

# THE SEVEN HEADED BEAST OF REVELATION

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Who is the seven headed beast of Revelation 12, 13 and 17? What do the seven heads represent? What do the ten horns represent? On this page we will delve into the Bible and history to find out exactly who this beast is and what it represents.

*Revelation 12:3 ...'And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, **having seven heads and ten horns**, and seven crowns upon his heads.'*

*Revelation 13:1 ...'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.'*

*Revelation 17:3 ...'So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, **having seven heads and ten horns**.'*

Did you notice that the crowns are on the 'heads' in Revelation 12 and then move to the 'horns' in Revelation 13? We will discuss this later and find out what this means. But first, let us find out who this dragon of chapter 12 represents.

Can there be any doubt that these are the same beast power, but in different stages of it's history? It is represented as a 'dragon' in Revelation 12, and as Revelation 12:9 confirms, the dragon is "*that old serpent, called the devil and Satan.*", but does Satan wage war against God's kingdom directly himself? No, he uses **the kingdoms** of the world. Thus the dragon of Revelation 12 must also represent a kingdom. But we are also shown that Satan is the one ultimately behind it all.

## Who is the Red Dragon of Rev.12?

So as we have already stated, the dragon represents Satan. But because Satan uses the



kingdoms of this world to persecute God's people, then the dragon must also represent a kingdom. Now to understand which kingdom, we must find out the context of Revelation 12.

*Revelation 12:1-5 ...'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.'*

It is clear to all that this 'man child' who was born of the woman, and whom Satan wanted to devour when He was born (Matthew 2:13-16) and then was caught up to God to sit at His throne (Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 8:1), is none other than Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Also, as prophesied in Psalm 2:7-9 and Revelation 19:15, Christ was to 'rule the nations with a rod of iron.' So there can be no doubt about the identity of the 'man child'. It is none other than Jesus Christ. But what about the woman? Some believe the woman to be Mary, while others believe the woman to be the Jews. But there is a big problem with both those interpretations, which we will see.

The woman of Revelation 12 cannot be Mary for the following reasons. A woman in prophecy does not represent one person, but God's people as a whole. See Ezekiel 16:26-32, 2 Corinthians 11:2 and Isaiah 62:5 for more regarding this. Also, verses 13-16 of Revelation 12 tell us that this woman was persecuted for a 'time, times and half a time.', which equates to 3 and a half prophetic years, or 1260 years, using the day for a year prophetic principle. And this happened AFTER the cross, as verse 10 shows us. So was Mary persecuted for either 3 and a half years or 1260 years after the cross? No. There is no record of any such thing concerning Mary.

So what about the woman being the Jewish people? Well, what is the description of the woman of Revelation 12? She is 'clothed with the sun' and has the 'moon under her feet' and has a 'garland of 12 stars'. The moon represents the old Mosaic dispensation, which was a 'lesser light' of the 'sun' of the gospel of Christ. The moon shines only at night when we are unable to see fully, just like the Mosaic dispensation. But the sun shines during the day when we can see fully and is a clear representation of the gospel dispensation, with the 'sun of righteousness' being Christ Himself (Malachi 4:2). The 12 stars represent the 12 apostles whose names are on the 12 foundations of New Jerusalem, and also possibly the 12 tribes

whose names are on the 12 gates of the city (Revelation 21:12-14). Now were the Jewish people 'clothed' with the sun of righteousness [Christ]? NO! They rejected the Prince of life, therefore they could never be pictured as being clothed with the sun. And neither is there any record of the Jews being persecuted for either 3 and a half years, or 1260 years.

The woman of Revelation 12 can be none other than the Christian Church. In other words, she is God's true people. Now I hear some say ... *No! that cannot be! Jesus was not born from the Christian church!*". But what many don't realize is that God has always had a true church throughout history. Look at what Stephen said in Acts:

*Acts 7:37-38 ... 'This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he, that was in **the church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.'*

What was in the wilderness in the days of Moses? The **CHURCH** of God - His true people who live according to His will, and Jesus WAS brought forth as a man through God's true 'church' [people]. The only 'woman' who is 'clothed with the sun' is God's true people. His true church.

So who is the dragon? Well, we have seen that this chapter spans from the time that Jesus was to become a man. The dragon sought to kill this man child [Christ] and then go on to persecute the church. So which kingdom did Satan use to try and kill Jesus as a child and then actually crucify Jesus and later persecuted the church? **ROME!** There can be no other kingdom whom this dragon represents. **So Pagan Rome is the dragon of Revelation 12.**

## Seven Heads and Ten Horns

Now what about the 7 heads and 10 horns of the dragon? What do they represent? There are many people who believe the heads represent the various kingdoms that ruled the world before Rome, like Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece, etc. Others believe the 7 heads to be various leaders or even various popes, but all of these interpretations are wrong, and I will show you why. Remember where **the crowns** are on the dragon, as apposed to the crowns on the beast of Revelation 13? The crowns on the dragon are on the heads. The crowns on the heads mean that these heads are the ruling powers of the dragon - Pagan Rome. Now was Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece, etc, ruling powers of the Roman Empire? No, these past nations had fallen long before and were no longer ruling. So the heads cannot represent any other nations in the past, as they are **ruling heads of the Roman Empire**.

Now please notice the following important rule regarding prophetic symbols of nations that God laid out:

A popular interpretation of the 7 heads today is that they represent Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece, Rome and (America or Papal Rome). The thought is that they represent the great nations of history which waged war against God's people. But there is a problem. God never introduces a new symbol in Bible prophecy to represent an old government which has had its day and passed away. The dragon is introduced in John's day. Which kingdom was ruling in that time? Pagan Rome. So why would God introduce a new symbol which

includes old governments that have had their day? Let me give you examples from the book of Daniel, which Revelation ties in with strongly.

In Daniel 2 God gives a vision to Nebuchadnezzar of the great kingdoms that would rule the world right up to the end, and which kingdom does God start with? Babylon (the head of gold). Now why didn't God include Egypt and Assyria? Because Babylon was the current ruling nation and both Egypt and Assyria's time as ruling powers had passed, so God didn't include them. The same happens with the 4 beasts of Daniel 7. Babylon is still the ruling power and therefore God begins with Babylon, and this of course ties in with the image in Daniel 2. Then we turn to Daniel 8. Here we have the vision of the ram and goat which represents Medo Persia and Greece, plus the little horn which represented Rome. Why didn't God include Babylon in this vision? Because this took place in the "third year of Belshazzar" which was the last year Babylon would reign, and Medo Persia were "at the door" to take control. Thus God didn't include Babylon in that vision.

Do you see what God does here in Bible prophecy when dealing with nations? He doesn't include nations of the past. He only includes current nations and future nations. So when we jump to Revelation 12 and 13 regarding the 7 heads of the beast, the current ruling power was Pagan Rome. So God is not going to include nations of the past in that image. To include those nations of the past in the image is to go against the precedence that God laid out. So we are dealing with Pagan Rome and going forward from Pagan Rome.

*"The head of a kingdom is its king or government. The seven heads, of the dragon naturally denote, therefore, the seven heads, or governments, which at different times have ruled over Rome; to wit, kings, consuls, decemvirs, dictators, triumvirs, emperors, and popes. The ten horns represent the ten kingdoms which arose from the division of Rome ... The crowns being placed on the heads and not on the horns, shows that the kingdom had not yet been divided" (J.G.Matteson, Review and Herald, Vol.64, No.22, May 31, 1887)*

*"The seven forms of government that have existed in the Roman empire are usually enumerated as follows: (1) kingly; (2) consular; (3) decemvirate; (4) dictatorial; (5) triumvirate; (6) imperial; and (7) papal." (Uriah Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, 1897, p.660)*

So the seven heads of the dragon must denote the various forms of government that ruled the Roman Empire, as shown above. And the fact that the 'head' that was mortally wounded in Revelation 13:3 is the Papacy (which we will show further down), proves again that the 7 heads are not other kingdoms of the past, or even popes, but the ruling governments of the Roman Empire.

So what about the 10 horns? Revelation 17:12 tells us that they are 'ten kings'. Kings can also be interpreted in prophecy as 'kingdoms'. Now if we take a look at the fourth beast of Daniel 7, which again is the Roman Empire, we also see 10 horns coming up out of that beast, and Daniel 7:24 says that the ten horns are 'ten kings that shall arise.' So these ten horns naturally must denote the 10 kingdoms that the Roman Empire originally split into when it fell. Which matches also the [prophecy in Daniel 2](#) of Nebuchadnezzar's image with the 10 toes.

So it is clear that the 7 heads represent the 7 forms of government of the Roman Empire. And the 10 horns are the original 10 kingdoms of Europe that the Roman Empire split into.

## First Beast of Revelation 13



This now brings us onto the first beast of Revelation 13, which also has seven heads and ten horns, just like the dragon of Revelation 12. But on this beast in Revelation 13, the crowns have now moved from the heads to the horns, signalling a change in the ruling powers of the Roman Empire. But the fact that this beast of chapter 13 still has 7 heads and 10 horns, just like the dragon of chapter 12, shows that it is still Rome, **but in a different form**. Now notice what we see concerning this beast.

*Revelation 13:1-2 ...'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. 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.'*

Who gave this beast its 'power, seat and authority'? The dragon, which is Pagan Rome. So all we need to do is identify who Rome gave its power, seat and authority over to, to be able to identify this beast of Revelation 13.

*"In 330 A. D. Constantine removed his capital from Rome to Constantinople. **The ancient city was left to the papal power and the pope occupied in Rome a throne higher than any occupied by the Caesars.** Constantine laid the foundation of the papacy; but it remained for Justinian to complete the edifice in 533 A.D., by declaring that memorable decree which constituted the pope the head of all the churches." (S.N.Haskell, Seer of Patmos, 1905, p.229)*

*"**The Popes** filled the place of the vacant emperors at Rome, **inheriting their power, prestige and titles from Paganism.** **Constantine left all to the Bishop of Rome ... The Papacy is but the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon its grave.**" (Stanley's HISTORY, p.40, as quoted in Charlene R. Fortsch, Daniel: Understanding the Dreams and Visions, p.105)*

So the Roman Empire gave its power and authority over to the Bishops of Rome, and thus the Papal Church with the popes at the helm became the ruling power. And so the first beast of Revelation 13 must be Rome in its Papal form - otherwise known as the ROMAN Catholic Church. Why "**ROMAN Catholic Church**"? Because it is from ROME that this church got its 'seat, power and great authority'. Emperor Justinian was the Roman emperor who transferred this power:

*"We have exerted ourselves to unite all the priests of the East and **subject them to the See of Your Holiness** ... For we do not suffer anything which has reference to the state of the Church, even though what causes the difficulty may be clear and free from doubt, to be discussed without being brought to the notice of Your Holiness, because **you are the head of all the Holy Churches, for We shall exert Ourselves in every way (as has already been stated), to increase the honor and AUTHORITY of your See.**" (THE CIVIL LAW - The Enactments of Justinian, S.P.Scott - [source](#) and [pdf here](#))*

This also matches the fact that one of the heads of the beast received a 'mortal wound' (Revelation 13:3). Now after the 1260 years that was prophesied for Papal Rome to wage war against the saints between 538 - 1798 AD, the Papacy DID receive a 'mortal wound', when the French army marched into Rome, taking the pope captive and stripping the Papacy of it's power. And the following attributes of the first beast also match the Papal Church of Rome.

1- The beast rises up out of the sea (Revelation 13:1). Meaning it rises up among many nations, tongues and people (Revelation 17:15).

2- The dragon gives the beast it's 'seat and authority' (Revelation 13:2). Revelation 12 confirms that the dragon is satan and also the nation of Pagan Rome (it was Pagan Rome who tried to kill the 'man child', Jesus Christ).

3- The beast would receive a 'mortal wound' which would be healed (Revelation 13:3). Meaning this kingdom would be conquered at some stage, and lose it's power. But would then be revived into a power again.

4- All the world would 'wonder after the beast' (Revelation 13:3). Meaning exactly as it says. The WHOLE WORLD would follow after the beast and the beast would lead the nations.

5- The beast 'continues for forty two months' (Revelation 13:5). Meaning it would rule for 1260 (prophetic days), which are 1260 literal years. Same as the little horn power.

The Papacy is the only kingdom that matches the sea beast perfectly. **1** - The Papacy rose up in Europe amongst many nations, tongues and people. **2** - The Papacy received it's 'seat and power' from the old Roman Empire, and ultimately from satan himself. **3** - The Papacy received a 'mortal wound' in 1798 when the French army marched into Rome and captured the pope and the Papacy lost it's control and power. But then in 1929 Mussolini granted state power back to the Vatican and the deadly wound began to heal. **4** - Is the world 'wondering after' the pope and the Papal Church of Rome today? YES! **5** - This is the same time as the little horn power, which is 1260 years. The Papacy ruled the world between 538AD and 1798.

But why is this beast *"like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion."*? These animals are the animals that represented Babylon, Medo Persia and Greece [in Daniel 7](#), with the 'dragon' representing the fourth 'terrible' beast of Daniel 7, which was Pagan Rome. The reason this beast looks like a leopard, bear and lion is because Satan took the characteristics of all these previous kingdoms, bringing them into this one beast power - Papal Rome, to wage his final war against God's people.

Did you notice that the crowns have moved from the heads of the dragon to the horns of the first beast of Revelation 13? This is because when Pagan Rome ruled, it ruled through it's

own forms of government, denoted by the crowns on the heads. But when the Roman Empire split into the original ten kingdoms of Europe, the ruling power passed onto the various kingdoms (ten horns), with the popes directing the affairs of those kingdoms, as we will see from the further illustration given in Revelation 17.

So it is clear that the first beast of Revelation 13, with the 7 heads and ten horns is Rome **in its Papal form** (the Papal 'head'), known as the Papal Church of Rome, or the ROMAN Catholic Church. It was the Papacy that received the 'seat and power' from Pagan Rome - the dragon.

## The Beast of Revelation 17

In Revelation 17, God makes it even clearer regarding the 'dragon' of chapter 12 and the 'first beast' of chapter 13. Here now in chapter 17 we have a picture of a woman riding a 'scarlet coloured beast' with 'seven heads and ten horns'.

*Revelation 17:3-6 ... 'So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, **having seven heads and ten horns**. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, *Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother Of Harlots And Abominations Of The Earth*. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.'*

What have we learned above regarding the dragon and the beast? That they are the two phases of the Roman Empire. The dragon is Pagan Rome and the beast is Papal Rome. The dragon - Pagan Rome - gave its '**seat** and authority' to the beast - Papal Rome. And what do we now see in Revelation 17? A woman 'sitting' upon a 'scarlet [**red**] coloured beast'. What was the colour of the dragon of Revelation 12? RED. So in Revelation 17, God is giving us an even clearer picture of the Roman Catholic Church receiving her 'seat' from Pagan Rome. And what does a woman in the Bible represent? Ezekiel 16:26-32, 2 Corinthians 11:2 and Isaiah 62:5 tell us that a woman represents God's professed people - the church. But this woman in Revelation 17 is a 'great whore', symbolizing that this is a great apostate church, which received its 'seat' from Rome. And who is that? The Roman Catholic Church.

*"Then the mystery of iniquity changed the church from a pure woman to a harlot, and seated her on the beast. The beast had seven heads and ten horns, **identifying it with the government of the Western Roman Empire** ... Between A.D. 533, when Justinian published his decree, recognizing the head of the Roman diocese as head of the government of Rome, and A. D. 538, when the last obstacle in the form of a rival power was taken out of the way in Italy, **the woman mounted the beast**. Henceforth lordly Rome, which, like Babylon of old, had prided itself upon the fact that it was the master of the world, was guided and controlled by a prostitute woman." (S.N.Haskell, Seer of Patmos, 1905, p.296-297)*

But what about the heads where it says that 'five are fallen, one is and another is to come'? As we learned earlier, the heads of the beast are the 7 forms of government that ruled the Roman Empire, with the Papacy being the last head. Now if we take this verse from the day John wrote this, then the 'five fallen' would refer to the five forms of government that had already

passed in John's day, namely - (1) kingly; (2) consular; (3) decemvirate; (4) dictatorial; (5) triumvirate. These forms of Roman government had passed, and John was living in the time of the sixth head - imperial.

*"Kings, consuls, decemvirs, dictators, and triumvirs had passed away in John's day. He was living under the imperial form. Two more were to arise after his time. One was only to continue a short space, and hence is not usually reckoned among the heads; while the last, which is usually denominated the seventh, is in reality the eighth. The head which was to succeed the imperial, and continue a short space, could not be the papal; for that has continued longer than all the rest put together. We understand, therefore, that the papal head is the eighth, and that a head of short continuance intervened between the imperial and papal. In fulfilment of this, we read that after the imperial form had been abolished, there was a ruler who for about the space of sixty years governed Rome under the title of the 'Exarch of Ravenna.' Thus we have the connecting link between the imperial and papal heads. The third phase of the beast that was, and is not, and yet is, is the Roman power under the rule of the papacy; and in this form it ascends out of the bottomless pit, or bases its power on pretensions which have no foundation but a mixture of Christian errors and pagan superstitions."* (Uriah Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, 1897, p.660)

God said concerning the heads ... *'Here is the mind that hath wisdom'* (Revelation 17:9) And it takes wisdom to understand the heads of the beast. It can be confusing to think that the beast has 7 heads, and yet the beast itself in it's third phase of 'yet is', which is the beast in it's Papal form, is the 'eighth' head and is of the seven. How can there be eight heads, when the beast only has seven? If you include the 'Exarch of Ravenna', then the Papacy would be the eighth. But because this 'head' (Exarch of Ravenna) only continued a short space, it is not normally counted among the seven heads in the pictorial view. But Revelation 17 gives us a more exact detailed account of the beast, which is why it mentions the Papacy as the eighth head.

As we have already mentioned above, the ten horns are the ten kingdoms of Europe that Rome split into, and these kings 'gave their power and authority' to the beast, when it transitions to it's Papal form of government. Thus we have the picture of the whore sitting upon the beast, because it was the Roman Catholic Church who received her seat from the Roman Empire.

So who is the 7 headed beast and dragon? It is the Roman Empire in both it's Pagan and Papal forms, including the nations that Rome split into, who also give their 'power and authority' to the Papacy, to fight against God's elect. The dragon and red beast can also be associated with Paganism. And this is covered over with a 'Christian' garb in Papal Rome.

It is a sad fact that even though God has revealed the Roman Catholic Church to be [the whore of Babylon](#) and that antichrist beast system, revealing her horrendous crimes, including killing the saints of God (Revelation 17:6), millions of people still 'wonder after' her (Revelation 13:3), and the churches that once separated from her, knowing who she was, have now returned in open communion with their 'mother' (Revelation 17:5). But God is sounding the warning, and is [calling His people OUT of Babylon](#) - OUT of the fallen churches who have made that unholy union with the civil state. Will you heed the call?

*Revelation 18:1-4 ...'And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a*



*strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people,** that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.'*