laws — Daniel 7:25.
11. Shall possess authority for "time, times, and the dividing of times" — Daniel 7:25.
12. Its dominion shall be taken away in the judgment — Daniel 7:26.
13. It will be utterly destroyed — Daniel 7:26.
14. This power will prevail because of a falling away from the truth — 2 Thessalonians 2:3.
15. Opposes God — 2 Thessalonians 2:4.

16. Exalts itself above God — 2 Thessalonians 2:4.
17. Opposes true worship — 2 Thessalonians 2:4.
18. Sits in the temple of God — 2 Thessalonians 2:4.
19. Accepts the mystery of iniquity — 2 Thessalonians 2:7.
20. Will be destroyed at Christ's coming — 2 Thessalonians 2:8.
21. Will do the works of Satan — 2 Thessalonians 2:9.
22. Will use signs and lying wonders — 2 Thessalonians 2:9.
23. Will do unrighteously — 2 Thessalonians 2: 10.
24. Will accept strong delusions — 2 Thessalonians 2:11.
25. Is a liar — 1 John 2:22.
26. Denies the Father and the Son — 1 John 2:22.
27. Denies Christ came in the flesh (fallen nature) — 1 John 4:3,4.
28. Deceives — 2 John 7.
29. This power rises out of a symbolic sea — Revelation 13:1.
30. Has 7 heads, 10 horns, and 10 crowns — Revelation 13:1.
31. Its name is blasphemy — Revelation 13:1.
32. Has the characteristics of a leopard (Greece — see Daniel 7); a bear (Medo-Persia); and a lion (Babylon) — Revelation 13:2.
33. The dragon (Satan; see Revelation 12:9) gives him power and authority — Revelation 13:2.
34. One of his heads received a deadly wound — Revelation 13:3.
35. The deadly wound was healed — Revelation 13:3.
36. All the world would wonder after the beast — Revelation 13:3.
37. The power leads out in worship of the dragon (Satan; Revelation 12:9; 20:2) — Revelation 13:4.

**38. Satan gave him power — Revelation 13:4.**

39. The beast itself was worshipped — Revelation 13:4.
40. Other nations were not able to make war with him — Revelation 13:4.
41. He spoke great things and blasphemies — Revelation 13:5.
42. He continues 42 months — Revelation 13:5.
43. Blasphemed the heavenly tabernacle — Revelation 13:6.
44. Blasphemed them that dwell in heaven — Revelation 13:6.
45. Made war with the saints and overcame them — Revelation 13:7.
46. Possessed power over all the world — Revelation 13:7.
47. Will attract almost universal worship — Revelation 13:8.
48. Only the most dedicated of Christians will resist his power and authority — Revelation 13:8.
49. A second power arises exercising all the power of the beast — Revelation 13:11, 12.
50. The beast with the lamb-like horns will force all to worship the first beast — Revelation 13:12.
51. This second beast does great wonders — Revelation 13:13, 14.
52. The second beast deceives — Revelation 13:14.
53. The second beast makes an image to the first beast — Revelation 13:14.
54. The second beast enforces an universal death decree upon all, on behalf of the first beast — Revelation 13:15.
55. The second beast enforces the mark of the first beast — Revelation 13:17.
56. The second beast implements an economic boycott upon all who reject the mark of the beast — Revelation 13:17.
57. The number of the first beast is 666 — Revelation 13:18.
58. The beast (Babylon) is fallen because she has made all nations drink of the wine of her fornication — Revelation 14:8.

59. There is fearful retribution for any who receive the mark of the beast — Revelation 14:9-11.

60. The saints who reject the mark of the beast will be those who keep the commandments of God and have Christ's faith — Revelation 14:12.

61. The redeemed will have overcome the beast's mark — Revelation 15:2,3.

62. Those with the mark of the beast receive the seven last plagues — Revelation 16:1,2.

63. It receives the wrath of God — Revelation 16:19.

64. It will be judged — Revelation 17:1.

65. It commits spiritual fornication with national leaders and merchants — Revelation 17:2.

66. It is full of spiritual fornication (see Jeremiah 3:1-6) — Revelation 17:4.

67. The whore is Babylon — Revelation 17:5.

68. It murders saints — Revelation 17:6.

69. It shall be sent to perdition — Revelation 17:8.

70. It sits upon 7 mountains as does the city of Rome — Revelation 17:9.

71. It is one of the seven powers that have opposed God's truth, and returns to associate with the seventh, it being also the eighth — Revelation 17:10,11.

72. These 10 horns, which represent Europe (see Daniel 7:24), shall become united in purpose in order to provide power and authority to the beast — Revelation 17: 12, 13.

73. The 10 horns and the beast make war with God and His people — Revelation 17:14.

74. Eventually the 10 horns will hate the beast and attack it — Revelation 17:15-17.

75. The woman represents a great city which reigns over the world's leaders — Revelation 17:18.

76. Babylon is vile — Revelation 18:2,3.

77. God urgently calls all men to come out of her faith — Revelation 18:4,5.

78. There will be a terrible retribution for Babylon — Revelation 18:4,5.

79. She has prostituted herself with leaders of nations and merchants and will receive the plagues — Revelation 18:8-24.

80. The beast is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone — Revelation 19:20.

81. Those who reject the work of the beast will reign with God for 1000 years — Revelation 20:4.

The Bible exhibits more than 80 identifying marks of the beast power of Revelation 13. No other symbol is so specifically and irrefutably identified in Scripture. A minority of these identifying features are future, but the great majority are historical facts and thus can be documented. One power, and one only, fulfills all the criteria which have been historically completed — the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestant reformers were absolutely correct in their identification of the beast of Revelation 13 as the antichrist power and their identification of that power as the Papacy.

Martin Luther declared,

We are of the conviction that the Papacy is the seat of the real antichrist (quoted in LeRoy Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Vol.2, p. 256).

John Calvin declared,

I deny him to be the vicar of Christ .... He is antichrist — I deny him to be head of the church (*John Calvin Tracts*, Vol. 1, pp. 219,220).

John Knox stated,

That tyranny which the pope himself has for so many ages exercised over the church, the very antichrist and son of perdition of whom Paul speaks (*The Zurich Letter*, p.199).

John Wesley concluded that

Roman Papacy he [the antichrist] is, in an emphatical sense, the man of sin (John Wesley, *Antichrist and His Ten Kingdoms*, p.110).

These, and other reformers, did not come to this conclusion because of a desire to vilify the Roman Catholic Church. They were not simply taking a cheap shot at that church. Their writings reveal that they had carefully studied the evidence of Scripture and were forced by weight of that evidence to conclude that only the Roman Catholic Church fitted the criteria. Protestants of the present day who still recognize this fact are frequently accused of paranoia, papalophobia, by fellow Protestants who have taken no pains to study Scripture in relation to the matter and are caught up in the evil spirit of ecumenism.

The majority of Protestants who intelligently identify the beast of Revelation 13 as the Papacy have a deep love for the souls of their Roman Catholic friends. They recognize that many Roman Catholics are sincere in their convictions, but deceived. Recognizing Christ's plaintive plea,

Come out of her *my* people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues (Revelation 18:4, emphasis added),

we must clearly make the identification. It is painful to so identify such a popular religion, but no true Christian can refrain from presenting such an urgent, loving call, from God. It is no display of love for Roman Catholics to conceal that which Scripture reveals.

The Roman Catholic Church is the result of the paganization of Christianity which progressed rapidly from the fourth century. The focal point of the entry of paganism into the Christian Church was the "conversion" of the Roman Emperor Constantine in 321 A.D. Hordes of European pagans entered the fold, encouraged by the conversion of their emperor. But in most cases there was no heart conversion, no new birth experience. They desired to continue to practice their pagan worship within Christianity. Thus they introduced their day of worship, Sunday, sanitizing it as a memorial of Christ's resurrection. They introduced their idol worship, covering its pagan nature by providing Christian names for the idols, such as Mary, the apostles and Christ Himself. They introduced the pagan practice of sprinkling water on the head of the newborn in order to remove evil from them and designated this pagan practice, Christian baptism. Also, the relating of one's sins to the priests entered the Christian faith. The Bible concept of Christ as our only Mediator was lost.

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5).

The idea that the soul is immortal, borrowed from paganism, and defying the plain word of Scripture, was introduced. God alone has immortality.

Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen (1 Timothy 6: 15,16),

This led to the belief that virtuous men and women go to heaven when they die and the evil go to ever-burning torment. Christ plainly taught that we are united with Him, if faithful, not at death, but when He comes again.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14:1-3).

He also states clearly that the punishment of the wicked is eternal destruction.

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

The Bible knows nothing of the pagan concept of purgatory. Neither does the Bible provide salvation on the basis of monetary gifts.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10).

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

Nor does Scripture give the right to any human to destroy God's law. Any Roman Catholic can examine the Ten Commandments in a Catholic version of Scripture, such as the Douay or the Jerusalem Bibles, and read the true Ten Commandments. But in their catechisms they are taught to entirely discard the second commandment, to eliminate most of the fourth commandment and to divide the tenth commandment in two in order to preserve the number of ten commandments. The reason that the pope's Apostolic Letter, *Dies Domini*,<sup>2</sup> repeatedly refers to the Sabbath commandment as the third commandment rather than the fourth is because Catholicism has cast out the second commandment which states

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord the God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments (Exodus 20:4-6).

There is sound evidence to charge the Roman Catholic Church with the introduction of idolatry into the faith. Some claim that their veneration of idols is not evidence of idol worship. If this claim is valid, why then did the Roman Catholic Church think it necessary to expunge the second commandment from the Decalogue?

Further, the Roman Catholic Church has altered the Sabbath commandment in their catechisms with the words, "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." The full fourth commandment is,

Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it (Exodus 20: 8-11).

Here again is compelling evidence that the Roman Catholic Church full well knows that Sunday worship does not extend back to apostolic times, otherwise it would have been the apostles who would have initiated such an alteration. The apostles spoke often of keeping the commandments, but made no effort to alter them. A few examples include the words of Paul.

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God (1 Corinthians 7:19),

John stated,

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keep not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. (1 John 2:3,4).

And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us (1 John 3:24).

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:2,3)

And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it ( 2 John 6).

And 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 (Revelation 12:17)

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Revelation 22:14).

Combining the concepts of the immortality of the soul, christening to remove original sin and eternal punishment in hell, the early Roman Catholic Church taught that all innocent but unbaptized children who died were doomed to eternal torment. Later, the concept was softened by consigning such unfortunate children to a mythical entity called limbo, simply because of the neglect of their parents to have their heads sprinkled with water. It is little wonder that the French fled from such an arbitrary and vengeful "god" and rather embraced the prostituted goddess of mercy at the time of the French Revolution.

It must not be forgotten that one of the identifying features of the little horn of Daniel 7 is that this power would "think to change times and laws" (Daniel 7:15). Certainly the Papacy has emphatically fulfilled that criterion without the least question, as it has eliminated the second commandment from God's sacred law removed much of the fourth commandment which deals with God, holy times, and divided the tenth commandment.

We will see that in other ways the Papacy, and the Papacy alone, fulfills the 81 criteria of the beast power of Revelation 13.