

# REVELATION 13 ~ 666 [THE MARK OF THE BEAST]



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## Lesson objectives

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- a. understand all biblical concepts carefully examined contextually and exegetically in Rev 13 in depth, even according to each verse;
- b. identify and explain why Rev 12 is divided into 17 verses, but the Vulgate version has 18 verses, concerning the positions of John and Satan in the apocalypse of the “sea beast;”
- c. identify and understand the eschatology of the four(4) main earthly kingdoms that reigned the world from 625 B.CE to 476 CE;
- d. explain in detail the idea(s) behind “Changing the times and the laws” according to Daniel and John which confuses many Christians;
- e. interpret with vivid evidences the nature and meaning of the “sea beast” and the “land beast;”
- f. interpret correctly the 18th verse of Revelation 13, where the concept of 666 is drawn;
- g. understand properly the exact meaning of the concept 666, which can help to correct all misconceptions and/or conspiracy theories, as the exact context is biblically given;

## To The Reader:

This lesson is prepared from the in-depth knowledge, wisdom, understanding and insight of God bestowed on the author, even as unveiled to him from the Scripture as well as the sound combination and rightful division of the knowledge in the four main eschatological model; Preterism, Idealism, Historicism, and Futurism. And thus, massive attention should be paid by the reader to understand things properly, as the content of this lesson is **fully apocalyptic**.

There are certain areas of this lesson which have been removed from the **verse 11-17** due to some aligned personal interests of the author. They have been however included as verses purposely to demonstrate to readers how the full lesson was prepared according to the 13th chapter of the book of Revelation; such verses removed have their sectional objectives somehow removed.

However, this particular lesson was taken from the main (upcoming) book of the author titled, **"The Great Apocalypse"** which covers (over) **600 pages**. It has been used for many debates and teachings on the subject matter exhibited in each chapter of the lesson. And due to the author's interests in relation to publicity and the set standards, all related images already fixed into the lesson in the original version have been taken off.

The purpose of this lesson is to help solve public issues in relation to this unique chapter of Revelation, and to assess the public's concerns about 666, through the *question and answer* method chosen. Readers should do well to write their misconceptions if any, at the space provided under **"Correcting some false claims about 666 (pp. 42-43),"** and should kindly pen down all questions they intend to ask, under **"Answering the questions from the public (p. 44),"** so they can be carefully addressed by the author.

Readers should also pay massive attention to some terminologies and biblical ideas explicitly dealt with, in this lesson, sometimes in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek languages or dialects.



Welcome to the lesson prepared on **“REVELATION 13 ~ 666 [THE MARK OF THE BEAST.]”**

## REVELATION CHAPTER 13 (18 VERSES).

**Verse 1:** *“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and 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.”*

### Meaning:

*And I stood upon the sand of the sea:* This phrase or statement in the KJV is not recognized in most of the Versions of the New Testament. Some Versions begin the 13th chapter as **“And he took up a position upon the stands of the sea-shore”** which is a reference to the position of Satan (the dragon), but ignores the phrase **“And I stood upon the sand of the sea”** which speaks of the location of John when the vision was unveiled to him. Some Versions too (as it is in the Twi Bible) use the phrase **“And he took up a position upon the stands of the sea-shore”** as the 18th verse of Rev 12 which adds up a verse to the already existing 17 verses.

This issue is though a problem to some Bible students but not all that a confusing phrase or statement. The fact is that, the original text of the New Testament or this book of Revelation was written in *Koine* (“common”) Greek. The 12th chapter of the book of Revelation is divided into 17 verses, but the Vulgate version has 18 verses. And this is why the positions of Satan and John are used interchangeably; either to use that of Satan as the conclusion part of the 12th chapter and to use that of John as the opening part of the 13th chapter, or vice versa.

Simply, John in the spirit (Rev 1:10) found himself standing upon the sand of the sea, as he saw the dragon (Satan) who has launched his persecution attack against the Churches of Christ, standing at the sea-shore. In this sense, we would believe that, John was at the same scene where the beast would come forth from the sea, but was far from the dragon. One thing Bible students must understand in John's visions is that, he was never harmed or affected by the things he saw in the spirit. He was though part of the saints persecuted in the Asia Minor, he did not face the persecution in

the spiritual realm as the visions were unveiled to him.

We would therefore conclude that, Satan was present at the sea-shore to give his power to the earthly kingdoms (Rev 13:2) that rose from the "sea" (i.e. restless and ever changing populations of humanity...Rev 17:15). While John was in a way summoned to witness such recorded event at the same time, in the spirit (Rev 4:1-2).

***And saw:*** Contextually, what John saw was not opposite to some of the previous things being revealed to him (ch 4 - 12), but would be something that uniquely portrayed the exact features of the four(4) earthly kingdoms and how they were supported by Satan and controlled by the throne of God.

However, the vision depicts how the kingdom of darkness through the Roman State and false religions persecuted the New Testament Church. We would thus apprehend to this that, the initial persecutor of the church was institutional Judaism (Rev 2:9, 3:9), and the primary persecutor of the church in the 1st century was the Roman Empire. In all these Satan has uniformly worked against the Church.

Nevertheless, what John saw in this context is apocalyptically expressed in symbols, cryptic images, numbers and colours.

***A beast rise up out of the sea:*** Apocalyptically, the word "beast" in most cases refers to "kingdom(s)" (as used in Dan 7 and Rev 13, 17) or "wicked men" (2 Pet 2:12). Wherever "beast" makes reference to specific earthly kingdom, such an empire can be defined according to the characteristics of the beast under discussion and its ability to bring what it reigns under the control of its source of power.

In this context of John's vision, the beast indeed is a symbol of all the four earthly kingdoms (i.e. Babylonian kingdom; Medo-Persian kingdom; Greece or Greek kingdom; and the Roman kingdom). All these earthly kingdoms originated from the sea. But Bible students should understand here that the reason why Rome was not seen alone is that, John wants his audience to



cast back their minds on the earlier kingdoms (supported by Satan) which fell before the existence of the Roman rule; the mind should therefore be fixed on the origin of Rome.

Apocalyptically, “sea” symbolizes the world. The world would be such a restless and ever changing populations of humanity (Isaiah 57:20-21; Jer 49:23). John tries to portray that humanity is as a turbulent sea that continually gives birth to different governmental powers throughout the ages (Rev 16:3; 20:13; 21:1). The meaning here is that, Rome arises out of conflict among world population groups.

**Seven heads ... ten horns ... ten crowns:** The numbers 7 and 10 used here are signs of perfection or completeness according to the Hebrew gematria. The “seven(7)” in this context stands for “spiritual perfection” and “ten(10)” also stands for “ordinal perfection.” The symbolism here proves that Satan completely supports the earthly kingdoms (and specifically the Roman kingdom) in order to work through them to persecute and bring to a close what God has planted on Earth (which is the New Testament Church [Acts 20:28; 1 Co 1:2]). Though Satan completely exercised his power against the Church, he could not completely destroy the Church because Rome as the earthly kingdom which he used in the apostasy period was fragile (as indicated biblically as the 666 [Rev 13:18]).

The “**heads**” symbolizes the “control” of Rome. The Roman kingdom exercised her great control in all her territories, and such were geographically of seven hills. John possibly took his imagery from this geographical position of the city in order to convey the meaning that the rulers of Roman government are sick with pompous power. Thus, the *seven heads* were the “seven hills” in Rome which were geographically the areas where Rome exercised her complete governmental rule in Asia Minor, against the Church.

**Horns** are seen in most cases as emblems of power, dominion, glory, and fierceness, of kings. These would be the ten kings that exercised complete

governmental power throughout Rome's designated territory (Rev 17:3).

In the first century, the Kings or Caesars who are under discussion here were initially eleven(11) in number but one of them is neglected. These Roman Caesars were Augustus (27 B.C. - A.D. 14), Tiberius (A.D. 14-37), Caligula (A.D. 37-41), Claudius (A.D. 41-54), Nero (A.D. 54-68), Galba (A.D. 68), Otho (A.D. 69), Vitellius (A.D. 69), Vespasian (A.D. 69-79), Titus (A.D. 79-81), and Domitian (A.D. 81-96). Out of these eleven Caesars, Otho is the one neglected because he was mortally wounded (compared with vs 3). Otho seized power as Caesar and committed suicide, after he enraged conflict with Caesar Vitellius. In the history of Caesar Otho, he reigned for only 95 days. Thus, the *ten horns* were the 10 known Caesars of Rome.

The **crowns** were the “glory and authority” of the ten Roman Caesars. Rome possessed complete authority in all her territories.

***Upon his heads the name of blasphemy:*** Blasphemy is an injury offered to God, by denying that which is due and belonging to Him, or attributing to Him that which is not agreeable to His nature.

In the sense of speaking evil of God this word is found in Ps. 74:18; Isa. 52:5; Rom. 2:24; Rev 13:1, 6; 16:9, 11, 21. It denotes also any kind of calumny, or evil-speaking, or abuse (1 Kings 21:10; Acts 13:45; 18:6, etc.).

The meaning here is that, throughout the territories of Rome, the State viewed Christianity and God as inferior and that paganism and Satanism needed to be promoted and hyped. These acts led to the many blasphemous words spoken against the people of God and Jesus Christ. Historically, such events were the evil abuse in the time after A.D. 70, whence Rome made Christianity an illegal religion, viewing it as an insurrection against Rome, and thus worked against the Church.

**Verse 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.”*

### **Meaning:**

***The beast which I saw:*** What was unveiled to John the visionary was the vivid interpretation given of the visions of Daniel in chapters 2 and 7.

One of the profound secrets of the book of Revelation is that, most of the figurative languages (with cryptic images and symbols), numbers and colours used in it as the Apocalyptic elements, are visions to complete the uncompleted visions of the past in the lifetime of Daniel in Babylon (Dan 12:4-10).

**Daniel 2 & 7 and Rev 13** speak of the power and duration set for the four beasts as the earthly kingdoms, which were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.

In the visions as seen in Daniel 2 & 7, there were four different creatures as symbols of the four earthly kingdoms. According to **Daniel 2**, the head of the great image was Gold, it represents the Babylonian kingdom; the breast and arms were like Silver, which represents the Medo-Persian kingdom; the belly and thighs were like Brass/Bronze which represents the Greece kingdom; and the legs and feet were made of Iron and Clay, which represents the Roman kingdom.

According to **Daniel 7**, the lion is the symbol for the Babylonian kingdom; the bear is the symbol for the Medo-Persian kingdom; the leopard represents the Greek kingdom; and the “Dreadful and Terrible” represents the Roman kingdom.

In the vision of John, three of the beasts were united and powered by the devil who was the source of paganism in the Roman rule (Rev 20:1-3). That same beast had four parts; leopard, lion, bear, and the 4th beast represents the parts like “seven heads, ten horns and ten crowns;” which refers to the

“Dreadful and Terrible” beast of Rome. So in Rev 13, the beasts united to form 1 beast with different parts.

In spite of these, Daniel's visions in Dan 2 & 7 portray the rise and fall of the four world kingdoms, whilst the visions of John in Rev 13 & 17 confirm the rise of the Roman kingdom and her fall in the latter part of the 5th century CE.

***Was like unto a leopard:*** Biblically, leopard (*namer* in Hebrew) is noticed of its fierceness (Isa 11:6), its watching for its prey (Jer 5:6), its swiftness (Hab. 1:8), and the spots of its skin (Jer 13:23); that is why leopard is more appropriately called a panther (*Felis pardus*).

The symbol of the “leopard” in this context represents the Greek kingdom, as identified in Daniel 7. In the **6th verse of Daniel 7**, it is written of Greece, *“After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.”* Because the Greek kingdom was independently exhibited in Daniel's prophecy, he is seen with unique features like “four wings of a fowl” and “four heads.”

However, the “four wings” of the leopard (Greece) in Daniel's vision would mean that “the forces of Greece were not easily controlled by the earthly armies (especially the armies of the second kingdom she conquered, Medo-Persia).” Though Rome indisputably conquered Greece, the remnants of the empire rose again to invade Rome with the barbarians in the late 4th century [see the interpretation given in Rev 9:16; BOOK OF REVELATION ~part 2, pp. 89-91]

Thus, in John's vision, the leopard is greatly exhibited to depict the empire (i.e Greece) during whose kingdom reign the fourth beast, Rome, conquered the world.

## **AN OVERVIEW OF THE GREEK EMPIRE.**

The side of Greece that affected the New Testament; Greek Empire (332

## **B.C.- 167 B.C.):**

Alexander the Great took control of Palestine in 332 B.C. He maintained control until his death in 323 B.C. After his death, his empire was divided among his generals. However, during his rule, the Greek language spread throughout the world. Greek became the common international language of commerce, government and literature.

The Greek culture permeated the Jewish culture to the extent that many Jews adopted the Greek language and culture. This led to the rise of what was referred to as Hellenism. *Hellenism* was the acceptance of the Greek language and culture by many Jews and other conquered people who generally lived outside Palestine. The Greek language was so influential among the Jews after the era of Greek conquest and rule, especially among those Jews in Egypt, that portions of the Old Testament were translated from Hebrew into the Greek language around 250 B.C. This translation of the Old Testament was referred to as the Septuagint (LXX). This was the translation from which Jesus and the New Testament writers quoted. The Septuagint was quoted because this was the translation of the Old Testament Scriptures with which most Jews in the first century were familiar.

***His feet were as the feet of a bear:*** Bears are biblically identified of how they hunt people (2 Kings 2:23-24) when they meet them (Prov 17:12). Their bad habits are referred to in Isaiah 59:11 as compared with lions (Lam 3:10; Hos 13:8), and used to refer to wicked rulers (Prov 28:15).

In Daniel's vision of the four beasts, it is written of the Bear, *“And behold another beast, a second, like to a **bear**, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh” (Daniel 7:5).* The interesting thing here is that, the symbol of the second world kingdom, Medo-Persia, depicts the real nature of a living bear. Nevertheless, the **bear** is the symbol of the

Medo-Persian kingdom as shown in Dan 7:5 and Rev 13:2.

**“Medo-Persia”** is a kingdom with two different nations or peoples, **Medes and Persians**, who afterwards united to claim power over Babylon.

At the time the kingdom of Babylon was in its twilight hours, Cyrus, the king of Ansham, overthrew the Median Empire in 550 B.C. He subsequently became the king of Persia around 547 B.C. In 539 B.C. the Medes and Persians overthrew the Babylonians. Cyrus was the king of the Medo-Persian Empire from 536-529 B.C., after which, his son, Cambyses, became king. Cambyses expanded the Persian Empire south by defeating the Egyptians. Egyptian territory remained a part of the Persian Empire until 332 B.C., the time when the Persian Empire eventually succumbed to the Greeks. Darius I (Hystaspes) was king of the Medo-Persian Empire from 521-486 B.C. He was followed by Xerxes (Ahasuerus) (485-465), Artaxerxes (465-425), Darius II (Nothus) (424-404), Artaxerxes II (Mnemon) (404-429), Artaxerxes III (Ochus) (359-338) and Darius III (Codomanus) (336-331). In 332 B.C. the Medo-Persian Empire came to an end when Alexander the Great expanded the Greek Empire to the east. This is very clear when river Euphrates (Gen 2:14) is identified at the boundary of the kingdom to the north-east, which was a reference to the Parthian armies.

Bible students should understand here that the descriptions given of Medo-Persia by Daniel (in ch 7:5) concerns the rise of Medo-Persia (when they overthrew the Babylonian kingdom) and their fall (when they were overthrown by the kingdom of Greece). However, John's emphasis of the Medo-Persian kingdom (as the bear feet, in Rev 13:2) was of the already fallen kingdom of the Medes and Parsians (which when living, had their souce of wickedness and power from the devil), and also symbolizes the “grassroots” of the Parsians who gradually grew stronger in the north-east, and were feared by the Romans.

These Parthian/Persian armies were those in the region of “the great river,” Euphrates (Deut 1:7; 11:24; Josh 1:4). Thus, the symbolism of “Euphrates”

in the context of Rev 9:13-14 could possibly be a reference to the Parthian armies that were beyond the eastern boundary of the Roman Empire. The remnants of Parsia/Parthia were feared by the Romans because they were at the eastern extremities of the Empire where the forces of Rome were weak. The Parthians were never brought under the control of Rome. [Refer to Rev 9:13-14; BOOK OF REVELATION ~part 2, pp. 83-87]

In spite of this, John's emphasis truly confirms the strength (i.e the feet of the bear) of the Parthian armies as they were supported by the dragon, the devil.

### **AN OVERVIEW OF THE MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE.**

**The side of Medo-Persia that affected the New Testament; the Medo-Persian Empire (538 B.C. - 332 B.C.):**

The Medo-Persian Empire came into prominence when Cyrus defeated Media in 550 B.C. and the Babylonian Empire in 539 B.C. Cyrus was a humanitarian, and thus, encouraged exiled people to return to their homelands.

This policy led to the return to Palestine of a representative remnant of Jews who had been scattered throughout the world many years before by the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.

There were three returns led by three Old Testament characters: Zerubbabel (536 B.C.), Ezra (457 B.C.) and Nehemiah (444 B.C.). Though all Jews did not return to Palestine, those who did, brought with them influences of foreign culture, religion and language that molded the Jewish culture of Jesus' day. One of the greatest contributions the returning exiles brought back to Palestine was the Aramaic language. Most of the exiles had been raised in an Aramaicspeaking culture in Babylonia.

Upon returning to Palestine, Aramaic was their primary language. It is probable that the language Jesus ordinarily spoke during His life and ministry on earth was Aramaic. The scattering of the Jews throughout the

ancient world was referred to as the **Dispersion** (Gr., *diaspora*, see James 1:1; 1 Pet 1:1). This dispersion was the foundation upon which initial world evangelism occurred in the first century. When the early evangelists went forth to preach the gospel, they went to the Jewish synagogues that had been established throughout the regions to which Jews had been scattered. They thus went to a religious culture that had a background of God as He was revealed through the Old Testament. From there they preached to the Gentile nations of the world. Add to the preceding historical fact that the Jews also made their way to Jerusalem for the annual feasts of Passover and Pentecost. While in Jerusalem on the annual feast of Pentecost in A.D. 30, God made the first official announcement of the kingdom reign of Jesus.

As a result, the church was established when about three thousand people submitted to the kingdom reign of Jesus (Acts 2:41). From the conversion of these first believers, the gospel went into all the world as these converted Jews returned to the nations from which they came.

***His mouth as the mouth of a lion:*** In making a literal reference to “lion,” I will like to use these two Hebrew words for the exegesis; *shahal* and *laish*. **Shahal** (the “roarer”), is used for the mature lion (Job 4:10; Ps. 91:13; Prov. 26:13; Hos. 5:14); and **Laish**, so called from its strength and bravery (Job 4:11; Prov. 30:30; Isa. 30:6).

**The lion symbolizes the Babylonian kingdom.** That was the exact cryptic image given in Daniel 7:4; *“The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.”* This was the rise of a new and the first earthly kingdom. God wanted Daniel to use the example of the “change from beast to man” in this context to understand that, the four beasts he saw in the vision (Dan 7:1-3) were the symbols of the earthly kingdoms of mankind but not of the literal beasts.



According to the history of Babylon, Nabopolassar (625-605 B.C.) was the first king of Babylon when the Babylonian Empire was in its early beginnings. He led the Babylonians in a defeat of the Assyrian Empire in 612 and 609 B.C. His successor, Nebuchadnezzar, defeated the Assyrian/Egyptian alliance at the battle of Carchemish in 609 B.C., and thus established the Babylonian Empire that took over all the former Assyrian Empire territories.

Nebuchadnezzar reigned from 605 to 561 B.C. He was succeeded by AmelMardu (Evil-Merodach) his son.

Amel-Mardu reigned until 559 B.C. when his brother in-law, Neriglissar assassinated him. Neriglissar reigned from 559 to 556 B.C.

After him came Labashi-Marduk, the son of Neriglissar, who reigned only nine months before being assassinated. Nabonidus then seized the throne. During his reign, Belshazzar, his son, reigned coregent with his father until 539 B.C. In 539 B.C. the Babylonian Empire came to a close.

However, John's vision in this context gives this little information to summarize the rise and fall of the Babylonian kingdom.

***The dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority:*** The “him” and “his” in this context, makes reference to the whole stature of the sea beast. Thus, Satan was definitely the source of the power and wickedness of all the four earthly kingdoms.

The lesson here is that, Satan becomes the source of the wickedness of all governments in history, when they do not know God or forsake the admonishing of the Lord (Rev 9:20-21).

## THE SUMMARY OF THE FOUR KINGDOMS

### (A) In relation to Daniel 2 & 7.

The visions of prophet Daniel in chapters 2 and 7, give a top-to-down view of the kingdom reign of the four Empires (ch 7:17); that is, from the Babylon the first kingdom, to Rome the last/fourth kingdom. All the four earthly kingdoms, the “great image and the four beasts,” are being summarized below;

- ✓ Gold (head) = Babylon Kingdom (Lion).
- ✓ Silver (breast and arms) = Medo-Persian Kingdom (Bear).
- ✓ Brass/Bronze (belly and thighs) = Greek Kingdom (Leopard).
- ✓ Iron & Clay (legs and feet) = Roman Kingdom (Dreadful and Terrible).

### (B) In relation to Revelation 13; the sea beast in vs 1-2.

The vision of John in Rev 13 as compared with chapter 17, gives a down-to-top view of the four earthly kingdoms, as the sea beast is concerned. That is, from Rome the fourth kingdom, to Babylon the first kingdom. We would thus believe that, the emphasis of the accounts given by both Daniel and John was commonly on the exact “kingdom in power.” Rome was the kingdom in power in this context with the ten Kings as the ten horns (Dan 7:24).

In Rev 13:1-2, the four kingdoms are being summarized below;

- ✓ Horns and crowns = Rome (4th).
- ✓ Leopard = Greece (3rd).
- ✓ Bear = Medo-Persia (2nd).
- ✓ Lion = Babylon (1st).

**Verse 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."*

**Meaning:**

***One of his heads:*** According to verse 1, the "heads" symbolizes the "control" of Rome; the "seven heads" were the "seven hills" in Rome which were geographically the areas where Rome exercised her complete governmental rule in Asia Minor, against the Church.

In this context of John's vision, the exact head amongst the seven was not specific determined, but would definitely be one that launched great attack against the Church, as part of the seven main Caesars whose governmental control were exercised and affected the 1st century in A.D 65 and 96 (i.e. the exact writing date for the book of Revelation).

***As it were wounded to death:*** The one wounded to death in this context, would be a reference to the first Roman Caesar in history (out of the seven) who severely persecuted the saints in Asia Minor. Such seven Caesars were Nero (A.D 54-68), Galba (A.D 68), Otho (A.D 69), Vitellius (A.D 69), Vespasian (A.D 69-79), Titus (A.D 79-81), and Domitian (A.D 81-96).

Thus, the "head wounded to death" would be a reference to Caesar Nero. When Nero committed suicide in A.D. 68, his personal vendetta against Christians ceased.

***His deadly wound was healed:*** Comparatively, when a wound is healed, it means that new cells or tissues have replaced the cut-off ones (as new skin forms over the granulation tissue). When Nero died through suicide, he did not re-incarnate, but was succeeded by a Caesar who portrayed the same and greater evil things of him. Such a Caesar was not necessarily a successor of Nero, but was identified by his wickedness (Dan 7:24).

The wave of persecution that swept through Rome was wounded. However, the persecution of the church later went from the personal onslaught of one wicked Caesar to the entire legislative government of Rome through

the leadership of Domitian. A statement that was made by the historian Eusebius (A.D 260 - 340) in his Ecclesiastical History (Book 3, Para. 17) is very significant concerning this transition of persecution. Eusebius wrote, "He [Domitian] finally showed himself the successor of Nero's campaign of hostility to God. He was the second to promote persecution against us, though his father, Vespasian, had planned no evil against us. With this agrees Tertullian, who said, "A long time after, Domitian, a limb of the bloody Nero, makes some like attempts against the Christians ...."

The historical significance of Eusebius' statement helps us understand how the "deadly wound" of the beast was healed. In this sense, the state persecution of the saints was born-again or resurrected through the wickedness of Domitian (from A.D 81 to 96).

***And all the world wondered after the beast:*** The phrase "all the world" speaks of the territories which were reigned by Rome in the 1st century. Rome conquered about  $\frac{3}{4}$  part of this world and thus, it makes reference to "the third part of the world" (Rev 8:7-9, 12; 9:18) conquered by the Romans. The phrase is therefore, a limited figure referring to the world of the Roman Empire. The phrase is so interpreted in passages as Luke 2:1 when a decree went out from Augustus that "all the world" of the Roman Empire be registered. This certainly did not include the entire physical world. Only those who were in the jurisdiction of Rome's control were to register. The same meaning is in the context of Revelation 13. Everyone in the Roman Empire marveled at the strength and control of Rome in its power over people.

However, we would also believe that the world that wondered after the beast would be a reference to all those who gave allegiance to the Roman rule and paganism, and some unfaithful Christians who could not be faithful unto death (Rev 2:10).

In this period of apostasy, this same evil and sign of backsliding occurs when one becomes amazed at things of this world that lead many people

into hell (Mat 22:14; 1 Jn 2:15-17).

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

**Meaning:**

***They worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast:*** Satan was though not incarnated to be worshiped, he was mainly worshiped through the Roman pantheon. The world of unbelievers in the Roman Empire worshiped Satan in their reverence of Rome.

We would not strictly conclude that "idol worship" or paganism, luciferianism or satanism was only present in Asia Minor; because such worship has been in existence for so many years till now (Jer 10:1-15; Psalm 115:1-4.). Thus, in relation to the Roman rule, the worship of Satan was common in Asia Minor.

***And they worshiped the beast:*** Though the sea beast was cryptically identified in vs 1-2 as the combination of all the four(4) earthly kingdoms, the specific reference was to Rome which was in power during the time John had all his visions (between A.D 65 & 96). Thus, the worship of the beast is the worship of the Roman State: the worship of the Roman State is the worship of the Roman Caesars as lords. All these are subsets of satanism.

When Domitian became Caesar, Roman imperial religion was propagated throughout the Empire through Caesar worship. Domitian claimed to be deity. The test for allegiance to Rome became one's submission to "Caesar as lord." Those who would not confess Caesar as lord, were accused of insurrection. Such insurrection carried with it the death penalty, and thus, came the great persecution against Christians who would not confess Caesar as lord. We would believe that some of the Christians who

could not be faithful to Christ worshiped the Caesars for the sake of the fear of severe persecution of the Roman State and physical death.

Worship of a man as a god was also given to Herod, by the unbelievers (Acts 12:22). In spite of this, worshipping men is a way of worshipping the devil. Christians should not dwell in these evil acts.

***Saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?:***

Understanding the "beast" in this context can help us to reframe the first question as "Who is like Rome?" The people who paid allegiance to Rome wondered if there would be a specific earthly kingdom in history that will overthrow such a strong kingdom of Rome.

The victims who were still living during and after A.D 476 would wonder how Rome or Western Rome fell. The answer is of a diverse response to the statement made by the worshippers in this context. The living beings would be answered, "It is God's kingdom, even that from heaven that had brought the Roman empire to her knees."

***Verse 5: "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."***

### **Meaning:**

***There was given unto him:*** Satan is behind all sorts of wickedness, deception and demonic power; he is the father of all evil (Jn 8:44).

Though the ways of the Roman Caesars were evil and supported by the dragon (Satan), God would be the One who gave such "authority" to Satan to enable his people on Earth to terminate and hunt down the Church (Rev 9:1), within a set time or a limited period of time.

***A mouth speaking great things and blasphemies:*** This can never be possible if one takes the event to be literal. The beast was like a leopard

(Rev 13:2); no leopard will carry a mouth of a lion and then being changed to that of a man, literally. Again, it is witnessed once in the Bible (apart from what happened in Eden...Gen 3:1-3) where a beast spoke like a man. According to Numbers 22:27-30, God opened the mouth of a donkey to speak against the bad treatment given to it by prophet Balaam. God did not give the donkey mouth of a man to speak.

John in this context expects the recipients of this vision to know that their level of understanding of the "sea beast" should be able to project through the Roman empire to clarify that, "He was speaking of the arrogance of some Caesars or Kings." Rome would set her course against the church. Eventually, Caesars would exalt themselves to the status of god. They would be as "a mouth that spoke very great things" against the church (Dan 7:8,20). Daniel prophesied of Rome, "And the king will do according to his own will. And he will exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and will speak marvelous things against the God of gods and will prosper until the indignation is accomplished. For what is determined will be done" (Dan 11:36). Indeed, the reference would be made of the arrogance of Caesar Domitian; though all the ten-to-eleven Caesars were wicked.

However, this event confirms the prophecy of Daniel (given somewhere in 530 B.C) in the lifetime of the second Christian generations in the 1st century C.E. This really confirms the arrogance of Domitian (A.D 81 - 96).

Domitian's arrogance as deity would lead him to "speak great words against the Most High" (Dan 7:25). He "will wear down the saints of the Most High. And he will intend to change times and law.

### **"Changing the times and the laws."**

It is written in Daniel 7:25; "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."

In the context of Daniel's vision, the statement "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High" is what is exactly confirmed by John in the statement(s) "A mouth speaking great things and blasphemies (Rev 13:5) ... against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven (Rev 13:6)." Thus, such a King was a reference to Domitian.

***And think to change times and laws:*** Some Bible students and Protestants of the gospel truth claim that Constantine the Great rather changed the times and laws of "the Jews" but not Caesar Domitian who reigned at a time Christianity was already existing. This is a fallacious claim.

**[Let's first speak of the idea of "changing the laws..."]**

Bible students should understand that the contexts of the visions of Daniel and John under discussion here were solely of the testimony of Christ (Rev 1:2; 2 Thes 1:10; 2 Co 1:12-14). In relation to the visions of John, he was not to testify of the things peculiar to all the 613 laws (248 positive and 365 negative laws) written to the Israelites (Jn 5:39) in the Chameesha Choomshey Torah [i.e. Gen - Deut; known as the law (Jn 1:45; Mat 5:17-19), the law of Moses (Lk 24:44), or the book of law or the Pentateuch].

That is to say that, if Daniel's reference in **ch 7:25** was strictly to Judaism and Sabbaths and the other laws of the Old Testament, then the book of Revelation fails to affirm its main purposes and thus, would be dated around A.D 65 - 70. But since the book was written to console the Christians, the seven Churches in Asia Minor (Rev 1:4,11) who were even affected by the siege of Jerusalem in A.D 70 as well as the great persecutions of the Roman State, the book would surely be dated between A.D 65 and 96. All these analysis mean that both Daniel and John were speaking of the laws of Christ (1 Co 9:21; Jn 14:15; 1 Jn 5:3) but not the entire 613 laws of Moses or specifically the Sabbatical laws.

Thus, Domitian tried to change the laws of Christ in Christianity, with the intention of condemning the foundations of Christianity in the 1st century.



### [The idea of "changing the times"...]

The Protestants continue to proclaim that *Constantine the Great brought about Sunday worship*. The protestants stand with some fallible claims of earthly knowledge concerning Sunday that, Constantine the Great ordained all Christians to worship or have holy convocations on Sundays. They mean that, Sunday is not a God-given day, but the Emperor compelled the Christians in that era to worship on Sundays instead of Saturday. This is also false to declare.

Historically, Constantine the Great (Latin: *Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantine Augustus*; 27th February c.272 A.D - 22nd May 337 A.D), also known as Constantine 1 or Saint Constantine, was a Roman Emperor of Illyrian and Greek origin from 306 to 337 A.D.

In the early 4th century (of about 367 A.D), Constantine 1 or Constantine the Great became the first emperor to convert to Christianity. During the rest of the 4th century, Christianity became the dominant religion of the Empire.

We can see here that, Christianity which started in the 1st century in A.D 33, and had holy convocations on Sundays, cannot be changed by the new convert, Constantine the Great in the 4th century. So how can one say that Constantine 1 forced all Christians to worship on Sunday, which day the emperor himself came to meet?...

The phrase "the first day of the week" is clearly identified in the New Testament and confirmed in Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:2, Mark 16:9, Luke 24:1, John 20:1, John 20:19, Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2, to be Sunday. The Sunday is also proven in John 20:26, as the 8th day after the resurrection of Jesus Christ; Acts 2:1, as the Pentecost day; Revelation 1:10, as the Lord's day; and some other places where the Churches of Christ had holy convocations in the New Testament, as in Acts 2:42,44,46, 1 Co 11:17-20, Acts 5:12. All these biblical references are made from the New Testament Canon of Scripture between A.D 47 and 96. So, it is incorrect for some

people to claim that Constantine the Great brought about the Sunday worship.

Even in the context of Daniel 7:25, Domitian tried to change the times and laws of Christianity, but it could not fully succeed till his death, and even till the fall of Rome.

### **[Back to Revelation 13:5...]**

***And power was given unto him to continue forty and two, months:*** This confirms the limited time predicted by Daniel as "a time and times and the dividing of time" identified in Dan 7:25, 12:7.

The 42 months as also indicated in Rev 11:2 is 3½ years, and it is equivalent to the 1,260 days seen in Rev 11:3, 12:16 and the "time, times, and half a time" in Rev 12:14. This is a perfect but limited period of time given to the wicked Caesars, even Domitian, to persecute the Church.

It was thus, the time when the horn of Rome "made war with the saints and prevailed against them" (Dan 7:21).

**Verse 6:** ***"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."***

### **Meaning:**

***He opened his mouth in blasphemy against God:*** The blasphemy in this context would denote any kind of calumny, or evil-speaking, or abuse (1 Kings 21:10; Acts 13:45; 18:6). The king (i.e Caesar Domitian) spoke evil of God Almighty.

***To blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven:*** The name of God here makes reference to the true nature of God. The tabernacle of God is the church (11:1-2). "Them that dwell in heaven" would be a reference to the 24 Elders (Rev 4:10, 5:8), the Cherubims (Gn

3:24, Ez 10:1) , the Seraphims (Isa. 6:1-6), the 4 Beasts (Rev 4:6-9, Ez 1:4-14...these are spirits but not in reference to the beast in Rev 13), the Wheels (Ez 1:15-21, 10:2), the Angels (Ps 104:4) and Ministers (Hb 1:7).

The message conveyed here in the context of John's vision is that, because the church receives her origin and authority for existence from heaven (Mat 16:18-19; Heb 12:22), blasphemous words that are spoken against her are spoken against God (Acts 9:4-5).

**Verse 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."*

**Meaning;**

***It was given unto him to make war with the saints:*** The "war" symbolizes the "persecution" of the saints in Asia Minor. Daniel had prophesied, *"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them"* (Dan 7:21). John's vision of chapter 11 revealed, *"... the beast that ascends out of the abyss will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them"* (Rev 11:7). Any who would persecute the church find their origin in the kingdom of darkness.

***To overcome them:*** The overcoming of the saints through the persecution could not make Christianity inferior, but the war was successfully launched against the Church, as some were taken into captivity and killed with the sword (vs 10).

In this sense, the saints have been overcome by the government of Rome in the flesh.

We would also conclude that, John was part of the tribulations which the seven Churches in Asia Minor went through (Rev 1:9). It is believed that Domitian put many Christians in exile and banished John in A.D 95.

Domitian's successor Nerva, who ruled the world empire from A.D 96 to early 98, likely released him in A.D 96.

All these confirm that the saints were overcome in the flesh through persecuting.

***Power was given him over all kindreds ... tongues ... nations:*** This statement means that the power of Domitian was exercised in all the territories of Rome, under his control.

***Verse 8: "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."***

#### **Meaning:**

***All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him:*** Bible students should understand that the "earth" in this context does not make reference to the entire world, but the Roman world and only those in the territories of Rome. In this sense, all who are under the jurisdiction of the Roman State gave their reverential allegiance to Caesar and the Roman State. However, this same event can be generally be likened unto our generation where most people have been deceived by the devil.

We would also conclude that the believers or faithful Christians did not worship the Caesars as lords. Those who worshipped the Caesars were those who were not saved, and were under the deception of the devil. This period however, determined the faith and patience of the saints (the church) in the Lord Jesus Christ (vs 10).

***Whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world:*** The "book of life" here just conveys a message of salvation for those who were and will be faithful to God in all tribulations. God has such record of all those who are His (Rev 20:15).

Simply, God knows His (2 Tim 2:19). The fact that God knows those who will inherit heaven or hell does not mean that God has wickedly chosen some people who should go to heaven or hell. Our righteousness and wickedness predetermines where we shall spend eternity (Gal 6:7; Ez 18:20, 2 Co 5:10). In spite of this, those who righteously began to record their names in heaven (Heb 12:22-23) become part of those who were known before the foundation of this world. Such would be those who would not worship Domitian and some idols during the state persecution in Asia Minor, and such will be those who will be faithful to Christ in this period of apostasy.

The Lamb refers to Jesus Christ who is the Holy Lamb of sacrifice (1 Pet 1:18-20; Jn 1:29; Hb 9:14), which sacrifice gives a better covenant relationship with us (Hb 7:22) with a better hope (Hb 7:19).

Some Bible students affirm that the coats of skins made by God for Adam and Eve as clothe (Gen 3:21) would be made from a lamb, which was a symbol of Christ's sacrifice and thus, such would be the figure of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. This argument is not biblically proven, since the foundation of this world was not laid immediately men fell into sin (Gen 3:1-9). The foundation of the world was laid before the creation of all the things on this earth (Ps 24:2; Job 38:5-7; 2 Pet 3:5-6). This means that, we need to comprehend with the word of Christ when He said; "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). In this sense, Christ meant His glory was before the foundation of this world.

Paul then finalizes everything to conclude the argument, as he said to the Christians in the regions of Ephesus; *"4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7 In whom we have redemption through his blood,*

*the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself”* (Ephesians 1:4-9). We would thus affirm that, before the incarnation of Christ (Jn 1:14), He was "spiritually sacrificed to purify us unto the adoption of children for eternal life in Him."

In all these, Christ wants the recipients of this vision to understand that their salvation into eternity is totally assured as they fail to worship Caesars in all their tribulations and remain faithful to the end (Rev 2:10).

**Verse 9:** *"If any man have an ear, let him hear."*

### **Meaning;**

The King James Version of the Bible records about 516 passages of "hearing." In this context of John's vision, he expected the recipients to seriously behold the message conveyed of their persecution that led to the damnation of many brothers of the kingdom (of Christ).

If one does not pay a massive attention to the vision, he is deaf spiritually. The other citizens of Rome who were outside the kingdom of Christ could not understand the message apocalyptically displayed, so as the remnant Jews (Mat 13:10-16) and thus, those who understood the cryptic images portrayed should make their right decisions by hearing (Rev 1:3; Rom 10:17; Mrk 8:18; Mat 11:15).

**Verse 10:** *"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."*

### **Meaning;**

***He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity:*** This phrase indicates when exactly the captors themselves will now be led into divine captivity. During the siege of Jerusalem in A.D 70, over 97,000 Jews were taken into captivity.

Before the Christian Era, Jews, as part of the Jewish diaspora, migrated to Rome and Roman Europe from the Land of Israel, Asia Minor, Babylon and Alexandria in response to economic hardship and incessant warfare over the land of Israel between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires. In Rome, Jewish communities enjoyed privileges and thrived economically, becoming a significant part of the Empire's population (perhaps as much as ten percent). These Jews gradually in Asia Minor, turned against the Christians in the Empire, and Christ referred to them as those Jews who were (in) "the synagogue of Satan" (Rev 2:9, 3:9). Though their negative influences on Christianity could not condemn the early Christians into captivity, they terminated the doctrines of Christianity in the 1st century C.E as some do now.

In all those years, Christianity and all its citizens of priesthood (1 Pet 2:9-10), especially those in Asia Minor were on the other side suffering from the Roman persecutions. John the visionist was banished by Domitian in A.D 95 (but was likely released by Domitian's successor Nerva, in A.D 96). Most of the Christians in the seven Churches in Asia Minor (Rev 1:4,11) were also taken into captivity.

However, there is here a turn of events in the spiritual war against the saints. The Roman captors were taken into captivity as the kingdom or Western Rome fell in A.D 476. In this context of John's vision, the 10th verse under discussion here is not depicting the end of the Revelation, but stands between the period of the rise of the Roman kingdom from the population of the world ("sea" ... 13:1) and her fall in the period of the false prophets who rose amongst them (i.e. the earth beast ... vs 11-18) to finally

fight against the people of God with fake miracles and strong laws of the State.

Thus, the context depicts the end of the 42 months indicated in Rev 11:2 as the 3½ years and equivalent to the 1,260 days seen in Rev 11:3, 12:16 and the “time, times, and half a time” in Rev 12:14.

***He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword:*** Jesus made a similar statement to Peter when he cut off the right ear of Malchus: “...*Put up your sword into its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword*”...(Matthew 26:52). This shows that “*vengeance and recompence belong to the Lord*” (Deut 32:35-36; Rom 12:19).

In 250 AD, an empire-wide persecution took place as an indirect consequence of an edict by the emperor Decius. This edict was in force for eighteen months, during which time some Christians were killed while others apostatised to escape execution. W.H.C. Frend estimates that 3,000–3,500 Christians were killed in the persecution. Ludwig Hertling ("Die Zahl der Märtyrer bis 313", 1944) estimated 100,000 Christians killed between 30 and 313 CE. And such would be part of the faithful martyrs (Rev 6:9-11).

The event however, turned against Rome through the mighty hand of the Lord. Though, Pitirim Sorokin (Social and Cultural Dynamics, vol. 3, 1937, 1962) estimated that Roman Armies suffered some 885,000 battlefield casualties throughout their nine - century history, from 400 BCE to 500 CE, many citizens of the Empire died in the fall of Rome in A.D 476. Around 451 CE to 476 CE, there were over 4,096 Roman herded away to death by Hunneric.

In these sense, those Romans who killeth with the sword were killed with the sword, until the Roman coloni (farmers tied to the land) gradually became Medieval serfs during A.D 476.

***Here is the patience and the faith of the saints:*** In most cases of the



Christians' lives, some easily become discouraged in persecutions and even faint in their troubles (1 Co 10:12-13; James 1:12), just because they think Christ is felt far away from them. In situations like this, the Lord Jesus Christ in so many strategic ways fights for His people spiritually (Ex 14:14; Isaiah 30:15).

Thus, when the faithful who endure the sufferings witness the vengeance of Christ on their enemies (Heb 10:30), they tend to wait in patience and faith, to the end (Rev 2:10; 2 Tim 4:7-8), for the salvation of their souls (Heb 10:39).

**Verse 11:** *"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."*

**Meaning;**

*I beheld another beast:*

*Coming up out of the earth:*

*He had two horns like a lamb:*

*He spake as a dragon:*

*[Content removed due to some personal interests of the author of this particular book]*

**Verse 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."*

**Meaning;**

*He exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him:*

*Causeth the earth and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound,, was healed:*

*[Content removed due to some personal interests of the author of this particular book]*

**Verse 13 & 14:** *"13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14 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."*

**Meaning;**

*The doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men:*

*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:*

*[Content removed due to some personal interests of the author of this  
particular book]*

**Verse 15:** *“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.”*

**Meaning:**

*He had power, to give life unto the image of the beast:*

*Cause that as many as, would not worship the image of the beast should  
be killed:*

*That the image of the beast should both speak:*

*[Content removed due to some personal interests of the author of this  
particular book]*

**Verse 16:** *"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:"*

**Meaning;**

*He causeth all, both small...great...rich...poor...free...bond:*

*To receive, a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:*

*[Content removed due to some personal interests of the author of this  
particular book]*

**Verse 17:** *"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."*

**Meaning:**

*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:*

*[Content removed due to some personal interests of the author of this particular book]*

**Verse 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."*

**Meaning:**

***Here is wisdom:*** This phrase plainly plants into the minds of the readers of this book or John's audience the idea of apocalyptic and figurative interpretations of all the things under discussion here. What is depicted here gets rid of wisdom of nature, wisdom acquired through learning or experience or one's own conscience. John's emphasis here gives an assertion that the worldly wisdom is nothing, without God (1 Co 3:18-20) and cannot help interpret the context of his vision.

Thus, John speaks of true wisdom which should be used to interpret and understand completely what exactly he meant in his vision. True wisdom is a gift from God to those who ask it (Job 28:12-28; Prov. 3:13-18; Rom. 1:22; 16:27; 1 Co 1:17-21; 2:6-8; James 1:5). In this sense, one needs *"Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God"* (1 Co 1:24) to understand the nature of the numbers used in reference to the "sea beast and earthly beast."

In the same vein, both Christians and the readers of this message today should not literally interpret the vision out of its context.

***Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast:*** One would assume that the wisdom to the understanding of John's message is "a moral rather than an intellectual quality." Some Bible students also try to literally count the number 666 and affirm it to be 666 years.

Now, what did John mean by asking the audience and readers to *"count the number of the beast?"* He simply asked them to *"calculate the number of the beast,"* which calculation would not be of a mere wisdom of this world, but should be that of the divine, which divine wisdom was nothing than the Hebrew gematria (a system of communication through the use of

numbers). However, such wisdom would not be that of human inventions and mathematics. John knows that the number referring to the beast can be understood by the immediate readers.

But the question is; ***Who is this beast?*** Bible students should understand here that the “beast” does not refer to the Anti-Christ or Caesar Domitian, neither does it refer to the Popes nor Donald Trump (as some Protestants affirmed). [And I believe since the world has not come to an end, people shall be attributing the “beast” to some other prominent people in the history of mankind as well.]

The word **Antichrist** simply means “against Christ, or an opposition Christ, a rival Christ.” **Antichrist** is one who works against the teachings of Christ. It is simply a figure who opposes Christ. Remember this “antichrist” is a biblical term used in the apostolic age (to define the apostasy) as a reference to those who were/are opposing Christ and His law (1 Jn 2:18-19, 22; 1 Co 9:21), but not the kings who were either opposing (some of or all) the 613 Mosaic laws or the specific Christians in history.

**Caesar Domitian** cannot also be biblically credited as the “beast” in Rev 13:18; neither can he be credited as the “man of sin” in 2 Thes 2:3. That is to say that, analyzing critically the context of 2 Thes 2:1-10, portrays that “*That man of sin*” is not referring to a specific individual as the Antichrist, since Paul is using apocalyptic language in this context; it could be referring to a body or an institution or general environment of sin in which Christians would dwell. Thus, one should not believe “that man of sin” will be an incarnation of Satan and as such will be able to deceive many. Such would surely be in reference to those bodies influenced by Satan to persecute the saints in order to pull down Christianity. Again, if one credits **the beast** to a particular wicked person, even to Domitian, then the calculation of the **666** which they assume as years but not gematrical numbers cannot fit the total period of the king's reign; since Domitian reigned for only 16 years (that is, A.D 81 - 96) but not historically for six hundred and sixty-six years.

It is quite pity and very unfortunate for some readers of this message and some Bible students to go to the extent of attributing the “beast” to the Roman Popes and even President Donald Trump, and the like. It is very sad for them because they have missed the context of John's message, which vision speaks of the kingdom reign of Rome as a nation but not a Catholic or a modern technological kingdom. All other comparisons like these are not biblical.

Brethren, we can simply know of the exact beast under discussion here if only we accept the divine wisdom of God to understand that John's reference was to the Roman empire, which was fragile before God, as it ruins its own fall, even in A.D 476. As verse 10 stated the end of the “sea beast” (Roman government), so verse 18 signals the end of the “land beast” (imperial religion/the false prophets); these two parts of the Roman attacks launched on the Church were from the same national Rome. John simply meant that, both government and religion were earthly and totally insufficient. Hence, **the “beast” in Rev 13:18 specifically refers to the Roman kingdom**, but not specifically the kings who reigned it. It is of the fall of this particular beast that the immediate readers had to understand that she is marked by the number 666 which specifies her complete doom, after harming and persecuting God's kingdom (“the Church”) established on Earth, even in Asia Minor.

However, John draws the conclusion according to the opening phrase of this 18th verse that, if one fails to address and calculate the fall of the domineering kingdom of Rome, he is as foolish as one to be godless (Ps 14:1; Judg 19:23; 2 Sam 13:13).

***For it is the number of a man:*** John identifies the beast by the number of man. It is not the number of a man. The indefinite article “a” does not need to be placed in the text before the word “man.” It is simply the “number of man.” The same word structure is used in 21:17 in reference to the measuring of the holy city “according to the measure of man.” The indefinite article here does not signify a specific man. It means only that



the calculation was according to man's numbering rules, which one was according to the Hebrew gematria; but not that it was in reference to a specific man in history.

***His number is Six hundred threescore and six:*** "Score" is an archaic word for the number twenty, used in the way that we still use a dozen for twelve. The "threescore" here is sixty, that is, three times twenty ( $3 \times 20 = 60$ ). Now the number under discussion here is six hundred and sixty-six (666) and not six, six, six (6, 6, 6).

Considering chapter 17, John briefly concludes the vision of Rome's overthrow that was discussed in chapter 16. Chapters 17-19 are an expanded panoramic view of the fall of Rome that is given in greater detail than previous visions.

Linking these ideas to **Rev 13:18**, the number **666** would not be a reference to the number of the Antichrist or a literal beast; even the Antichrists are not biblically identified with numbers. The analysis given here would mean that the kingdom of Rome is fragile, as she faces the judgement of God (Rev 6:9 - 9:1-21).

According to the Hebrew gematria (a system of communication through the use of numbers), the number **six (6)** as used in Rev 13:18 would mean something that is imperfect or incomplete, or signifies that which is earthly, or simply "incomplete earthly kingdom;" it is also the number of "man." The **triple six (666)** is a reference to the Roman kingdom which originates "out of the earth," but tries to claim heavenly origin (because it's used three times as something that is perfect in its ways); it is found to be fake and thus, it is "triple" incomplete. And this was as a result of God's judgement that led to the destructions of Rome in the 1st century; and finally, the city of Rome fell in A.D. 476.

Bible students should not compulsorily fix the word Antichrist into this context, as to that which had the number 666. Understanding the Bible is part of the ultimate steps to salvation (Lk 24:44-45; Acts 8:30-36).

Thus, one whose mark (vs 16) was on the forehead (“total psychological allegiance”) and those who had it on their hands or wrists (“total physical allegiance”) all belonged or claimed their nationality to Rome, and through such evil acts and negotiations, had the chances of benefiting from the earthly kingdom without being saved in the Lord. And all such would fall with Rome.

Though Rome has fallen away and the remnants have propagated to raise Italy, the devil who was behind this is not dead yet. He now uses scary movies, pictures and some satanic activities of the antichrists, false Christs, false prophets, occults, satanists, luciferians, spiritualists, paganists, prophetesses, as well as some other religious priests who form parts of the “body of deceitful workers” (2 Co 11:13-15) to deceive many that that mark still reigns as a physical mark and the beast in Rev 13 physically be revealed when the judgement day prompts. All these claims are false and demonic; do not pay attention to them in your entire Christian life.

### Correcting some false claims about the 666

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

DAL

ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

DAL

**[End of lesson, as aimed]**

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**TO GOD BE THE GLORY.**

**GOD BLESS YOU.**

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