



# THE BIBLE STANDS

*The Bible stands though the hills may tumble,  
It will firmly stand when the earth shall crumble;  
I will plant my feet on its firm foundation,  
For the Bible stands.*

## Supplement to Lesson 22: The Man Who Claimed to Change God's Law

### Identifying the Beast

1. Its Geographic Location
2. The Time of its Rise to Power
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### The Origin of Sunday Observance

#### Identifying the Beast

We assume that you are familiar with the Scripture passages presented in lessons 21 and 22.

Jesus tells us that "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17). The message of the Bible is never against people, but for them. Its admonitions "are written, that ye might believe, and that believing ye might have life" (John 20:31). Sometimes its message cuts across long-standing traditions and established religious systems. Error must be pointed out, and warnings given. But the intent is never to embarrass or condemn, but to heal. In this study, no attempt is being made to harm individuals. Many have been sincere in their error. It is therefore with genuine concern that we direct your attention to the Bible's own explanation of its symbolic terms

which describe and identify the beast power of Revelation 13. To the Biblical specifications we simply add historical data, unfolding the facts in the past and present story of Sunday observance.

The little horn in Daniel 7 and the composite beast in Revelation 13:1-10 are two symbols for the same power. Through Bible prophecy God has given a more detailed description of this power than of any other apocalyptic figure. Daniel 7 describes his rise to power;

Revelation 13 gives additional details regarding his work. A third description of him is given in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12.

There is only one political power which fits these three descriptions -- the Roman Catholic Papacy. Holding much more than ecclesiastical authority, the pope for hundreds of years enjoyed practically complete control of princes and rulers.

"In all ages of the Church, from the days of Gregory the Great down to the present, men have pointed to the Papacy as the fulfillment of the prophecy. That interpretation is set forth in the Homilies of the Church of England and by all the Reformed Churches. The interpretation, however, has been ignored or rejected by critics, for reasons which need not be specified. It can, however, stand all the tests of criticism."—Dr. Charles H. H. Wright, *Daniel and His Prophecies*, p. 168. London: 1906.

Let us examine each of the identifying marks of this little horn to confirm that the union of religious and civil power embodied in the Papal office is indeed the very entity predicted in these Scripture passages.

### **1. Its Geographic Location**

"AMONG THEM" Daniel 7:8

In order to rise among the other horns, it would have to arise where the ten nations existed which had taken over the Western Roman Empire. The papacy did indeed arise in the very city of Rome itself.

### **2. The Time of its Rise to Power**

"AFTER THEM" Daniel 7:24

Since the Roman Empire is considered by historians to have fully given over its authority to those ten nations by the year A.D. 476, we must look for the little horn to receive its power sometime after 476. It did, as we will see later.

### **3. The Circumstances of its Rise**

"HE SHALL SUBDUE THREE KINGS" Daniel 7:8; Daniel 7:20; Daniel 7:24

The Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths would not recognize the Bishop of Rome as the head of the church, and were deposed.

### **4. Its Comparison with the Other Kingdoms**

"DIVERSE FROM THE FIRST" Daniel 7:24

The papacy was a different kind of power than the other kingdoms. While they possessed strictly secular authority, the pope claimed religious as well as civil power. The eyes, mouth and stoutness of this horn reveal its superiority over the other kingdoms.

### **5. Its Inherited Characteristics**

"LIKE UNTO A LEOPARD,... A BEAR, AND...A LION" Daniel 7:12; Revelation 13:2

The vital aspects of the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece are preserved in the papacy. The priesthood and sacramental ritual of Catholicism were taken directly from the Babylonian cults. Also from

ancient Babylon came the worship of a virgin mother-goddess. The Persian sun-worship religion, Mithraism, has been preserved in amazingly precise detail in the holidays and religious customs of the Catholic people. Doctrines and philosophies of Greek Gnosticism taught by the church fathers and adopted by early Catholic councils are still alive today.

The Catholic Cardinal Newman gives an extended list of things “of pagan origin” which the papacy brought into the church “in order to recommend the new religion to the heathen”: “the use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, and ornamented on occasions with branches of trees; incense...candles...holy water...holydays...processions...sacerdotal vestments...the ring in marriage ... images. ...the ecclesiastical chant...”—J. H. Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, 1920 ed., p. 373.

## **6. Its Inherited Authority**

“THE DRAGON GAVE HIM ...HIS SEAT” Revelation 13:2

Revelation 2:13 also mentions Satan’s seat. Before the rise of the papacy, Satan used pagan Rome as his persecuting agent against Christianity. This was “he who now letteth...until he be taken out of the way.” 2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7.

On the vacated seat of the Roman Empire arose the papacy. Said one historian, “The Pope...is Caesar’s successor.”—Adolf Harnack, *What is Christianity?* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1903), p. 270.

## **7. Its Claims**

“A MOUTH SPEAKING GREAT THINGS AND BLASPHEMIES” Daniel 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 13:1, 5, 6

The Bible gives two definitions of blasphemy: (1) John 10:33 -- When a man makes himself God; (2) Luke 5:20, 21 -- Claiming the power which belongs only to God to forgive sins. The papacy makes both of these claims. Notice the following quotations:

“Thou art another God on earth.”—Christopher Marcellus’ Oration in the Fifth Lateran Council, 4<sup>th</sup> session.

“We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.” - Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter “The Reunion of Christendom.”

“All names which in the Scriptures are applied to Christ...all the same names are applied to the Pope.”—Robert Bellarmine, *Disputationes de Controversiis*, Tom. 2.

“Hence the pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions.”—Lucius Ferraris, *Prompta Bibliotheca*, “Papa”, art. 2.

The very title, pope, means “papa,” or “father.” It is a title which in religious usage belongs only to God. “And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.” Matthew 23:9.

“They have assumed infallibility, which belongs only to God. They profess to forgive sins, which belongs only to God. They profess to open and shut heaven, which belongs only to God. They profess to be higher than all the kings of the earth, which belongs only to God. And they go beyond God in pretending to loose whole nations from their oath of allegiance to their kings, when such kings do not please them. And they go against God, when they give indulgences for sin. This is the worst of all blasphemies.” - Adam Clarke, *Commentary*, on Daniel 7:25.

## **8. Its Persecuting Activity**

“SHALL WEAR OUT THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH” Daniel 7:21, 25; Revelation 13:7

“For professing faith contrary to the teachings of the Church of Rome, history records the martyrdom of more than one hundred million people. A million Waldenses and Albigenses perished during a crusade proclaimed by Pope Innocent III in 1208; beginning from the establishment of the Jesuits in 1540 to 1580, nine hundred thousand were destroyed; one hundred and fifty thousand perished by the Inquisition in 30 years; within the space of thirty-eight years after the edict of Charles V against Protestants, fifty thousand persons were hanged, beheaded, or burned alive for heresy; eighteen thousand more perished during the administration of the Duke of Alva in five and a half years.”—Brief Bible Readings for Busy People , No. 8.

“That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history.... It is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is quite certain that no powers of imagination can adequately realise their sufferings.” - W. E. H. Lecky, History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe (1955 ed.), Vol. 2, p. 40.

### 9. Its Duration

“A TIME, AND TIMES, AND HALF A TIME” Daniel 7:25; Daniel 12:7; Revelation 12:14

“FORTY AND TWO MONTHS” Revelation 11:2; Revelation 13:5

“A THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND THREESCORE DAYS” Revelation 11:3; Revelation 12:6

These three expressions all refer to the period of time during which the papacy was to exercise its supremacy.

“A time and times and the dividing of time.” A “time” represents a year (Daniel 4:16; 11:13, margin). One prophetic year equals 360 prophetic days. In Aramaic (the original language used in Daniel 7:25) the word “times” means “two times.” So let’s add it up.

1 time = 360 prophetic days

+2 times = 720 prophetic days

+half time = 180 prophetic days

TOTAL = 1260 PROPHETIC DAYS

“Forty and two months” A prophetic month consists of 30 prophetic days. So let’s multiply it.

30 days per month

x 42 months

TOTAL = 1260 PROPHETIC DAYS

With seven references in Scripture to this time period, one thing is clear. The papacy was to be in power for exactly 1260 prophetic days.

In lesson 14 we learned that the scale for interpreting prophetic time periods in the Bible is “each day for a year.” Two Biblical instances when this scale was used are Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6. In Daniel 9:24-27 this scale was used to predict the very year of Christ’s crucifixion. By adding that information to the details given in the first part of that same prophecy (Daniel 8:14), we figured the starting point of the great Day of Atonement foreshadowed in the ancient ceremonial system.

That same scale applies to the prophecy at hand:

1 prophetic day = 1 literal year

1260 prophetic days = 1260 LITERAL YEARS

History confirms the fact that the papacy held supremacy for exactly 1260 years. In A.D. 533, emperor Justinian issued a decree recognizing the bishop of Rome as the “head of all the holy churches.” But full sovereignty could not be realized as long as the Ostrogoths held power in Rome. You remember that the Ostrogoths were the last of the three kingdoms which would not recognize the Roman bishop’s authority. Then in 538 the Ostrogoths were overwhelmingly defeated. The bishop of Rome, with unchallenged political and ecclesiastical authority, was now the most powerful man in the West. That year, 538, marks the beginning of the 1260 years of papal supremacy. Now let’s do some addition.

A.D. 538

+ 1260 years

A.D. 1798

On February 10, 1798, during the French Revolution, Napoleon’s general, Berthier, entered Rome, proclaimed a republic, and took the pope prisoner. The pope died shortly thereafter in Valence, France. That year, 1798, marks the end of the 1260 years of papal supremacy.

### **10. Its Apparent Death**

“AS IT WERE WOUNDED TO DEATH” Revelation 13:3

We have just described the death blow which the papacy received exactly 1260 years after it had gained its supremacy. Two factors reveal the significance of this event:

1. Unlike any previous schism, this de-poping was inflicted by an outside authority whose sole motive was to destroy the entire papal structure.
2. By 1798 the world had changed its attitude toward the papacy. Following this event, the nations of the world considered the papacy as dead.

### **11. Its Healing**

“HIS DEADLY WOUND WAS HEALED” Revelation 13:3

In 1870 the Italian government took over the city of Rome. But in 1929 Cardinal Gasparri met Premier Mussolini in the Lateran Palace to sign the Treaty of the Vatican, returning political power to the papacy.

The Catholic Advocate in Australia (April 18, 1929, p. 16) said that its effect was to “heal a wound of 59 years.” The front page of the San Francisco Chronicle of February 12, 1929 carried the headline, “Heal Wound of Many Years.” The Associated Press dispatch of the event said, “In affixing the autographs to the memorable document, healing the wound which has festered since 1870, extreme cordiality was displayed on both sides.” Thus in 1929 Vatican City was recognized as an independent state, the pope its king. Religious and civil power were once again united in the papal office.

### **12. Its World-Wide Popularity**

“ALL THE WORLD WONDERED AFTER THE BEAST” Revelation 13:3

On March 9, 1929 the pope could say, “The peoples of the entire world are with us.” Today there is not a man on earth who receives more publicity, or whose movements are more closely followed than the pope.

### **13. Its Number**

“SIX HUNDRED THREESCORE AND SIX” Revelation 13:18

Let us notice four facts about the mystical number 666:

1. It is "the number of the beast " (verse 18).
2. It is "the number of a man " (verse 18).
3. It is "the number of his name " (verse 17).
4. If a person "hath understanding" he can " count the number" (verse 18).

The Catholic Douay Bible has this note on Revelation 13:18: "The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number." So all we need is an understanding of the pope's name and we will be able to add it up ourselves. The Catholic weekly, Our Sunday Visitor, April 18, 1915, says, "The letters inscribed in the Pope's miter are these:

VICARIUS FILII DEI, which is the Latin for "VICAR OF THE SON OF GOD." This title is applied to the pope in Roman Catholic literature of high standing (Prompta Bibliotheca, by Ferraris, in the article "Papa"). In English this expression is applied to the pope eleven times by Cardinal Manning in his book, The Temporal Sovereignty of the Pope. Thus the title is of undisputed authenticity. It expresses very plainly the position the pope claims to possess.

How does one count the number of his name? Before the use of numbers as we have them today, letters of the alphabet were given numerical significance. In ancient heathen cults much thought was given to the preparing of titles which contained the desired numerical significance.

You are familiar with Roman numerals, the numbering system used in ancient Rome. I=1; V or U=5; X=10; L=50; C=100; D=500. Let's add up the numerical value of the pope's title.

V = 5	F = 0	D = 500
I = 1	I = 1	E = 0
C = 100	L = 50	I = 1
A = 0	I = 1	
R = 0	I = 1	
I = 1		
U = 5		
S = 0	TOTAL: 666	

#### 14. Its Doctrine

"CONFESSES NOT THAT JESUS CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH" 1 John 4:3; 2 John 7

According to the Bible, a primary characteristic of antichrist is its teachings regarding the human nature of Christ. In two of his epistles, the apostle John (who also recorded the book of Revelation) warned that antichrist would deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

The Bible says that Jesus came "in the likeness of men," "in the likeness of sinful flesh." He came in the nature of those whom He wished to save. "In all things" he was "made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest." (See lesson 13.)

Catholic belief denies that Jesus came in the nature that you and I possess. The Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception teaches that Mary was born without the ability to sin. Jesus, therefore, was born with a nature so far removed from us that He could not fully be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," or be "in all points tempted like as we are."

#### 15. Its Attempt to Tamper with God's Law

"HE SHALL...THINK TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS" Daniel 7:25

Primarily, the activities of the little horn are directed not merely against human authority, but against God Himself. Says the text, "He shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High." The "times and laws" that he would "think to change" would therefore be "of the most High." The papacy would actually claim the right to alter divine precepts.

Consider the following statement made in Pope Nicholas' time. "The pope has authority and has often exercised it, to dispense with the commands of Christ...He can dispense above the law, and of wrong make right, by correcting and changing laws."

Again, "The pope is of so great authority and power that he can modify, explain, or interpret even divine laws.... The pope can modify divine law, since his power is not of man, but of God, and he acts in the place of God upon earth, with the fullest power of binding and loosing his sheep." - Lucius Ferraris, "Papa," art. 2, in *Prompta Bibliotheca* .

You remember that the Ten Commandments are the only part of the Bible which God both spoke with His own voice and wrote with his own finger. They are found in Exodus 20:3-17. Let's notice a few examples of where the papacy has thought to change God's law. You will find these changes in any Catholic catechism.

God's second commandment says in Exodus 20:4-6, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." But because it speaks against the use of graven images which are a vital part of Catholic worship, the papacy has completely removed God's second commandment from its teachings. Then in order to come up with ten, they divide the tenth into two separate commandments, again attempting to change God's law.

Our text says he shall "think to change times and laws ." The only law of God that has to do with time is His fourth commandment. It says: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work."

The current widespread profaning of God's holy Sabbath day, and the veneration of the day of the sun, were brought about by no other authority than the Roman Catholic papacy itself. The papacy picked it up as just another practice inherited from heathenism. The following documentation traces the gradual transfer of Sunday observance from its heathen origin to its position in popular contemporary denominations.

### **The Origin of Sunday Observance**

"It is certain, that Christ himself, his Apostles, and the Primitive Christians, for some good space of time did constantly observe the seventh-day Sabbath."—William Prynne, *A Briefe Polemicall Dissertation, Concerning...the Lordsday-Sabbath* , p. 33.

"Until the second century there is no concrete evidence of a Christian weekly Sunday celebration anywhere. The first specific references during that century come from Alexandria and Rome, places that also early rejected observance of the seventh-day Sabbath." Dr. Kenneth Strand, *The Sabbath in Scripture and History* , p. 330.

"It is certain that the ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed...by the Christians of the East Church, about three hundred years after our Saviour's death."—Prof. E. Brerewood, *A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath* , p. 77.

"Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church."—Lyman Coleman, *Ancient Christianity Exemplified* , chap. 26, sec. 2.

“Although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this.”—Socrates Scholasticus (written about A.D. 440), quoted in Ecclesiastical History , Book 5, chapter 22.

“The Christian Church made no formal, but a gradual and almost unconscious, transference of the one day to the other.”—F. W. Farrar, The Voice From Sinai , p. 167.

“Christianity and the higher forms of paganism tended to come nearer and nearer to each other as time went on.... They tended to merge into one another like streams which had been following converging courses.”—J. H. Robinson, Introduction to the History of Western Europe. p. 31.

“The two opposed creeds moved in the same intellectual and moral sphere, and one could actually pass from one to the other without shock or interruption.... The religious and mystical spirit of the Orient had slowly overcome the whole social organism and had prepared all nations to unite in the bosom of a universal church.”—Franz V. M. Cumont, Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism , reprint 1956, pp. 210, 211.

“Remains of the struggle are found in two institutions adopted from its rival by Christianity in the fourth century, the two Mithraic sacred days, December twenty-fifth, dies natalis solis , as the birthday of Jesus, and Sunday, ‘the venerable day of the Sun,’ as Constantine called it in his edict of 321.”—Walter Woodburn Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire , p. 60.

“The Church made a sacred day of Sunday...largely because it was the weekly festival of the sun; for it was a definite Christian policy to take over the pagan festivals endeared to the people by tradition, and to give them a Christian significance.”—Arthur Weigall, The Paganism in Our Christianity , 1928, p.145.

“The church...took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday.... The Sun was a foremost god with heathendom.... And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday.” Dr. William L. Gildea, The Catholic World , March, 1894.

“What began, however, as a pagan ordinance, ended as a Christian regulation; and a long series of imperial decrees, during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries, enjoined with increasing stringency abstinence from labour on Sunday.”—Hutton Webster, Rest Days , p. 270.

“The Roman Church...reversed the Fourth Commandment by doing away with the Sabbath of God’s word, and instituting Sunday as a holiday.” Nicolas Summerbell, History of the Christian Church , 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1873, p. 415.

“The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her Divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday.”—The Catholic Mirror , September 23, 1893.

“The Sunday, as a day of the week set apart for the obligatory public worship of Almighty God...is purely a creation of the Catholic Church. It is...not governed by the enactments of the Mosaic law. It is part and parcel of the system of the Catholic Church.”—John Gilmary Shea, The American Catholic Quarterly Review , January, 1883.

“Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday? A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.”—Peter Geiermann, The Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine (1957 ed.), p. 50.



“They will needs have the Church’s power to be very great, because it hath dispensed with a precept of the Decalogue.”—The Augsburg Confession , 1530.

“The church has changed the Sabbath into the Lord’s day by its own authority, concerning which you have no Scripture.”—Johann Eck, Handbook of Common Places Against the Lutherans , 1533.

“If you follow the Bible alone there can be no question that you are obliged to keep Saturday holy, since that is the day especially prescribed by Almighty God to be kept holy to the Lord. In keeping Sunday, non-Catholics are simply following the practise of the Catholic Church for 1800 years, a tradition, and not a Bible ordinance.... With the Catholics there is no difficulty about the matter. For, since we deny that the Bible is the sole rule of faith, we can fall back upon the constant practise and tradition of the Church.”—Francis G. Lentz, The Question Box , 1900, p. 98, 99.

“Like two sacred rivers flowing from Paradise, the Bible and divine Tradition contain the Word of God, the precious gems of revealed truths. Though these two divine streams are in themselves, on account of their divine origin, of equal sacredness, and are both full of revealed truths, still, of the two, TRADITION is to us more clear and safe.”—Joseph Fa di Bruno, Catholic Belief , p. 45.

“We have, therefore, the same authority for Purgatory as we have for Sunday.”—Martin J. Scott, Things Catholics Are Asked About , 1927, p. 136.

“Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the Church, has no good reason for its Sunday theory, and ought, logically, to keep Saturday as the Sabbath.”—John Gilmary Shea, The American Catholic Quarterly Review , January, 1883.

“You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we [Catholics] never sanctify.”—James Cardinal Gibbons, The Faith of Our Fathers , 1917 ed., pp. 72, 73.

“Is it not strange that those who make the Bible their only teacher should inconsistently follow in this matter the tradition of the Church?”—Bertrand L. Conway, The Question Box Answers , 1910, p. 255.

“But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?”—Jesus, Matthew 15:3 .

“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”—Jesus, Matthew 15:9 .

“No; it never was changed, nor could it be, unless creation was to be gone through again: for the reason assigned must be changed before the observance, or respect to the reason, can be changed!! It is all old wives’ fables to talk of the change of the sabbath from the seventh to the first day. If it be changed, it was that august personage changed it who changes times and laws ex officio—I think his name is DOCTOR ANTICHRIST.”—Alexander Campbell, The Christian Baptist , Feb. 2, 1824, vol. 1, no. 7.

“We ought to obey God rather than men.”—Peter, Acts 5:29 .

“The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate.”—Isaiah 24:5, 6 .

“Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday or Catholicity and the keeping of Sunday. Compromise is impossible.” Catholic Mirror , December 23, 1893.