

The Beast from The Land



10 in a series

Introduction

The third chapter in the Old Testament book of Daniel tells the story of three young men determined to be true to God despite facing the threat of death. Their names were Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and they were being held captive in Babylon in the sixth century before Christ.

The story of Daniel chapter three tells of how King Nebuchadnezzar had set up a tremendous image of gold some thirty metres tall as an object of worship. Everybody was commanded to bow down at the music cue and worship this image. The three, young Hebrew captives were totally opposed to idol worship and refused to. In an angry rage the king commanded these three young men be thrown into an overheated furnace. Instantly, those who threw them in to the furnace perished from the excessive heat. Yet amazingly these would-be martyrs walked among the flames unhurt. The king noticed a fourth person present with them – and the king exclaimed this fourth person appearing in the fire looked like the Son of God. In this biblical story, God miraculously preserved these three young men from an otherwise inevitable death.



The king was trying to force a type of worship that went against the conscience of these young men and their faith in God. In this lesson, we will see a similar spiritual dynamic taking place at the 'end time' just before Jesus' Second Coming. Similarly, a "false" way of worship will be demanded of everyone - and God's faithful believers will be threatened with death if they do not conform.

Overview for Session #10

1. Summary of the Sea Beast
2. Identifying the Land Beast
3. The Mark of the Beast
4. 666 The Number of the Beast

1. Summary of the Sea Beast

The “Sea Beast” of Revelation 13:1-10 and the “Little Horn” of Daniel chapter 7 are the same entity. In summary, the Sea Beast / Little Horn rose out of the pagan Roman Empire; this power is different from the previous beasts in Daniel because it is religious rather than military; an attempt is made by this entity to replace God and speak as God; this entity oppresses God’s people and maintains its authority for 3.5 “prophetic years” (1,260 days) and also attempts to change times and laws. Finally, the Sea Beast receives a deadly wound but after a time the wound is healed therefore allowing it to re-activate its war against God’s people.

We saw the identity of this Sea Beast was the Medieval Christian Church (also known as the Roman Catholic Church) which rose out of the remnants of the Roman Empire. It claims to be God’s representative on earth and oppresses anyone who challenges its authority. This power reigned supreme between 538AD to 1798 AD - a total of 1,260 years – equal to the prophetic 1,260 days. Also, The Medieval Christian Church attempted to change The Ten Commandments and ‘spoke pompous words against the Most High’ (Daniel 7:25)

Question 1: What symbolic entity in Daniel chapter 7 is the same as “The Beast from the Sea” of Revelation 13:1-10?

Notice the following prophecy in *Daniel 7:25*: **“HE SHALL SPEAK POMPOUS WORDS AGAINST THE MOST HIGH, SHALL PERSECUTE THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH, And shall INTEND TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAW.”**



The Bible was forbidden to be read by laymen during the dark ages.

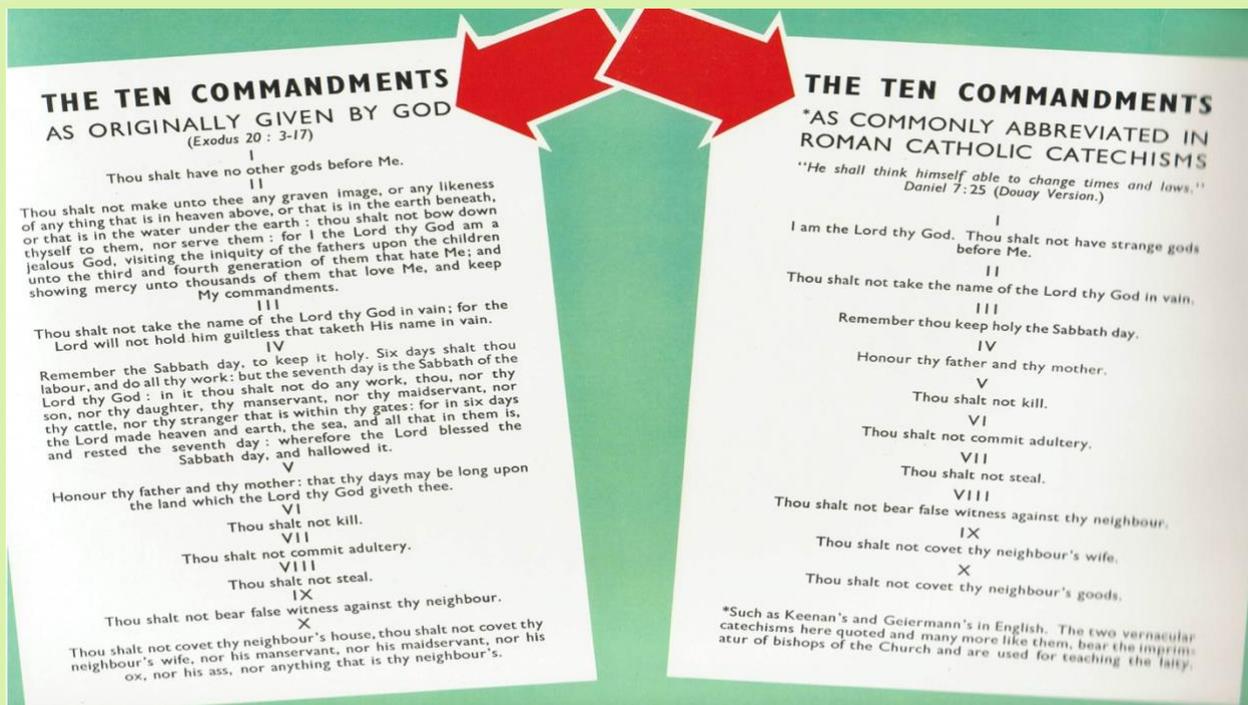
a) “SPEAK POMPOUS WORDS AGAINST THE MOST HIGH.” The Medieval church has done this – e.g. *“The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but He is Jesus Christ Himself, hidden under the veil of flesh.”* (An excerpt from *“The Catholic National”*, July 1895).

Also, notice the “pompous words” in this statement: *“With regards to the mystic body of Christ, that is, all faithful, the priest has the power of the keys, or the power of delivering sinners from hell, or making them*

worthy of paradise, and of changing them from the slaves of Satan into the children of God. AND GOD HIMSELF IS OBLIGED TO ABIDE BY THE JUDGMENT OF HIS PRIESTS”.

(An excerpt from *“Dignity and Duties of the Priests or Selva”*, by St. Alphonsus De Leguorl, page 27)

Furthermore, notice in the following comparison how the biblical Ten Commandments have been modified by the Medieval Christian Church (now known as the Roman Catholic Church):

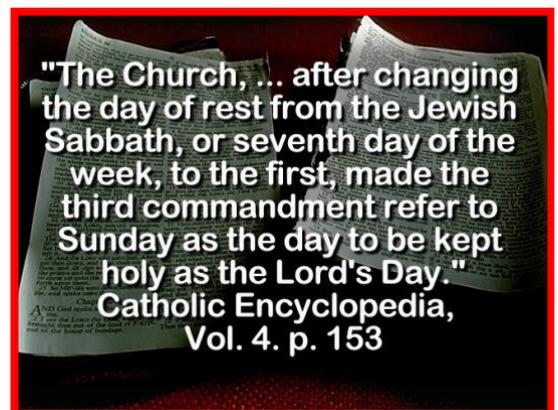


The biblical second commandment (Exodus 20: has been deleted from the Roman Catholic Catechism and the tenth commandment has been divided into two separate commands. Also, notice the biblical fourth commandment is now the third commandment in the Catholic Church. As you'll read below, this church claims it has the authority to change the Sabbath from the biblical seventh day to Sunday. The biblical seventh-day Sabbath is the twenty-four hour period between Friday sunset to Saturday sunset that God blessed and made holy at creation - see Genesis 2:2-3, also Mark 2:28)

WHO CHANGED THE SABBATH FROM SATURDAY TO SUNDAY?

Question: Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?

Answer: Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; she could not have substituted the observance of Saturday, the seventh day ... a change for which there is no scriptural authority. (An excerpt from "A Doctrinal Catechism", page 174 – Father Stephen Keenan).



“It was the Catholic church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Catholic church”. (An excerpt from “Plain Talk About Protestantism Today”, page 225, written by Monsignor Segur).

Also, notice in the graphic below how the Roman Catholic Church has changed the biblical Ten Commandments.

Question 2: Do you see how the Medieval Christian Church is both the Sea Beast of Revelation 13:1-10 and the Little Horn of Daniel chapter 7? _____

When considering the attempted changes to the Ten Commandments remember what the Apostle Peter said – *“We **ought to obey God** rather than men.”* (Acts 5:29).

2. Identifying the Land Beast

(Revelation 13:11-18) “Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. ¹² And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³ He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. ¹⁴ And he deceives those^[a] who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. ¹⁵ He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶ He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

Question 3: The Sea Beast receives a deadly wound that is healed. What does this mean?

In studying the Sea Beast we were looking back into history. However, with the Land Beast we are looking into the future, therefore the details are more difficult to interpret.

What we do see in these verses is a uniting of religion and politics as this ‘lamb-like’ beast will follow the same pattern of the Sea Beast in Revelation 13:1-10. There are five identifying marks to show who the Land Beast of Rev. 13:11-18 represents:

1. The beast would arise out of the earth in new or sparsely populated land.



2. This beast arises when the other beast is falling. In other words, it would grow into power about the time of the Medieval overthrow.

3. It has two lamb-like horns. Lamb-like represents youth and innocence. The new free world, after the dominance of the Medieval Church, introduced civil and religious liberty.

4. This beast has no crowns on its horns. In other words, it is not a monarchy but some form of republic.

5. It exercises a power equal to the first beast. This indicates a formidable, supreme, world power.

Question 4: What is the meaning of a beast coming "out of the earth"? _____

There is only one power in history to meet these five specifications - the United States of America. It was not established by military conquest like European kingdoms, but grew up quietly in the sparsely populated new world. It became a nation as the Medieval Church's power was waning. No nation in history has been more dedicated to civil and religious liberty. It is a republic – not a monarchy, and has become the richest and most powerful nation on earth. This nation has been a benefactor to humankind, but we notice a change of character is predicted. This lamb-like (a symbol of Christ) beast, will speak as a dragon (a symbol of Satan). The terror and suppression of liberty experienced during the Dark Ages is to be repeated at the very end of time. A religious tyranny as ruthless as the Spanish Inquisition will exert its power.

Question 5: Can you see how the U.S.A. might represent this Land Beast? _____

There are five other identifying marks predicting this remarkable change:

1. It speaks as a dragon. Here we see a startling change from democracy to dictatorship.
2. It forces the worship of the first beast. Rather than maintaining its protestant heritage, it now becomes a crusader for Papal restoration.
3. It deceives multitudes by working miracles. It uses physical marvels as ultimate truth in religion instead of the Word of God. Miracles are not a sign of truth. The powers of evil can perform miracles (2 Thessalonians 2:9). The Bible is our safeguard – not miracles.



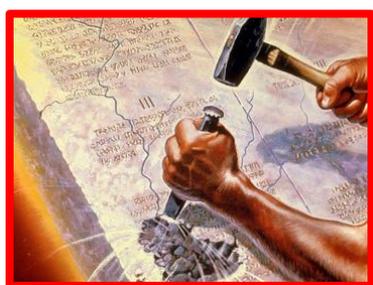
Satan will seek to force the whole world to break God's commandments.

4. It urges the making of an image to the first beast and gives life to the image. Here we see a church-state monopoly similar to the Medieval Christian Church of history.
5. It enforces the worship of the image and the reception of the “mark of the beast” under pain of death. Here we find humanity’s basic freedoms being abandoned. The commandment-keeping minority are boycotted and persecuted.

3. The Mark of the Beast

We have now identified the Sea Beast power as the Medieval Christian Church and the Land Beast as possibly the U.S.A. The next question is – “What is the mark of the beast?” (Rev. 13:16-17). It is not something visible like a tattoo, for it is received by choosing to accept it with our minds. Those who have the mark will be against God’s commandments because those who reject the mark are noted as “keeping the commandments of God”. Those mentioned in Revelation 14:9-11, who receive the mark are in direct contrast with those in Revelation 14:12 who keep God’s commandments and have the faith of Jesus.

The prophecy states that the little horn power would intend to change the law of God.



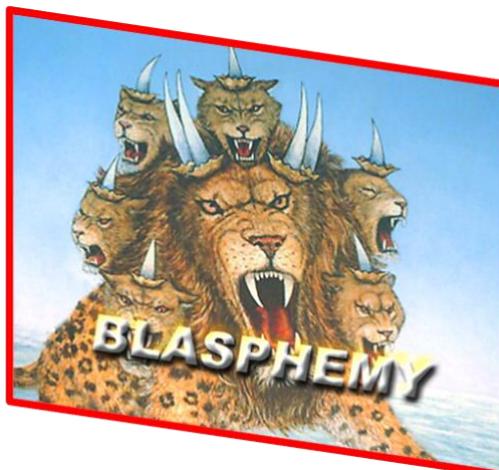
We have seen the change made to the Ten Commandments and in particular, the fourth commandment, by changing the Sabbath to Sunday. Those who keep these “changed” Commandments are yielding their allegiance to the power that changed them. Therefore, this change would be a “mark” that would distinguish between those who follow man’s commandments and those who obey God’s holy law.

The Medieval Church claimed the power to change the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday.

Question 6: Is it really possible to change the law of God?



The Medieval Church states that its tradition is equal to the Word of God.



It is blasphemy to assume power to change the law of God.

The only religious power that openly claims to have changed the law of God is the Medieval Christian Church (also known as the Roman Catholic Church). Prophecy said the church would attempt to make this change (Daniel 7:25) and the church quite candidly says they've 'changed' the Sabbath from the biblical seventh day to Sunday. Therefore, it should be concluded that the "mark of the beast" in the final days just prior to Christ's second coming is the attempted change of the day of worship - for by doing this, the "mark" of authority is giving man's own law precedence over the law of God.

"At the last opening on the 18th of January, 1562, their last scruple was set aside; the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture. The authority of the Church could therefore not be bound to the authority of the Scriptures because the church had changed the Sabbath into Sunday, not by the command of Christ, but by its own authority. With this, to be sure, the last illusion was destroyed and it was declared that tradition does not signify antiquity, but continual inspiration." (excerpt from "Canon and Tradition", page 263, Heinrich Julius Holtzman, Luduigsburg, 1859).

In 1895, J.F. Snyder, of Bloomington, Illinois, U.S.A., wrote to Cardinal Gibbons asking this question: *"Does the Roman Catholic Church claim the act of changing the observance of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week as a **mark** of her power?"*

Through his Chancellor, Cardinal Gibbons gave the following answer:

*"Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical and religious without her. And the act is **a mark** of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters."*

(Signed) H.F. THOMAS, "Chancellor for the Cardinal" - November 11th, 1895

It's important to note that no person has this "mark" at the present time. However, at some point in the future - near to Christ's second coming - those who receive this "mark" will be those who give an outward visible sign of submission to the apostate authority. The "mark" will indicate a person's direct opposition to the known will of God. In the last great crisis, when the Sabbath truth is fully understood, those who reject this light and instead observe Sunday will be declaring their opposition to God's biblical truth. Sunday observance will become the distinguishing "mark" of those who have chosen to reject God's Sabbath in favour of Sunday. **Therefore, in the "last days" the honouring of Sunday will be the outward sign that a person has the mark of the beast.** Whether an individual receives this mark will depend upon where an individual takes his stand in regards to the Ten Commandments.

4. The Number of the Beast

Many different theories and outlandish propositions have been used to identify the anti-christ and the number '666' referred to in Revelation 13:18. Here are two credible interpretations:

1. Using a language like Latin where an alphabetic letter has a numerical value has been considered. For example, one of the Pope's titles is **Vicarius Filii Dei**. When adding the numerical value of each letter it totals '666'. The difficulty with this approach is that so many other names do too. Using this as only one of the identifying marks can be acceptable, seeing it fits in with all the other points we have mentioned about the Sea Beast, but using it alone is not credible.
2. The second possibility for interpreting '666' is that the number six is the number of humanity. God created Adam and Eve on the sixth day (Genesis 1:26-31). When the humanity fell into sin the number six was associated with evil as it falls short of the number seven – the biblical number that indicates perfection or completeness. In context, the number 666 may well refer to evil and deceived men, motivated by the trinity of evil of wicked end-time powers who fight against God Himself. This connects with Revelation 16:13:

Revelation 16:13 *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*



When attempting to identify the “Beast from the Land” in Revelation 13:11-18 it is wise for us to remember Jesus' counsel regarding the fulfilment of prophecy:

“And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.” (John 14:29)

Biblical prophecy is best used looking backwards as a confirmation of our faith, and we can sometimes get ourselves into difficulty when we look forward into the future and attempt to speculate too much. All of the details of the prophecy in Revelation 13:11-18 are not clear at this point in time.

As we reflect on this prophecy, we need to remember that our salvation rests on us receiving the righteousness of Christ into our lives and not depending on our own righteousness. Our motivation in life solely needs to be in pleasing our God. There may be times when we fail but we are to never give up. We can be thankful for God's wonderful forgiveness and His desire to see us saved in His kingdom.

What we see in the Land Beast and the Sea Beast of Revelation chapter 13 is a warning to take our side with God and be amongst His commandment-keeping people (Revelation 12:17, 14:12). We are compelled to not choose the traditions or man-made laws above God's commandments of truth. Knowing God's word in the Bible can shield us from Satan's counterfeits that aim to deceive and distract.

When we choose to walk with God, He will lead us to an eternal reward.

Question 7: Because of your love for God and His truth, is it your choice to be true to Him and be part of His commandment keeping people? _____