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# Worship

## A Preparation for the Lord's Second Coming

**R**ead God's Ten Commandment law in the second book of your Bible, Exodus, chapter 20. The commandments are also quoted in the Appendix. The Ten Commandments will judge us. Nothing will be secret. God will even judge our secrets by the Ten Commandments. God says, "The hour of his judgment is come." Revelation 14:7, KJV. The message prepares God's children to stand in the judgment. The message commands them to "fear God, and give glory to Him, and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12, KJV.

To be prepared for the judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. "As many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law, . . . in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." "The doers of the law will be justified." Romans 2:12-16, KJV. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." And, "whatever is not of faith is sin." Hebrews 11:6, KJV; Romans 14:23, KJV.

We are to "fear God, and give glory to Him." "Fear God, and keep *his*

commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” Ecclesiastes 12:13, KJV. “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” “One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.” 1 John 5:3, KJV; Proverbs 28:9, NKJV.

Revelation 14 reveals people that, as the result of the threefold message, are keeping the commandments of God. “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it [made it holy].” “Keep my Sabbaths holy, that they may be a sign between us. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.” “It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.” Exodus 20:10, 11, NKJV; Ezekiel 20:20; Exodus 31:17, NKJV.

The Sabbath will always be God's sign, His seal, that sets His worshipers apart from those who worship the “beast.” It reminds us constantly of the true reason we worship God. He is the Creator, and we are His creatures.

### **Whom Will You Worship?**

Who do you worship? Most people believe in God. When we talk about “worshiping the beast,” many don’t realize that those who will end up worshipping the beast won’t even be aware of it. They will think they are worshipping God. God’s Word says that before Christ comes again, everyone, everywhere, will either worship the beast or the Creator. The fact that the Bible uses the word *worship* lets us know that God is talking about religious deception. The word *beast* is a biblical word that means “a power” and has been used to represent various nations and powers.

The word *beast* sounds like something big and ugly. Anyone who hears about the beast will be prepared to avoid anything in the future that is big and ugly. The beast is not atheism. It is not the outside forces of communism and atheism that we have to fear, so much as it is deception within the church. It was not atheism that went after Christ to put Him on the cross. It was church leaders who laid the plans to capture Christ and persuade Pilate to crucify Him.

The beast is not atheism. It is not a communist or a Moslem power. Those who “worship the beast” will be supposedly worshipping God and Christ. There has always been a right way to worship God the Father and Christ and a wrong way to worship them. That is pointed out in the parable of the ten virgins of Matthew 25. They were all “virgins” (Christians), but five were wise, and five were foolish. They all had lamps, representing the

Bible, but five were saved, and five were lost. Those who look for a Moslem beast will be deceived. Those who look for a communist beast will be deceived. Those who look for an atheist beast will be deceived.

If the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 were ugly, it would not be a deception. We usually avoid the ugly, mean-looking dogs with sharp teeth that growl at us. The strange thing is that worshiping the beast will be the most popular form of Christianity and worship before Jesus Christ returns. The Bible tells us that most people will not even realize that they are worshiping the beast—a religious power. Another strange thing is that most people have absolutely no idea what or who the real beast is.

God's Word says that you will either "worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water," or you will "worship the beast and his image." Those who "worship the beast and his image" will think they are doing right. They do not realize that in God's eyes, they "are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked." They will think they are honoring God and will not be aware that they are in need of repentance. Revelation 14:7; 14:11; 3:17.

The three characteristics of those who worship the Creator are that:

1. They "obey God's commandments."
2. They "remain faithful to Jesus."
3. They have "the seal of the living God" on their foreheads.

In other words, they have let God write His law in their minds. Check the following Bible verses in your very own Bible: Revelation 14:9, 10, 12; 7:2, 3; Hebrews 8:10.

Those who "worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same will drink of the wine of the wrath of God." The mark in the hand relates to actions, and the mark in the forehead relates to thoughts. Revelation 14:7, 9, 10, KJV.

Since the seal of God has to do with God writing His law in our minds, the mark of the beast has to do with the acceptance of rebellion to God's law in the minds and in the actions of those who will ultimately be lost. The mark and the seal can be seen by God and angels, but it is not a physical mark or a physical seal that can be seen by men. Who is the beast? And what is its mark? We'll look at the "mark of the beast" later. Let's find out who the beast is first.

Both the books of Daniel and Revelation use beasts or different type of animals to describe various world powers. We do that with the American

eagle, the Russian bear, the Democratic donkey, and the Republican elephant. God showed to Daniel in visions which future nations would rule the world from Daniel's time to the second coming of Christ.

God showed Daniel four animals—beasts—that represented four world empires. God told Daniel: “The four great beasts are four kingdoms.” Daniel 7:17. God foretold that Babylon, represented by a lion, would be conquered by Medo-Persia, represented by a bear, and that Greece, represented by a leopard, would be the next world ruler. This would be followed by a dragon-like animal representing pagan Rome, which appeared as a beast with ten horns. In Daniel 7:24, God says, “The ten horns are ten kings,” or kingdoms.

The ten horns represented the breakup of the empire into ten divisions. The Roman Empire was invaded in A.D. 376 by Visigoths, followed later by other tribes that make up the European nations of today. There were, in random order:

1. Visigoths — Spain
2. Burgundians — Switzerland
3. Lombards — Italy
4. Anglo-Saxons — England
5. Franks — France
6. Alemanni — Germany
7. Suevi — Portugal
8. Heruli — destroyed
9. Vandals — destroyed
10. Ostrogoths — destroyed

The Bible says that the papacy would overcome three of those powers. “There before me was another horn, a little one which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings.” Daniel 7:8, 24. The Catholic emperors Zeno and Justinian eliminated the Heruli in 493, the Vandals in 534, and broke the power of the Ostrogoths in 538.

John continues Daniel's prophecy with a vision of pagan Rome, represented by the dragon. “A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of

twelve stars on her head, She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth . . . an enormous red dragon . . . stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter.” Revelation 12:1-5.

### **Pagan Rome**

The dragon of Revelation 12 sought to kill Christ at His birth. The dragon is Satan, and the nation Satan used to seek to kill Christ at His birth, Rome, pagan Rome. The dragon primarily represents Satan; it is in a secondary sense a symbol of pagan Rome. Revelation 12:9.

### **Papal Rome**

“I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns.” He “resembled a leopard but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion.” Revelation 13:12. In Daniel 7 the three empires that existed before Rome were pictured as a lion, a bear, and a leopard. So the power that followed pagan Rome, the papacy, was to have similar characteristics to all the empires that came before it. In Revelation 17:15, an angel explained that waters represent “peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages.” Let’s see how the Bible identifies the beast.

### **The Beast of Revelation 13:1-10**

As we have already seen, the word *beast* in the Bible merely means “powers or nations or kingdoms.” It is not a good word or a bad word. The goodness or badness is dependent on the character of the beast—the power. God has many of His own children who believe in the system spoken of in Revelation 13:1-10. Many of them will be saved and spend eternity in heaven and the earth made new.

No man has the right to judge another person regarding sincerity, motives, attitudes, or choice of belief. Even when we believe that another person’s beliefs are incorrect, we are to treat that person with love. Forcing another to believe the same way we believe is the spirit of antichrist. God wants us to treat each other with love, whatever our skin color or faith. Once we find out who the beast is, God expects us to treat those who are deceived by the beast with the same love we treat others. We are even called upon to pray for those who mistreat us. There is no hatred or unkindness intended or implied in identifying the beast power. God warns us against receiving “the mark of the beast.” It is necessary, then, to seek an understanding of who this beast power is.

The Bible says:

1. God predicted that the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 would arise from a heavily populated part of the earth.

The beast power is seen “coming out of the sea.” Since waters represent “peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages,” this leopard beast power rises in a heavily populated area. Europe was heavily populated, in contrast to areas like North America in the early centuries. Papal Rome rose in Europe. Revelation 13:1; 17:15.

2. God predicted that the beast would be the power that would dominate the earth immediately after pagan Rome dominated the earth.

“The fourth beast,” said the angel, “is a fourth kingdom that will appear on the earth.” The fourth empire was pagan Rome. Whatever power followed would be known as the “new” beast—the beast, or power, spoken of in Revelation 13:1-10. Papal Rome was the dominant power after pagan Rome. Only the papacy fulfills this prophecy.

3. God predicted that the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 would receive power from pagan Rome and would be headquartered in the city of Rome.

The “fourth beast”—“the dragon,” or pagan Rome—was to give “his power, and his seat, and great authority” to the beast of Revelation 13:1-10. “The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.” Revelation 13:1, 2. Emperor Constantine moved the “seat” of his empire in A.D. 330 and founded Constantinople (now Istanbul) as the empire’s new capital. This left a power vacuum that the bishop or “pope” of Rome filled. The old “seat” of his empire, Rome, became the “seat” of papal Rome. Other emperors continued to give the Bishop of Rome more power.

God, in Daniel 7, predicted the world empires beginning with Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and pagan Rome. “The fourth beast,” pagan Rome, gave the next “beast” his “power and his seat and great authority.” Emperor Constantine moved the headquarters of his empire to Constantinople (now Istanbul). Emperor Constantine gave the Bishop of Rome “his seat,” or “his throne,” just as Bible prophecy predicted. The seat or throne of the Roman empire was Rome. Only the papacy fulfills this prophecy.

4. God predicted that the beast, known in Daniel as “another horn,” would overthrow three of the ten divisions of Europe at the end of the rule of pagan Rome.

“Another horn, a little one which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it.” “The ten horns are ten kings who will

come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.” Daniel 7:8, 24. Thus was predicted the papal overthrow of the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths.

The Catholic emperors Zeno and Justinian eliminated the Heruli in A.D. 493, the Vandals in 534—and broke the power of the Ostrogoths in 538, thus giving the papacy the ability to rule unopposed. The papacy fulfilled this prophecy.

5. God predicted that the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 would speak “proud words and blasphemies.”

“And the beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies. . . . he opened his mouth to blaspheme God.” Revelation 13:5, 6.

What is the Bible definition of blasphemy? In the tenth chapter of the book of John, Jesus says, “I and the Father are one.” John 10:30. Notice that the Jews picked up stones to stone Him. But Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?” “We are not stoning you for any of these,” replied the Jews, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.” John 10:31-33.

Christ would in fact have been guilty of blasphemy if He had been only a mere man. But He was, and is, God in human flesh. Any man who claims to be God is guilty of blasphemy. I would be guilty of blasphemy if I told you that I am God. I am but a mere man. Yet there are numerous instances in which the papacy claims to be God. Look for references in the Appendix.

Another time when Jesus was accused of blasphemy was when He spoke to the paralyzed man just before healing him physically. Read it in Mark 2:3-7. Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” Some were thinking, “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” They were right that only God can forgive sins. For man to claim to forgive sins would be blasphemy. It would be an attempt to exalt man’s power above God’s power. Why was it not blasphemy for Jesus to forgive that man’s sins? Because Jesus is God in human flesh.

So any man who claims to forgive sins is guilty of blasphemy. I cannot forgive sins—only God can. The papacy claims both of these powers. They claim the power to forgive sin and that they are God on earth. See the Appendix. When they do either of these, they are guilty of blasphemy. The papacy fulfills this prophecy.

6. God predicted that the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 would be a persecuting power.

“He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation.” Revelation 13:6, 7.

Over more than 1,000 years of papal supremacy, millions lost their lives for believing differently than the papacy. Over 50 million were killed by the papal persecutions. They were found guilty of reading the Bible or of worshipping differently than the established church. Jesus never put any person in a torture chamber for not worshipping Him, but the papacy ordered it. The papacy made “war against the saints.” Daniel 7:21, NKJV. See *Fox’s Book of Martyrs* or *The Great Controversy* for a historical account of this bloody history. The papacy fulfilled this prophecy.

Anyone who claims to represent the Master must live like the Master and be willing to die for another. Jesus set the example. The papacy has never uplifted the cross of self denial but has rather chosen the crown. Jesus teaches that the cross must come before the crown.

7. God predicted that the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 would have authority over “every tribe, people, language and nation.” Revelation 13:6, 7, NKJV.

At the moment, it is reported that the papacy has over one billion people on Planet Earth, all around the world, who claim to follow the papacy. The papacy fulfills this prophecy.

8. God predicted that the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 would be taken prisoner after ruling exactly 1,260 years.

“Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.” “I saw one of his heads as it was wounded to death.” “He who leads into captivity will go into captivity: he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword.” Revelation 13:10, NKJV.

$30 \times 42 = 1260$ $42 \text{ Months} \times 30 \text{ Days in a Month} =$ $1260 \text{ Prophetic Days}$ $\text{or } 1260 \text{ Literal Years}$
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The “time and times and the dividing of time,” the forty-two months, and the 1260 days, all refer to a period of 1260 years of papal rule. The 1260 years are understood using the year-day prophetic time principle. See the Appendix, Daniel 7:25, and Revelation 13:3, 5 and 12:6.

The papacy became supreme in A.D. 538. That supremacy ended in 1798, exactly 1260 years later, just as prophecy predicted. Then, Napoleon’s army, under General Alexander Berthier, took the pope captive. On February 15, 1798, he arrested Pope Pius VI in the Sistine Chapel and proclaimed that the rule and authority of the popes had ended. The papacy power received its captivity or “deadly wound,” just as the Bible predicted. “He who leads into captivity will go into captivity.” Revelation 13:6. The papacy fulfilled this prophecy.

9. God predicted that the beast that went into captivity and received what seemed to be “a deadly wound” or fatal wound would recover and that the whole world would “worship the beast.”

“One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast. . . . and they worshiped the beast.” Revelation 13:3, 4.

Here we have God predicting that the beast would be a church-state combination. The word *worship* always denotes religion or “church,” and the word *beast* in Bible prophecy always denotes a kingdom or power. God predicted that the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 would be different than the other beasts or world powers. It would be a church-state combination. God predicted that this end-time world power would receive a “deadly wound,” that it would go into captivity after ruling unopposed for 1260 years (A.D. 538 to 1798), and that it would then recover and take center stage again. Look around the world today. The papacy joined hands with the other great end-time power—the other power of Revelation 13—and disrupted communism. “The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.” Revelation 13:3.

10. God predicted that this power would try “to change the times and the laws.” Daniel 7:25.

Compare the Catechism’s ten commandments with the Bible’s Ten Commandments. The Catechism changes two of God’s biblical commandments. First of all, the Catechism has removed one of them. The second commandment that forbids idolatry and bowing down to images or worshiping them was removed. The second biblical commandment reads: “You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them

or worship them.” Exodus 20:4. That leaves only nine commandments in the Catechism. To cover up this fact, the tenth commandment was divided into two parts, making one part the ninth commandment and the other part the tenth commandment.

God said, “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” Exodus 20:8-12.

The papacy changed the only commandment that deals with time—the Sabbath commandment. “He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws.” Daniel 7:25.

In the *Catholic Catechism of Christian Religion*, in answer to a question as to the day to be observed in obedience to the fourth commandment, this is what is written: “During the old law Saturday was the day sanctified; but the church, instructed by Jesus Christ, and directed by the Spirit of God, has substituted Sunday for Saturday; so now we sanctify the first, not the seventh day.” In *An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine*, page 58, papal writers say: “The very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; . . . because by keeping Sunday, they acknowledge the church’s power to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin.” God knew this would happen, which is why He began the Sabbath commandment with the word *remember*. The papacy fulfills this prophecy.

The Bible clearly identifies the “beast” power of Revelation 13:1-10 and the “horn” power of Daniel 7 as the very same power—the papacy. God loves you, reader, and if you have been deceived by the beast of Revelation 13:1-10, take courage. God is guiding and letting you learn these great truths so that you can make the very best choices and be safe through the coming crisis!

Through the centuries, various Roman Catholic spokesmen have felt that the pope—either the current one or a future one, or the papacy as a whole (the entire line of popes)—was the antichrist. For example, during a time of deep spiritual laxness in Rome, Arnulf, the bishop of Orleans, deplored the Roman popes as “monsters of guilt” and declared in a council called by the king of France in 991 that the pontiff, clad in purple and gold, was “Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself as God”—a reference to 2 Thessalonians 2:4.

Eberhard II, archbishop of Salzburg (1200-1246) stated approvingly at a synod of bishops held at Regensburg in 1240 (some say 1241) that the people of his day were “accustomed” to calling the pope antichrist.

When the Western church was divided for about forty years between two rival popes, one in Rome and the other in Avignon, France, each pope called the other pope antichrist—and John Wycliffe is reputed to have regarded them as both being right: “two halves of Antichrist, making up the perfect Man of Sin between them.”

Martin Luther, as an Augustinian monk in the University of Wittenberg, came reluctantly to believe that “the papacy is in truth. . . . very Antichrist, though he was willing to exclude certain individual popes.” *God Cares*, vol. 1, p. 123. Also see the Appendix.

