

God's Final Message

Third Angel's Message – Part 1

The New King James Version is used, unless otherwise quoted.

Third Angel's Message:

Rev. 14:9-12 - ⁹Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' ¹²Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

To understand this beast, his image and his mark, we need to go back to where it is first referenced, viz., in Rev. 13. Let's explore the identifying marks of this beast in that section:

1. **Beast** – This beast, that the Third Angel warns about is the leopardlike sea beast of Rev. 13:1-10. As we will see from the descriptions below, it can refer to none other than the Roman Papacy, the only power that fulfils this description perfectly. Note that the Bible is unmasking a **false system**, and not condemning individuals.

- a) **Rev. 13:1: Beast rises up out of the sea** – That is, the power emerges from a densely populated area (Rev. 17:15)

Rev. 17:15 – "Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are _____, _____, _____, and _____."

- b) **Vss. 1 & 2: The 10 horns, seven heads, leopard body, bear feet, lion mouth** – This is a composite beast that includes the characteristics of the beasts from Dan. 7:3-7 (the beasts of Daniel 7 together all have 7 heads and 10 horns). This end-time Papacy will possess qualities that were prominent in Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece – seemingly those qualities that stood in opposition to God.

Dan. 7:3-7 – ³And four great beasts came up from the sea... ⁴The first was like a _____, and had eagle's wings... ⁵"And suddenly another beast, a second, like a _____. It was raised up on one side ⁶"After this I looked, and there was another, like a _____, which had on its back four wings of a bird. ⁷"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet."

- c) **Vs. 2: Dragon** – This symbol, primarily refers to Satan, but in a secondary sense represents the Pagan Roman Empire (see Rev. 12:3-4 where Satan the dragon tried to kill Jesus, but worked through the Roman Empire [Matt. 2:16] to do so):

Rev 12:3-4 – ³And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red _____ [a symbol of Satan] having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. ⁴His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the _____ stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born."

Matt. 2:16 – “Then _____ [a king in the Roman Empire], when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.”

Notice also that Jesus was put to death by Roman authorities:

Mark 15:15 – “So _____ [A Roman governor], wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he **delivered Jesus**, after he had scourged Him, **to be crucified.**”

So in Rev. 13:2 the Pagan Roman Empire gave “his power, and his seat [i.e. throne], and great authority,” to papal Rome, when it moved its capital to Constantinople (modern day Istanbul in Turkey) in the East and left a vacuum of power for the papacy to fill, a fact well attested to in history.



Notice the following historical statements supporting this exact truth:

“The removal of the capital of the Empire from Rome to Constantinople in 330 left the Western Church, practically free from imperial power, to develop its own form of organization. The Bishop of Rome, **in the seat of the Caesars**, was now the greatest man in the West, and was soon forced to become the political as well as the spiritual head. To the Western world Rome was still the political capital--hence the whole habit of mind, all ambition, pride, and sense of glory, and every social prejudice favored the evolution of the great city into the ecclesiastical capital. Civil as well as religious disputes were referred to the successor of Peter for settlement.” (*Alexander Clarence Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church, pp. 168, 169*)

“To the succession of the Caesars came the succession of the Pontiffs in Rome. When Constantine left Rome, he **gave his seat** to the Pontiff (*Prof. Labianca, Professor of History, University of Rome*).

“The popes filled the place of the vacant emperors of Rome, **inheriting their power, prestige and titles from paganism.**” (*Arthur P. Stanley, Stanley's History, p. 40*)

d) **Vs. 3: Fatal wound** – The Papacy was inflicted with a wound by a sword (Rev 13:14).

Rev. 13:14 – “And he deceives those 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 _____ and lived.**”

Biblically a sword can represent the Word of God (Eph. 6:17) that cuts our hearts, or the sword of the state that inflicts civil punishment (Rom. 13:1-7).

Eph. 6:17 – “And take the helmet of salvation, and the _____ of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Rom. 13:1-4 – “¹Let every soul be subject to the _____. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. ³For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil...⁴ For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the _____ in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to _____ wrath on him who practices evil.”

In the context of Revelation 13:1-10, the reference is clearly to the civil sword and not the biblical sword, because the Papacy received a ‘deadly’ wound in 1798, when the civil sword of the French army took the pope prisoner to France, and declared the political rule of the papacy at an end. This is further confirmed in Rev. 13:10, that says: ‘He who kills with the sword with the sword he will be killed (that is, the very civil power the papacy used to destroy others during the Middle Ages, will bring its own demise).

e) **Vs. 3: Fatal wound healed** – The papacy gradually gained power after the French Revolution. In 1929 the Lateran Treaty restored the pope’s temporal power, but the full healing and restoration of the papacy’s wound is still future.

f) **Vs. 4: Men worshipped the dragon ... authority to the beast** – Satan gets worship through the power he gives to the papacy.

g) **Vs. 5: Mouth uttering proud words and blasphemies** – ‘Blasphemy’ in the New Testament occurs:

i. When a human being forgives sins which only God can do (Mark 2:7)

Mark 2:7 – “Why does this _____ speak blasphemies like this? Who can _____ sins but _____ alone?”

Notice how the Papacy fulfills this blasphemous characteristic:

- “The priest does not have to ask God to forgive your sins. The priest himself has the power to do so in Christ’s name. **Your sins are forgiven by the priest the same as if you knelt before Jesus Christ and told them to Christ Himself**” (*Baltimore Catechism, Quoted in Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, p. 197*).

- “When he ascended into heaven, Jesus Christ left his priests after him to hold on earth his place of mediator between God and men, particularly on the altar. . . **The Priest holds the place of the Saviour himself**, when, by saying *Ego te absolvo*, **he absolves from sin.**” (St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva*, p. 34).
 - “Were the Redeemer to descend into a church, and sit in a confessional to administer the sacrament of penance, and a priest to sit in another confessional, Jesus would say over each penitent, ‘Ego te absolvo,’ the priest would likewise say over each of his penitents, ‘Ego te absolvo,’ and **the penitents of each would be equally absolved.**” (St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva*, p. 28).
- ii. When a mere human claims to be God (Matt. 26:63-65 – here the Jews **falsely** accused Jesus of blasphemy; see also John 10:33).

Matt. 26:63-66 – “⁶³ ... And the high priest answered and said to Him, “I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the _____ _____!” ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, “He has spoken _____! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! ⁶⁶ What do you think?” They answered and said, “He is deserving of _____.”

John 10:33 – “The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a _____, make Yourself _____.”

Here are a few quotes from Catholic sources proving its claim to divinity:

- “But the supreme teacher in the Church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires, together with a perfect accord in the one faith, complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, **as to God Himself**” (*The Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII*, p. 193, January 10, 1890)
- “We hold upon this earth **the place of God Almighty**” (*The Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII*, p. 304).
- “The **pope takes the place of Jesus Christ on earth**. . . By divine right the pope has **supreme and full power in faith** and morals over each and every pastor and his flock. He is the true Vicar of Christ, the head of the entire church, the father and teacher of all Christians. He is the **infallible ruler**, the founder of dogmas, the author of and the judge of councils; the **universal ruler of truth**, the arbiter of the world, the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by no one, **God himself on earth**” (*The New York Catechism, Quoted in Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism*, p.127).

- “Thus the priest may, in a certain manner, be called the **creator of his Creator**, since by saying the words of consecration, he creates, as it were, Jesus in the sacrament, by giving him a sacramental existence, and produces him as a victim to be offered to the eternal Father. As in creating the world it was sufficient for God to have said, Let it be made, and it was created. He spoke, and they were made so it is sufficient for the priest to say, *Hoc est corpus meum* [over the bread / ‘host’ during mass] and behold the bread is no longer bread, but the body of Jesus Christ. **The power of the priest**, says St. Bernardine of Sienna, **is the power of the divine person**; for the transubstantiation of the bread requires as much power as the creation of the world.” (*St. Alphonsus de Liguori, Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva, pp. 33-34*)

h) **Vs. 5: Authority for 42 months.** Biblical months are 30 days (compare Gen. 7:11 and 8:4 with 7:24. Five months = 150 days).

Gen. 7:11 – “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the _____ month, the _____ day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.”

Gen 8:4 – “Then the ark rested in the _____ month, the _____ day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.”

Gen. 7:24 – “And the waters prevailed on the earth _____ .”

Furthermore, a day in prophecy is equal to a literal year:

Num. 14:34 – “According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each _____ you shall bear your guilt one _____, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection”

In symbolical prophecy, when a miniature object (e.g. one beast) represents something much larger (i.e. an entire empire), the time elements in those prophecies also represent something larger. In the story in Numbers 13-14, this principle of miniature symbolisation is at work: **One** spy (miniature) represented a **whole** tribe (thus 12 spies for the 12 tribes of Israel – see Num. 13:3-15). Because of their later disbelief and disobedience their punishment in terms of time was also from miniature to large, i.e. for **each day** of exploring Canaan they received **one year** of wilderness wandering (hence 40 years).

Eze. 4:6 – “And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a _____ for each _____.”

In Ezekiel 4 we find a similar principle. The context shows miniature representation: vss. 1-3: a brick stands for a miniature model of Jerusalem; vss. 4-8: Ezekiel himself becomes a miniature symbol of the **whole** house of Israel, then the **whole** house of Judah. So the time elements in that section should also stand for something larger. Thus the 390 + 40 **days** in that context = 430 **years**.

This principle of a day standing for a year is accepted by historicists, the only biblically consistent school of interpretation.

Thus in Rev. 13:5 the 42 months is $42 \times 30 = 1260$ days, and since this **one beast** in Rev. 13:1-10 stands for a **whole** empire, the days in this section must also refer to something bigger, viz., years.

Incidentally this is the same period that the Bible refers to as **time, times and a half a time** (Rev. 12:14 cf. Rev. 12:6). A time is equal to a year (see Dan. 4:16)

- Time (one year): 30 days x 12 months = 360 days
- Times (2 years. Whenever the Aramaic does not have a numeral in front of 'times' it always refers to 'two') = 720 days
- Half a time = 180 days
- Total = **1 260 days**

This period spanned the time from:

- **538** (when emperor Justinian's law proclaimed the Pope to be head of all churches. Although this decree was given 5 years earlier, it could only be put into effect with the destruction of the rebel Ostrogoths in 538 AD. Justinian's decree legitimised the spiritual authority of the Pope, proclaiming him to be the only authentic spokesman for orthodox Christianity.)
- to **1798** (when the pope's power was broken. This happened when Pope Pius VI was deposed, captured and exiled in 1798 during the French Revolution.



- i) **Vs. 6: Slanders God's dwelling place** – That is, his sanctuary. This the papal power for instance does through drawing attention away from Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary, and turning to early priests who claim to forgive sin, substituting Christ's once-for-all sacrifice with the weekly sacrifice of the mass, etc.
- j) **Vs. 7: War against the saints** – The Roman papacy persecuted millions of Christians through the ages (some historians say 50 million were martyred, while others claim much higher figures). Here are some statements that share the Papacy's view on destroying those who believed contrary to its teachings:

- i. Pope Nicholas encouraged the King of Bulgaria, a new convert to Christianity, to force the religion of his new church upon his subjects. Notice his words: **“I glorify you for having maintained your authority by putting to death those wandering sheep** who refuse to enter the fold; and ... congratulate you upon having opened the kingdom of heaven to the people submitted to your rule. **A king need not fear to command massacres**, when these will retain his subjects in obedience, or cause them to submit to the faith of Christ; and God will reward him in this world, and in eternal life, for these murders.” (Quoted in, R.W. Thompson, *The Papacy and the Civil Power*, p. 244).

 - ii. Here Pope Gregory IX outlined the role of a king or civil authority: “Temporal princes shall be reminded and exhorted, and if need be, compelled by spiritual censures, to discharge every one of their functions; ... **to extirpate [completely destroy] from their territories all heretics [those who believe contrary to the Catholic church]** marked by the church; so that when any one is about to assume any authority, whether spiritual or temporal, he shall be held bound to confirm his title by this oath. And if a temporal prince, being required and admonished by the church, shall neglect to purge his kingdom from this heretical pravity [wickedness], the metropolitan and other provincial bishops shall bind him in fetters of excommunication; and if he obstinately refuse to make satisfaction this shall be notified within a year to the Supreme Pontiff, that then he may declare his subjects absolved from their allegiance, and leave their lands to be occupied by Catholics, who, the heretics being exterminated, may possess them unchallenged, and preserve them in the purity of the faith” (*The Decretals of Gregory IX*, book 5, title 7, chapter 13).

 - iii. “The fourteenth century inquisitor, Bernard Gui explained the purpose of the Inquisition: “The objective of the Inquisition is to destroy heresy [any teaching against the Catholic church]; **it is not possible to destroy heresy unless you eradicate [kill] the heretics**; and it is impossible to eradicate the heretics unless you also eradicate those who hide them, sympathize with them and protect them.” (*Salim Japas, Herejia, Colon y la Inquisicion (Siloam Springs, Arkansas: Creation Enterprises, 1992)*, p. 20.
- k) **Vs. 8: All the inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast** – This is a future time when the papacy will enjoy universal worship.

Personal Reflection

- I do not want to follow the teachings of this blasphemous sea beast
- I would like to study God’s Word more
- I accept Jesus into my life / recommit my life to Jesus

What personally stood out for me in this lesson:
