

deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 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?" (Rev 13:1- 4).

Now notice how these beasts - John saw compares to the four beasts Daniel witnessed. "And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. 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. 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. After this I beheld, and 10 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. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse, different from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things" (Dan 7:3-8),

Both, John in Revelation and Daniel witnessed seeing these beasts coming out of the sea. Daniel and John after seeing these beast coming up out of the sea gives the order in which they saw the beasts rise in appearance to them. Notice first the order which John in Revelation 13: witnessed: 1st beast has seven heads and ten horns. The image of the 2st beast is like a leopard. The 3rd beast has the feet of a bear. And the 4th beast the last mentioned is like a lion.

These empires in their respective order began with Daniel seeing a lion! John listed the order in Revelation in reverse, ending with the lion! Why was that? John wrote Revelation around 650 years after Daniel's dream or vision, putting the writing of Revelation into a different era of time from Daniel.

The lion image plays a major roll at this end age. Rev 13:2 tells us, "The dragon gave him [the lion] his power and his seat and great authority!" What does the body of this beast represent? It represents the designated order of this beast which runs through the entire range of the Babylonian succession of empires.

Babylon was the head in the political succession. It carried on during the succeeding world empires. The Babylon system is the head of gold which king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon set in motion. "Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was 90 feet high and 9 feet wide he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon" (Dan 3: 1). It is here we have an account for the birth of gold being worshiped and being made a standard. Remember the story of Daniel's friends, Shadrach - Meshach and Abednego, who would not bow down to Nebuchadnezzar golden image.

Gold was made a controlled medium of exchange, the possession of which became essential to those who were buying and selling in the world markets. Like was said earlier, we cannot see a television program without seeing a commercial for buying of gold and silver!

The three main channels of human activity in organized society are the political, the economic and the religious systems.

Satan has counterfeited the true and righteous system of government of economics, as well as a spiritual relationship between man and his God. So the counterfeit of all three, political - economic oppression and spiritual superstition control men and shapes his destiny in the world, keeping him out of touch with God. Man-kind has failed to harmonize their actions and plans according to God's purposes. He has adopted an economic system that caters to greed and selfishness. The acquiring of gold, silver or its equivalent in the medium of exchange has become the objective of mans endeavor.

Today's system of human values and exchange has given birth to poverty on the one hand and the brutal arrogance on the other. This has encouraged men to rob, murder, and cheat to supply the wanton system with wealth and luxury, rather than to build a peaceful home and family in accord with God's instructions.

When looking at the last stage of the beast in Revelation 13, we see that man has been duped in bowing down to the worshiping of gold from the day of man or a woman's birth, to the day of their death. They are dominated and influenced by this system of mammon which requires they labor day in and day out. The

dominating power of pagan Rome has been transferred to this beast of commercialism, who collects a toll from wealth and labor. Today commercialism exercises greater power and authority than ever was wielded by Imperial Rome at the height of her glory! !

Its pretty clear and needless to say, suffering and sorrow have afflicted the earth as men continues to worship the beast and covet her gold and silver. Humans have set aside God's laws of righteousness so to worship this monster beast.

The Apostle Paul sees Satan and his workings in 2 Thessalonians, "With all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess 2: 10-12).

As was said earlier, the beast of commercialism has caused God's people Israel to follow the evils of the Babylonian financial and economic interest, who control the markets of the world. The Apostle John also saw this evil domination of commercialism that have power "over all kindreds, tongues and nations. "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. 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 yhe foundation of the world" (Rev 13:7-8).

Were the American taxpayers about to be forced to help bailout Europe? The Untied States, is offering our borrowed Federal Reserve money to troubled European financial institutions! Die Welt, a German newspaper says, "The United States is ready to bailout Europe. *"Quote, "Other central banks, for example the U.S. Federal Reserve, are apparently prepared to finance a part of the cost."* America cannot afford to send money to foreign nations! Our national debt already exceeds 22 trillion dollars, which mean every man, woman and child in America owes over 65,000 dollars to payoff that debt!

For us to help Europe out we would have to borrow the money at a high interest rate and give it to Europe at a low interest rate! We have been doing that for years around the world already. We give aid to Saudi Arabia, who has received billions of petro dollars from us for many, many years!

Looking at Rev 13: verses 11-12, we read of another beast coming up out of the earth. "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. And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him, and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." This beast deals primarily with the economic and financial structure of Babylon in contrast to the economic system of God.

This beast of the earth must therefore, represent another step in the domination over man through economic control, particularly through the financial system, that is the life blood of the commerce of Babylon. This beast has to do with mans physical economics rather than with a spiritual economics system. The use of the word worship aptly describes the homage paid by men to the system that enables him to acquire its golden wealth, which deceives him or her.

This second beast represents the modern banking and financial structures through which all the power of the first beast [commercialism] is exercised. The two horns represents its system of debt and interest that have power over men.

The image of the beast in this symbol, John in Rev 13: expresses our modern banking and financial system, the controllers of which control those who dwell on the earth. "He had power [controllers have 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" (Rev 13:15).

An image represents a likeness of the thing portrayed. It reflects or mirrors that which it impersonated. This beast image that is able to speak is none other than the coin of the realm, we often say, "*Money talks,*" or "*Those who have the gold, makes the rules.*"

The principal money law in God's divine economics is against interest! Today, the interest in business is the debt business, the foundation of national and international finance.

In ancient Israel, where God's word tells us **not** to charge usury, there was no incentive to invent the means to get everybody into debt. Why? Because there was no profit in debt!! The term usury is listed in 8 places

in the Old Testament! One is found in Exo. 22:25 that said, "If you lend money to any of My people that is poor by you, you shalt **not** be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury."

We have paid dearly for every departure from God's economic law! If we had followed God's law of increase we would have had what Matthew said; "But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold" (Matt 13:8).

Because we have elected to follow after the Babylonian system, we have now to decide whether we want to take the mark in our hands and forehead! There are many kinds of marks! The branding and marking of cattle to show ownership is one, in that sense the mark is here used. "And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 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" (Rev 13: 16-17). The right hand represents all manual labor as Job 40: 14 tells us. "Then will I also confess unto you that your own right hand can save you."

The Church of God has always taught that the mark in your right hand was the working on God's Sabbath days. We still believe that to be true! Exo 20: 8-11, is the evidence of that belief! "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt you labor, and do all your work: [do all your physical work and worldly pleasures]. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: **in it you shalt not do any work**, [physical work or worldly pleasures], you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maid servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

If you work [serving your 6 day worldly activities] on either the weekly Sabbath or God's annual Sabbath or buy and sell on God's set apart Sabbaths, you have the mark in the right hand already!! Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong wrote in the booklet, Mark of the Beast 1952, page 6, "*We begin now to see that the Mark of the Beast involves a point of obedience-whether we shall obey God, or reject the commandments of God and obey man's rule.* "

If that identifies the mark in the right hand? What does the mark in the forehead represent? The forehead is emblematic of mental and intellectual thoughts. "Behold, I have made your face strong against their faces, and your forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made your forehead: Fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house" (Ezek 3: 8 - 9).

This mark in the forehead was the worshiping of false gods. Idols like gold or silver. Worship on Sunday, keeping Christmas, Easter or Halloween- following the tradition of men. We can add the following of the oral Jewish Hebrew calendar which many Churches of God follow!

God's word tells us to worship the true God from Heaven, not some false god, gods or images. "And God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shalt have no other gods before Me. You shalt not make unto you any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: For I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain" (Exod 20:1-7).

In our booklet "Postponements, Another Mystery of the Ages," written 25 years ago, we said that the number 666 can be counted as the words wealth and tradition. The worship of wealth or the lust for wealth caused the world to have the mark of the beast and traditions has caused mankind to not follow God's laws, statutes and judgments.

Our study on the postponements concluded the worship on Sunday, instituted by the Catholic Church! And the postponements of God's true annual Holy Days were changed by the Jews which caused the world to be deceived into the mark in their foreheads.

John tells us in Revelations there is wisdom written for us. "Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding count the Number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number Is six hundred

threescore and six" (Rev 13: 18).

When studying any biblical subject it is wise to look into Commentaries, Lexicon's and Dictionaries for knowledge. Example: According to the Seventh Day Adventist "Commentary of the Bible," page 823 says: "Since the days of Irenaeus, 666 has been applied to many names. The number alone cannot identify the beast since numerous Names can add up to 666." Another Commentary called "Study in Revelation" says: "Many have been conjectures regarding this number 666. But John declares it is the number of a man or as has been rendered "for Number is of man." It is the numeric of the system of man in opposition to the system of God. The number 666 applies to the political, religious, economic system of Babylon and has its foundation of the worship of gold. 1 Kings 10: 14, tells us "The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six Hundred threescore and six (666) talents of gold". Gold is the foundation on which rests the image of the first beast! The image of the second beast is the financial or monetary system, both are the image of the commercial activities of Babylon.

John once again writes what he saw happening to the Babylon system. "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" (Rev 18:1-3).

Reading from an ancient book titled "Against heresies," on page 559: is written [*"He Irenaeus*] warned that it is therefore more certain, and less hazardous, to await the fulfilment of the prophecy, than to be making surmises, and casting about for any names that may present themselves, in as much as many names can be found possessing the number 666 mentioned."

It is not for us to name a person called the beast, because there are so many names that equal 666, that have lead God's people into mis- interpreting its meaning. But we know that Satan, as the "prince of the power of the air" has his false ministers every where to try and cause all the discomforts he can. Be it money or health problems, to Satan it does not matter. Timothy encourages us to remember: "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. So hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard" (2 Tim 1 :7, 13). 📖

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