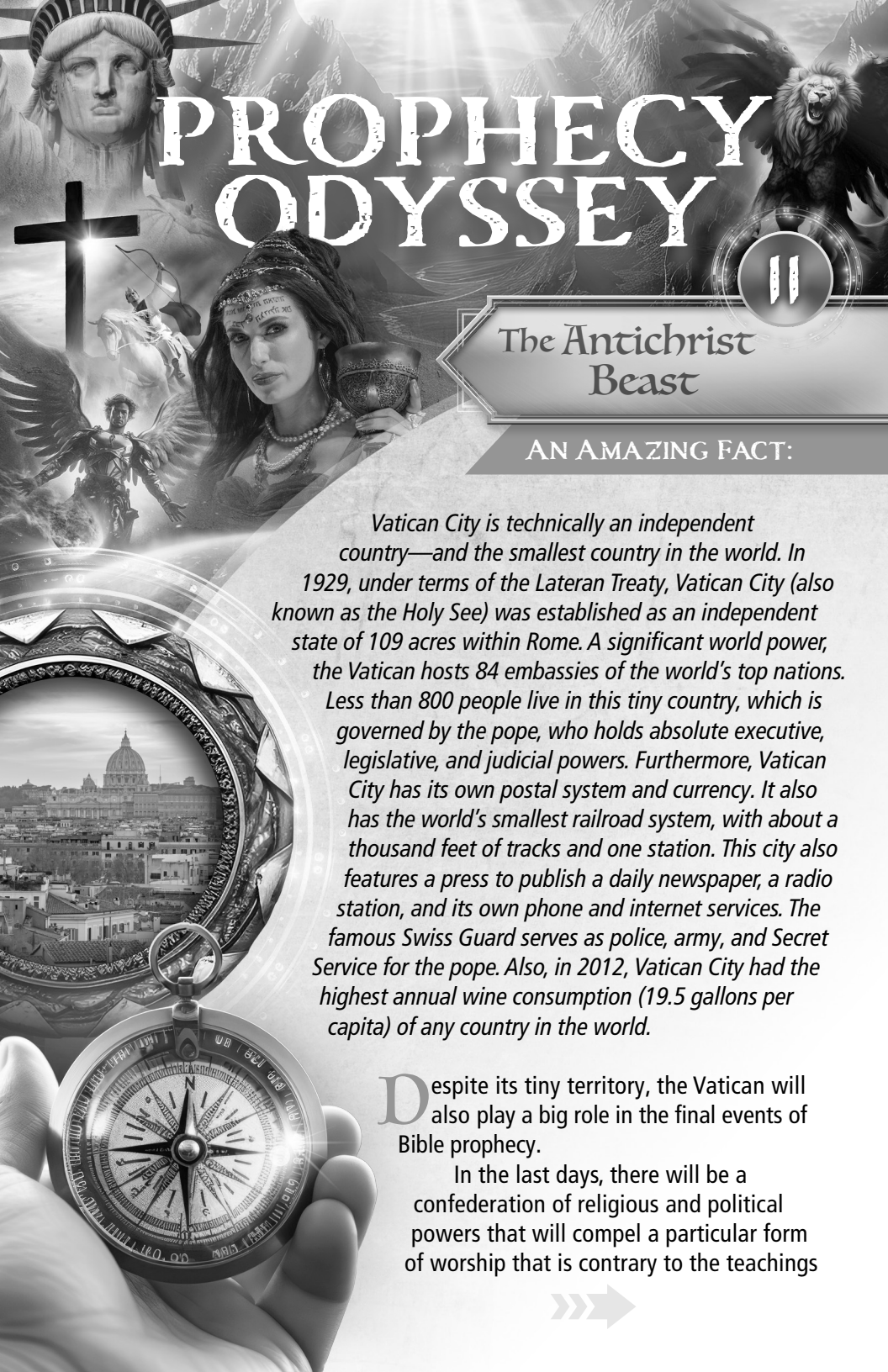




PROPHECY ODYSSEY

The Antichrist Beast

AN AMAZING FACT:



Vatican City is technically an independent country—and the smallest country in the world. In 1929, under terms of the Lateran Treaty, Vatican City (also known as the Holy See) was established as an independent state of 109 acres within Rome. A significant world power, the Vatican hosts 84 embassies of the world's top nations. Less than 800 people live in this tiny country, which is governed by the pope, who holds absolute executive, legislative, and judicial powers. Furthermore, Vatican City has its own postal system and currency. It also has the world's smallest railroad system, with about a thousand feet of tracks and one station. This city also features a press to publish a daily newspaper, a radio station, and its own phone and internet services. The famous Swiss Guard serves as police, army, and Secret Service for the pope. Also, in 2012, Vatican City had the highest annual wine consumption (19.5 gallons per capita) of any country in the world.

Despite its tiny territory, the Vatican will also play a big role in the final events of Bible prophecy.

In the last days, there will be a confederation of religious and political powers that will compel a particular form of worship that is contrary to the teachings



of Jesus. We can count on the devil to present this counterfeit worship as a beautiful thing, but it will violate the commandments of God.

How can we be sure we will not be deceived and compromise our convictions? In the prophecies of Scripture, God has given clear warning flags to identify these last-day movements ...



When you see a blank, use your Bible to look up the missing word and fill it in.



Who will stand on the sea of glass in heaven?

REVELATION 15:2

Those who have the victory over the _____, over his image and over his _____ and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.

NOTE: Bible prophecy tells us that in the last days, there will be an evil power manipulating the kingdoms of the world and compelling people to worship contrary to the commands of God (Revelation 17:12, 13). Those who faithfully follow Jesus and resist this evil power will be rewarded with eternal life.



What are the three angels' messages of Revelation 14?

REVELATION 14:7

Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His _____ has _____; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.

REVELATION 14:8

And another angel followed, saying, _____ is _____, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

REVELATION 14:9, 10 *If anyone _____ the _____ and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God.*

NOTE: Revelation 14:14 describes Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven. Immediately prior to Jesus' return, Revelation 14:6–14 says that an awesome three-part message of hope and warning will go to the entire world to prepare people for that great day. One of these messages warns against worshipping the beast and receiving its mark.

In this lesson, we will identify the beast. In a future lesson, we will identify the mark. Eternal life itself is at stake, so pray earnestly for God's guidance and understanding as you study!



What does a beast represent in Bible prophecy?

DANIEL 7:17 *Those great _____, which are four, are four _____.*

DANIEL 7:23 *The fourth beast shall be a fourth _____ on earth.*

DANIEL 8:21 *And the male goat is the _____ of Greece.*

NOTE: In Bible prophecy, a beast represents a government, kingdom, or political power. God uses beasts to symbolize nations, just as we do today—an eagle (United States of America), a bear (Russia), etc. In the Bible, "beast" is not necessarily a disrespectful term. It does not suggest beastly characteristics. The beast that has the mark is pictured in Revelation 13:1–10, 15–18. Please take time to read these verses before proceeding to the next question.



How does the Bible identify the beast?

REVELATION 13:1

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a _____ rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

NOTE: In Revelation 13, God gives ten clues to help us identify the beast. He gives us a long list of characteristics so that we can be absolutely certain of the beast's identity.

1. Rises up out of the sea (v. 1)
2. Receives its power, seat, and authority from the dragon (v. 2)
3. Becomes a worldwide power (vv. 3, 7)
4. Is guilty of blasphemy (vv. 1, 5, 6)
5. Rules for 42 prophetic months (v. 5)
6. Receives a deadly wound that heals (v. 3)
7. Is a religious power that receives worship (vv. 4, 8)
8. Persecutes God's saints (v. 7)
9. Has the mysterious number 666 (v. 18)
10. Is led by one supreme man (v. 18)

Only one power fits all ten identifying marks—the papacy. But in order to be certain, we will carefully consider them one at a time.



This beast arises from the sea. What does the sea, or water, symbolize?

REVELATION 17:15

The _____ which you saw ... are _____, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

NOTE: In prophecy, water represents great multitudes of people—or heavily populated areas. Prophecy predicted that the beast would arise from amid the established nations of the then-known world. The papacy arose in Western Europe, so it fits point 1. But what about the other nine identifying points?



Who gives the beast its power and position?

REVELATION 13:2

The _____ gave him his
_____, his _____, and great authority.

NOTE: The beast—which has the mark that we must avoid—obtained its power, authority, and capital city from the dragon. According to Revelation 12:3–5, the dragon is the power that sought to destroy the child Jesus at the time of His birth. It was Satan who inspired Herod, a king in the pagan Roman Empire, to slay all the male babies in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:13, 16).

To whom did pagan Rome give her authority and capital city? History is clear that pagan Rome turned over its power and capital city to the church of Rome. “The Roman church ... pushed itself into the place of the Roman World-Empire, of which it is the actual continuation. ... The Pope, who calls himself ‘King’ and ‘Pontifex Maximus,’ is Caesar’s successor.” So point 2 fits the papacy as well.

SOURCE

Adolph Harnack, *What Is Christianity?* (New York: Putnam, second edition, revised, 1901), p. 270.



How far-reaching is the influence of the beast?

REVELATION 13:3

And _____ the _____ marveled and
followed the beast.

NOTE: No historians doubt that during the Middle Ages, the papacy was a worldwide power. In fact, the word “catholic” means “universal.” We can see that point 3 also fits the papacy.

Now please note that there are many godly, loving Roman Catholic Christians whom God counts as His children. There have also been many gracious and courageous popes who loved God. This lesson is not intended as an attack on our Catholic friends; it is simply intended to honestly explain the prophecies that expose the devil’s plan to use a religiopolitical institution that lures churches away from scriptural truth.



What comes out of the mouth of the beast?

REVELATION 13:6

*He opened his mouth in _____
against God, to _____ His name.*

NOTE: The Bible defines “blasphemy” as a man claiming to forgive sins (Luke 5:21) and claiming to be God (John 10:33). The papacy boldly claims the power to forgive sins. Notice the following section from a Catholic catechism: “Does the Priest truly forgive the sins, or does he only declare that they are remitted? The Priest does really and truly forgive the sins in virtue of the power given to him by Christ.” The papacy also claims that the pope is equal to God. Pope Leo XIII said, “We [the popes] hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.” Here is another startling statement about the pope: “Thou art another God on earth.” So point 4 also fits the papacy.

SOURCES

Joseph Deharbe, S.J., *A Complete Catechism of the Catholic Religion* (New York: Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss, 1924), p. 279.

Christopher Marcellus, *Oration in the Fifth Lateran Council*, Session IV (1512), manuscript SC, Vol. 32, col. 761 (Latin).

Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter “The Reunion of Christendom,” dated June 20, 1894, trans. in *The Great Encyclical letters of Pope Leo XIII* (New York: Benziger, 1903), p. 304.



How long would this first beast rule?

REVELATION 13:5

*And he was given authority to continue for
_____ - _____ months.*

NOTE: In prophecy, one prophetic day equals one literal year (Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34). This time period is repeatedly referred to in prophecy as three and a half years, 42 months, or 1,260 days. Based on the 30-day calendar used by the Jews, all three time periods total the same 1,260 prophetic days, or 1,260 literal years.

The worldwide power of papal Rome became official when, in AD 538, Emperor Justinian’s decree making the papacy supreme was no longer opposed. However, the papacy was dealt what appeared to be a death blow in 1798 when the pope was captured by Napoleon’s general, Alexander Berthier. The time period between AD 538 and 1798 is 1,260 years! Point 5 also fits the papacy.



What happened to the beast after the 42 months?

REVELATION 13:3

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly _____ was _____ . And all the world marveled and followed the beast.

NOTE: As mentioned, the papacy received what appeared to be a deadly wound in 1798 when General Berthier took the pope captive to France, where he died in exile. Half of Europe thought that this event signaled the end of the papacy, but God had said that the wound would be healed and that the papacy's power and influence would be restored until the entire world would follow her lead.

Malachi Martin, consummate Vatican insider, reveals the following in his book *The Keys of This Blood*: "The pope is the best-known person of the 20th century, ... has formed personal relationships with the leaders of 91 countries, ... and is prepared for worldwide rule now." You can recognize that today; the papacy is, in many ways, the most influential power on Earth. And with each trip the pope makes, his power and influence grow. Multiplied millions worldwide look to the papacy as the only hope for world unity, peace, and decency—precisely as God predicted. The papacy clearly fits point 6.

SOURCES

Joseph Rickaby, "The Modern Papacy," *Lectures on the History of Religion* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1910), Vol. 3, Lecture 24, p. 1.

Malachi Martin, *The Keys of This Blood* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), pp. 123, 490, 143



Is the beast a religious power?

REVELATION 13:15

And cause as many as would not _____ the image of the beast to be killed.

NOTE: It is made clear in Revelation that this entity would be involved in spiritual matters. The word "worship" (or "worshipped") is used five times in Revelation 13 in reference to this power. Surely, the papacy fits point 7.



What does the beast do to the saints?

REVELATION 13:7

It was granted to him to make _____ with the saints and to _____ them.

NOTE: It is common knowledge that the papacy did persecute and destroy conscientious Christians, especially during the Middle Ages, the peak period of its control. Many historians say that more than 50 million people died for their faith during this period of tribulation. Apparently, the church felt it was doing God a favor by stamping out "heresy." The pope has asked that the church be forgiven for its atrocities, but the fact remains that it did persecute and destroy. The papacy fits point 8 also.



What is the mysterious number that identifies the beast?

REVELATION 13:18

His number is _____.

NOTE: In Revelation 13:18, God says to count the number of the beast's name and that it is the number of a man. When we think of the papacy, the man we naturally think of is the pope. What is his name? One of the pope's official titles is "Vicar of the Son of God," which is "Vicarius Filii Dei" in Latin (the official language of the church). Newspaper articles, when referring to the pope as "Vicar of Christ," will often enclose the words in quotation marks to show that they are a translation of his title. The book of Revelation is saying that the Roman numeral value of the letters of his name will equal 666. Let's see whether or not points 9 and 10 fit the papacy:

V	5	F	0	D	500	TOTALS
I	1	I	1	E	0	112
C	100	L	50	I	1	53
A	0	I	1		<u>501</u>	501
R	0	I	<u>1</u>			<u>666</u>
I	1		53			
U	5					
S	0					
	<u>112</u>					

There should be no doubt remaining. All ten characteristics portrayed in Revelation 13 fit the papacy. And this power has a specific mark that we dare not receive. In a future lesson, we will identify the “mark” of the beast. If you receive the mark, you will be lost. Many will discover that avoiding the mark involves a tremendous struggle. But God can give us the faith and courage to honor all His commandments in these last days.



How does God identify those who get the victory over the beast?

REVELATION 14:12 *Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the _____ of God and the _____ of Jesus.*

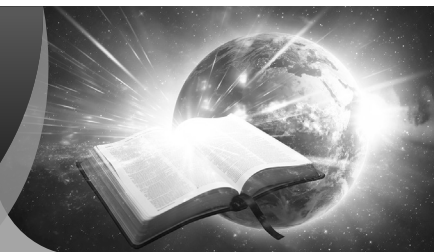
NOTE: There are certainly some awesome and momentous events coming in the future, but those who follow Jesus have nothing to fear. We know who will win the battle—for God’s Word promises, “He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

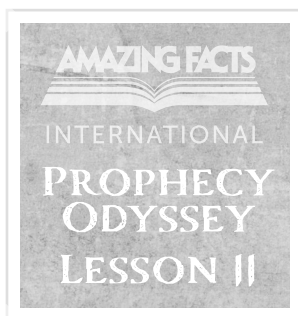
» YOUR RESPONSE

Are you willing to follow Jesus wherever He leads, even though you may lose your friends and suffer persecution?

ANSWER: _____

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