



# 2025 Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy Lesson 5 The Nations: Part 2

by Tim Jennings

## SABBATH

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The lesson points out that many through history have argued that wanted the Fall into sin, for a variety of reasons, but the lesson rightly points out this is a “horrible and wretched position to take.”

First, do you think God wanted either Lucifer or Adam and Eve to sin?

What would it say about God if God wanted that to happen? What kind of God would God be?

If such a position undermines trust in God, why would some people argue for it?

I think this stems from multiple misunderstandings—one the sovereignty of God. God is sovereign, no question about it, but what if one believes God’s law functions like human law—He imposes rules and is control of what happens? Then sin must in some way have been God’s will, because God is in control. It is argued that since God is all-powerful, and all-knowing, and sin happened, then it must have been His will for it to happen.

This comes from not understanding design law, the law of liberty and love. That love cannot be compelled, forced, coerced, or achieved by legislation and law enforcement. And that God is in control of what God controls, which is Himself and His design laws, including the law of liberty—so sin couldn’t have happened if God didn’t create freedom, but that doesn’t mean God wanted people or angels to use their freedom to sin.

But some people, not understanding this, believe that only the things that God wants to happen, happen.

This leads to other horrible ideas about God, like God is in control of all things that happen, so if a person is murdered, child molested, or loved-one dies in a car accident, some will say “it was God’s will.”

Evil, suffering, torment, sin, sickness, disease, death—none of it is God’s design, God’s will—**freedom is God’s will** and design for only in freedom is their both love and development of individuals. But it is not God’s will for people to use their freedom to rebel and sin.

The second reason people will sometimes argue that God wanted this to happen is because of misunderstanding about God’s foreknowledge: because God foreknew, they argue, it was His will for

it to happen, because if He foreknew and didn't want it to happen then He would have prevented it. They might argue, that if you foreknew your car was going to breakdown on a trip, you would get it fixed or use a different car to prevent the breakdown from happening. But, such analogies misconstrue reality. Cars do not have freewill. Cars cannot love or develop character.

Further, those who argue such things conflate foreknowledge with causality, arguing that foreknowledge takes away freedom and predestines or causes it to be that way. But this is not so. Knowing doesn't cause the outcome.

In my view, God foreknew what would happen and created free beings anyway, and then enacted His preordained plan to remove sin, rebellion, fear, selfishness, distrust and restore His universe to eternal perfection of love and trust in freedom. And the fact that sin did happen is powerful evidence that God is love and we have real freedom.

One of the founders of the SDA church gave her views on this, and I agree with this position, what about you do you agree or see it differently, and if so how and why?

- It is impossible to so explain the origin of sin as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin, to fully make manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all his dealings with evil. **Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in nowise responsible for the entrance of sin;** that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it, is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the Word of God; it is "the transgression of the law;" it is **the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.** E.G. White, *The Great Controversy* 1888, p. 492, emphasis mine.
- **The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam.** It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal." Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an **unfolding of the principles** that from eternal ages have been **the foundation of God's throne.** From **the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man** through the deceptive power of the apostate. **God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence,** and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was **His love** for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. E.G. White, *The Desire of Ages* p. 22, emphasis mine.

## SUNDAY

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The title of the day's lesson is *The Very First Commandment* and points us to Genesis chapter 2, and then the lesson states in the second paragraph,

- The first use of the root verb tswah, “to command,” that God gave to humans was in Genesis 2:16, 17, the command not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. How can some knowledge be forbidden? Isn’t it always useful to experience and to know more? *Adult SS Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy*, p. 39.

Any questions or concerns about this description?

When studying always check the Bible references for yourself, like the Bereans

- Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Acts 17:11 NIV84.

They were checking Paul by the Scripture, so we should definitely check other non-inspired sources by the Scripture, including everyone should check what I teach by the Scripture.

And so, let’s go to Genesis 2, is the command of God a rule, a restriction, a legal requirement, or something else? What is actually going on here?

- The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, “**You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.**” Genesis 2:15-17 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Does it make any difference to understand the instruction “you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die” as a standalone command or in the context of “you are free to eat from any tree in the garden”?

Consider saying to your child, “you are free to skydive with a parachute, but you must not jump out of a plane without a parachute for in the day you jump without a parachute you will surely die.”

What kind of a command is this? Is this a legal restriction, or an instruction on how reality works, a description of life and death, not an imposed law legal requirement, but a design law requirement to stay in harmony with the laws of life?

Notice, when Satan tempted Eve, he left out the freedom to eat from all the trees and just started with,

- “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” Genesis 3:1 NIV84

God gives freedom, but Satan suggest they are not free, they are being restricted, their liberty is constrained, implying some rule is in force why? Because external use of force to violate liberty damages love and incites rebellion.

And external rules enforced through punishments restrict liberty, so Satan's position is an attempt to introduce his lie from the beginning that God's laws are made up rules that restrict freedom.

If you haven't read our magazine [The Lie that Deceived Angels, Infects Christianity, and Delays the Second Coming of Christ](#) I encourage you to do so. In that magazine I document that Satan's root lie to the entire rebellion, is the lie that God's law is made up rules that restrict freedom, and God's justice is using His power to inflict punishment. This lie, when believed, breaks love and trust and incites fear, selfishness, and rebellion.

Satan introduces this lie in Eden.

So, what was the problem with eating from that tree? Was it God setting up a rule, don't do it or you will get in legal trouble and I will be required by law to punish you with death, OR they would change themselves and take themselves out of harmony with the laws God built into their being and the result is ruin and death?

God was not giving them a legal command He was describing reality, if you break my design law of love and trust you will sever your connection with me, the source of life, and you will decay and die.

Satan, insinuates the problem is not natural, not breaking design law, that there is nothing inherently wrong with breaking trust with God, only that God could kill them. His temptation is, "You will not surely die." He didn't say, "God is unable to kill you, or God doesn't have the power to kill you, or there is nothing God can do to you." He said, "you will not surely die," in other words, there is nothing wrong or harmful in distrusting and disobeying God, sin is not actually harmful, but God certainly can harm you for it. But if you take the fruit then you will become like God and once you become like God then there won't be anything God can do to you.

These are the implications. Remember God is Creator. He spoke reality into existence, and His laws are the laws that govern the existence of space, time, matter, life and they are the fixed laws of heaven and earth—like the law of gravity, physics, health, and the law of love, truth, liberty, exertion, worship and others.

Satan is a created being, like you and me, and we cannot speak anything into existence, we can only make up rules that we enforce through external punishments.

This is Satan's lie about God's law, that He makes up rules and His government functions no differently than that of a creature.

When we understand reality and what God wants—love, trust, loyalty, friendship, and how love, trust, loyalty, friendship, and devotion work we understand why God put this tree in the Garden. It was for their development and benefit, for them to think for themselves and exercise their ability to choose and thereby determine what they would know by experience. Remember this was the tree of knowledge of GOOD and Evil; they had the opportunity to know good, truth, love, loyalty, devotion, and if they would have chosen to reject the lies they would have known health, peace, greater intimacy with God,

ever growing maturity and godliness of character. But they chose to believe lies and thus chose to know evil, fear, selfishness, guilt, shame, and all the destructive attributes.

God's command was not a rule, it was an instruction of health and a description of reality. He was telling them what would happen if they chose to know evil, they would die. And thus, embedded in the command not to eat of that tree and therefore not to die, was the command to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. Choose love and choose trust which is to choose life, that was the command.

These verses reveal through historical events, what happened, how God's laws work. Adam and Eve had freedom to choose and their choice changed them. But they could have chosen the good and thus sealed themselves into loyalty like the loyal angels in heaven did.

The lesson goes on to describe how after the fall that humans began to make human governments and how human governments end up exploiting and hurting people.

Why do you think this is a consistent theme and process that has happened in every culture and civilization—the establishment of rulers who use imposed laws with threats of punishments?

The natural drive, motive, spirit, animating energy of humanity after the fall is fear—and when you are afraid, what do you want? To not be afraid, to be secure, to be safe.

What makes people feel more fear? Other than obvious external threats? Fear is increased by unpredictability, helplessness, uncertainty, not knowing what will happen and what others will do.

What makes people feel more safe and secure? The belief that things are predictable or they are in control. And rules, imposed law, a system of a code of conduct, with enforcing power, gives a societal structure that causes people to feel safer.

But the safety people feel with so-called law and order is not in the imposed laws; true safety is only achieved when people have hearts changed to be trustworthy, when people choose to abide by the agreed upon rules for conduct.

A great example is how some people want strict gun control laws so they can feel safe, while other believe that restricting guns makes them less in control and less able to defend themselves and thus makes them more vulnerable to exploitation and less safe. Both sides of that argument are made by people who are in fear and are trying to make a rule that will cause them to feel less fear and more safe. All human laws are like this, none of them provide real safety or security, only people choosing to follow the laws results in safety.

For instance, it is illegal to murder someone—but that law does not stop someone from committing murder, it only creates a structure to punish someone who does commit murder. Thus, the imposed laws do not actually make one safe. But the compliance with the laws creates the illusion that seduces people into thinking they are safe.

In the Apple TV period piece *Franklin*, which stars Michael Douglas as Benjamin Franklin, there is a scene in which John Adams questions Franklin's deception of the French and asks something to the effect, "So we are supposed to deceive them?"

To this, Franklin responds, "No, we are to lawyer them."

What an insightful theatrical depiction of the reality of made-up imposed law! Imposed laws are the types of rules that creatures make up.

Imposed laws do not define reality, determine outcomes, remove sin, purify character, instill love, or make people righteous; they do not make a better and more just society or world; they do not heal hearts and minds. They do not deliver from death, heal sickness, or resurrect loved ones; they do not heal relationships; they do not reveal the truth about God; and they do not represent God's kingdom or government!

**Imposed laws do not stop evil—in fact, they perpetuate it**, because imposed laws restrain the total chaos and the inevitable self-destruction that would otherwise result if sin were unrestrained. However, imposed laws simultaneously create the framework for evil to operate "legally." In other words, imposed laws are the laws Satan wields to manage his kingdom so as to prevent his wicked followers from completely destroying themselves, while they continue to do evil, exploit, abuse, lie, and cheat—but all through mechanisms that make it "legal" or through tricking the system (such as using lawyers to deceive) to avoid the artificially inflicted consequences the punitive justice system would otherwise enforce.

For instance, slavery is now "illegal" in every country, but there are still various forms of slavery being practiced—sex trafficking, sweatshops, forced child labor, etc. This reveals that imposed laws do not change hearts and minds, do not bring righteousness, do not remove sin but, rather, perpetuate sin because the various imposed laws allow traffickers to continue their evil. They use laws against wiretapping, surveillance, and warrantless searches and exploit rules of due process, evidence, and so much more to continue in their sin. Evil people, those who do not have God's law in their hearts, do not seek to obey the law; instead, they use law to disobey and restrain the righteous from holding them accountable.

In other words, as Franklin is depicted as saying, they "lawyer." They deceive, trick, and manipulate to do real evil while calling it "legal"—or at least use the legal system to claim it isn't legal to hold them accountable because the various rules of evidence or procedure were not followed.

As long as the majority of people in a society have remained sensitive to the movements of the Holy Spirit and retained within themselves some sense of morality, a desire to live godly lives, then they have acted reasonably in their community discourse seeking to be "law-abiding citizens"; thus, the imposed laws have given a semblance of justice. But the good we have seen in society has never been derived from imposed law; it has been only from the goodness of God operating in the people!

On October 11, 1798, John Adams, Founding Father of the United States and its second president, wrote to the Massachusetts Militia that:

Because We have no Government armed with Power capable of contending with human Passions unbridled by morality and Religion. Avarice, Ambition, Revenge or Gallantry, would break the strongest Cords of our Constitution as a Whale goes through a Net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

As God has been removed from our culture, as hearts have hardened against heaven, and as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, the evil passions of the human heart have increased such that no imposed laws will result in a healthier society. For instance,

- Gun laws do not stop murderers.
- Child protection laws do not stop child-molesters.
- Tax laws do not stop cheaters.

There is no “justice” in an imposed-law system. Justice, doing what is actually right, comes only from the hearts and minds of people who have God’s living law of love and truth written upon their hearts.

The great deception coming upon the world is that we can have justice, order, safety, and security with more laws and more law enforcement. But this is a lie! The only way we get true justice is when God heals people and writes His law on their hearts and minds (Hebrews 8:10). And this happens only when we are won to love and trust in God. And that happens only when we reject the lies about God, including the lie that God’s law functions like human law, and return to worshiping God as Creator, which requires realizing that His laws are design laws, the laws reality is built to operate upon.

The Bible describes two types of governments or kingdoms, Jesus said,

- “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.” John 18:36 NIV84.
- “The kingdom of God is within you.” Luke 17:21 NIV84.
- Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” Matthew 4:8-9 NIV84.

Jesus calls Satan the prince of this world. The kingdoms of this world are represented as ravenous beasts, they use external power to destroy those who won’t submit.

Jesus is represented as a lamb.

There are two types of governing, the government of imposed law with external enforcement and the government of truth and love which operates in the heart.

God's kingdom is not like the kingdoms of the world. It does not operate upon imposed law it operates upon design law of truth and love. And this law cannot be externally imposed or enforced, it can only be internally chosen and function.

That is why the true covenant of grace is:

- This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. Hebrews 8:10-11 NIV84.

It is why Zechariah wrote,

- Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty. Zechariah 4:6 NIV84.

It is why Paul wrote,

- Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. Romans 14:5 NIV84.

What God wants is our love, trust, loyalty, devotion and this cannot be achieved through law and law enforcement, only through truth, love, and freedom. We must choose what we believe, who we trust, and our choices either open our hearts to God or close our hearts to God. When we choose to follow the truth and open our hearts in trust we receive a new life, a new spirit, a new animating, motivating power, energy, the life of Jesus. It is no longer our old fear-ridden selfish self living, but Christ lives in us. We move away from fear-based law-keeping and law enforcing to a life of loving trust and obedience that springs from love and trust and not fear.

Understand what is coming upon the world, and we are living in it, is the rise of the beastly system of Revelation a worldwide system of human governments seeking to advance what they believe is right, to do justice, but they will use imposed laws and external enforcement. They will not pursue truth in love and leave others free. They may have a good goal, like claiming to save lives or save the planet, but their methods will be contrary to God's kingdom. They will coerce consciences, lie, shut down liberties of association, conscience, travel, commerce, speech, and worship.

God wins not by using external power to force everyone to bow, but by the internal power of truth and love that wins all who respond to eternal devotion and loyalty to Him.



## **MONDAY and TUESDAY**

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The lessons focus on the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7 which describes the rise and fall of nations symbolically represented either as different metals in the multi-metal image or beasts.

Any questions or thoughts about these images and systems?

In brief:

Daniel 2:

- Head of gold—Babylon
- Breast of Silver—Medio-Persia
- Belly of Brass—Greece
- Legs of Iron—Rome
- Feet of Iron and Clay—Europe fractured never to be under one government again
- Rock cut out of a mountain but without human hands that destroys gold, silver, brass, iron, clay—represents Jesus setting up His eternal kingdom and making the Earth new.

Daniel 7:

- The lion with wings—Babylon
- The bear with one side higher and with ribs in mouth—Medio-Persia
- The leopard with four heads and four wings—Greece
- The grotesque beast with iron teeth and ten horns, and then a little horn that uprooted three with eyes like a man and a mouth that blasphemed—represents Rome in its initial pagan and later papal state.

And what is interesting is that the little horn

- He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the **set times and the laws**. Daniel 7:25 NIV84, emphasis mine.

And how did this religious system do this?

This system Romanized Christianity—and when I say Romanized, I mean taught that God’s law and government functions like Rome, imposed laws with imposed punishments.

Eusebius, the first church historian wrote,

- “With the Roman Empire monarchy had come on earth as the image of the monarchy in heaven.” S.L. Greenslade, *Church and State from Constantine to Theodosius* (London: SCM Press, 1954 p. 10).

When Constantine converted the church accepted the lie that God's law and government function like human laws and government—imposed laws with imposed punishments.

And there are multiple fruits to this lie:

- Sin is a legal problem that requires a legal payment of a sinless human sacrifice to propitiate the anger and wrath of the offended god—straight paganism, which still infects much of Christianity.
- God is the source of inflicted pain and suffering for sin and He will use His power to torture the unsaved in hell for eternity, or just as long as the wicked deserve.
- God must be plead with by intercessors, whether Jesus, or also Mary and the saints, God requires some action upon Him to be merciful.
- God's laws, being no different than human laws, are subject to change and therefore the church is free to change them, and the prohibition on making images was set aside and the seventh-day Sabbath was replaced with pagan Sun festival worship with Christian arguments of resurrection of Christ. The ultimate issue here is not what day one attends church services, We can fellowship at church on Wednesday evenings, the issue is how one understands God's law functions. If one understands God's laws are design laws, protocols of reality, then one realizes they cannot be changed. The change of these two commandments is the evidence, proof, or fruit of the real change to Christianity, asserting and teaching that God's law functions like human law. That is what the Daniel prophecy is telling us

And the entire world becomes intoxicated on this lie—and history proves this true, every culture of the world believes that the rule of law is the way to justice and every Christian denomination teaches that God's law functions like human law and sin requires inflicted punishment. All be the remnant, those who Revelation describes have come out of Babylon and have returned to worshipping God as Creator—these individuals realize God's laws are design laws, and God's kingdom of truth, love, and freedom cannot be achieved through law and law enforcement, but only through the operations of love and truth in the heart and mind of people.

We are called today to share a message about our incredible Creator God of love, truth, and freedom, whose laws are design laws and call people to break free of the Romanization of Christianity, the lie that God's law functions like human law and that sin is a legal problem requiring legal solution.

## **WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY**

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The lesson shifts to Revelation 12 and 13—any questions about these chapters?

Revelation 12 describes the war—both in heaven and on earth. The woman in white represents God's faithful and through these people Jesus will be born. The dragon represents Satan and his war against both Jesus in heaven and also God's people on earth and Jesus when he became incarnate.

Here are verses 1-5 from The Remedy paraphrase:

- In my vision, I saw an incredible panoramic display across the sky: A woman clothed with the sun — symbolizing the true church clothed in God’s character of love — stood upon the moon, which symbolizes the dim light of the ceremonial teachings of the Old Testament. She had a crown of twelve stars on her head — symbolic of both the twelve patriarchs that gave rise to the twelve tribes, and the twelve Apostles upon which the church was founded. She was pregnant and cried out as she was about to give birth — which symbolized the imminent birth of Jesus, the Savior. Then I saw another panoramic display across the sky: A massive red dragon with seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads — symbolic of Satan and the conglomerate of earthly political powers and false religions through which he works. His tail dragged one-third of the stars out of heaven and threw them to the earth — symbolizing Satan's lies that deceived one-third of God's angels and dragged them into selfishness and sin. The dragon opposed the pregnant woman who was about to give birth, and stood ready to destroy the child the moment he was born — which symbolizes Satan's attempt to destroy the avenue through which Christ would come, and then destroy Christ when he was born on earth. But the dragon failed, and the woman gave birth to a son—a male child Jesus, who would rule the world with a shepherd's rod of love that cannot be broken — and her child returned to God and stood at the command center of the universe. Revelation 12:1-5 REM.

The chapter describes how Satan turns his attack on Jesus’ followers seeking to destroy them, but how his attacks fail and they overcome:

- They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Revelation 12:11 NIV84.

The blood is symbolic of the life of Christ, the life is in the blood Leviticus 17:11. So these saints overcome by receiving the life of Christ; they are reborn with the life, spirit, animating, motivational energy of love and trust and no longer live driven by fear and selfishness. Thus they don’t shrink back from threats against them even death. They stand for Jesus and His kingdom of truth and will sacrifice their lives just like Jesus did. They do not use coercion, they will not use the power of the state or position to coerce consciences, to compel people to take experimental injections so that they can feel safe, no, they would rather die than force others to comply with their ways of doing things.

Revelation 13 describes Satan’s further war against the saints after Jesus’ return to His Father as described in Revelation 12.

So, let’s go through the symbolism of Revelation 13, as far as we can get today. If you don’t have our magazine, [Unmasking the Beasts of Revelation 13 and 17](#) you can download a pdf online, read it online, or order a physical copy in the US, Australia, and South Africa.

The dragon represents Satan and the beast corrupt powers, but the dragon and the beast have ten horns and seven heads, what do these represent?

The 10 horns represent the 10 powers wielded by the dragon and the beast and they are:

1. Lies—Satan is the father of lies and, since all the kingdoms of the earth are his, all the kingdoms of the earth wield lies. They lie to other kingdoms and to their own citizens. They use propaganda and other forms of misinformation to advance their agenda.
2. Imposed laws—These are made-up rules that require external enforcement and always result in unequal, arbitrary treatment and injustice (Isaiah 1:10; Ecclesiastes 5:8). These human-made laws stand in contrast to God’s laws, which are the protocols upon which the Creator built reality to operate (laws of health, laws of physics, the moral laws) and which treat everyone the same (Luke 6:43–45). Harmony with God’s design laws brings life; breaking them automatically injures the lawbreaker and results in death (Romans 6:23; James 1:15; Galatians 6:8). God’s law is perfect and brings life to the soul (Psalm 19:7). Satan is not the Creator, the governments of earth are not God’s (John 18:36; Matthew 4:8, 9), and the laws of the kingdoms of this earth are also not God’s; they are imposed rules. Wielding this power, human governments make up rules that determine what is “legal” and “illegal.” And these rules change from place to place and time to time. God and His law never change. All earthly governments are based upon the so-called “rule of law,” which are made-up rules requiring external enforcement (Daniel 7:25, Jeremiah 8:8).
3. Police and prosecution—the power to accuse and bring charges (Zechariah 3:1), restrict liberties, enforce fines, and arrest and imprison in order to compel and control a population. God’s kingdom does not use these powers (2 Peter 2:11; Jude 9). Jesus explicitly stated that He would not accuse us before the Father (John 5:45). Satan is the accuser, and his agents used this power when they arrested and accused Jesus (Luke 22:54) and the apostles (Acts 12:3). All human governments use this power.
4. Judicial—the power to determine guilt or innocence, to pardon or convict, and to determine punishment. We see this power wielded by Pontius Pilate in unjustly convicting and sentencing Jesus to death (Matthew 27:19). God’s power is the power of truth. Thus, His judgment is the accurate pronouncement (diagnosis) of what actually is. God’s judgment doesn’t determine the condition of a soul; it confirms the condition of a soul (Matthew 12:33–37; Revelation 22:11). Human governments, however, pass external judgment determining guilt or innocence under their imposed laws—irrespective of actual guilt or innocence. In human systems, the guilty often go free and the innocent are found guilty. God’s judgments are the accurate diagnosis of the condition of each heart and mind.
5. Economic—the power to print money, regulate currency, manipulate its value, and control commerce—all used to exploit populations through taxation, tax incentives and loopholes, currency manipulation, inflation, commerce, and trade. Jesus said that we cannot serve both God and money (Matthew 6:24; 22:17–21).
6. War—the use of military force to compel, control, or overcome other states to expand a nation’s wealth and power; the power to raise a military and compel service; all powers bent on attacking and destroying others for the protection of the state (Job 1:14, 15; Daniel 7:21; Revelation 13:11).

7. Death—Satan’s kingdoms wield the power of death, the ability to take life in war, by police action, and through execution; the power to deceive souls, cutting people off from God, the source of life, resulting in eternal death. Satan is the “murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44); Jesus came to destroy him “who holds the power of death—that is the devil” (Hebrews 2:14 NIV84).
8. Education—the power to educate the populace, setting a national educational narrative, moral values, and history; the power to deny education/access to truth (e.g., the Bible) to those they want to keep disempowered. Moses was educated in the wisdom of Egypt (Acts 7:22). Daniel and his friends were educated in the ways of Babylon (Daniel 1:5). God’s people are to be educated in the ways, methods, truths, and principles of God’s kingdom. Satan uses the kingdoms of this world to educate people in the ways of this world.
9. Ownership (Genesis 47:16)—the power to determine ownership of lands, peoples, goods, resources, activities, and business endeavors—who can own a license to make certain products or open a school, hospital, or refinery, etc. But the truth of God’s kingdom is that all things in heaven and on earth belong to God: “To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it” (Deuteronomy 10:14 NIV84, see also Psalm 24:1, 50:10, 89:11; 1 Corinthians 10:26). We own nothing. We are God’s stewards, entrusted by Him to use His resources for the uplifting of His kingdom (Genesis 1:26–28; Luke 12:42, 43; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 1 Peter 4:10). It is Satan’s deception to get us to believe that we are the owners, which inflames selfishness, jealousy, conflict, and division.
10. Fear—as soon as Adam and Eve sinned, they ran and hid because they were afraid (Genesis 3:10). Every other power (horn) used by Satan’s beastly systems ultimately exploits and works through the power of fear. When lies are believed, they break the bonds of love and trust and result in fear and selfishness, motivating people to protect self at the expense of others. Imposed laws instill the fear of getting into legal trouble with subsequent inflicted punishment, enforced by police and judicial powers; economic policies incite fear of poverty, debt, foreclosure, and loss of whatever one “owns;” war inflames the fear of pain, suffering, loss, and death; and people are educated to be afraid of going against the state. All beastly systems advance their power through fear. In God’s kingdom, “there is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18 NKJV).

### **The Seven Heads of the Dragon and Beast**

While the ten powers (horns) are used by worldly kingdoms to advance their agendas, the seven heads direct the use of those powers. The head is where one thinks, reasons, and worships. These seven heads, each with a blasphemous name, represent the seven false religious philosophies that have manifested throughout human history and which have directed the formation of the various beastly governments and their use of the ten powers.

In Revelation 17, we’re given more details regarding these seven heads:

- The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while (vv. 9, 10 NIV84).

Why are the seven heads also described as seven hills? In Scripture, hills (i.e., high places) represent places of worship. Zion was called God's holy hill (Psalm 2:6). But in this case, it is blasphemous worship being represented; in the Bible, hills can also represent places of pagan (false) worship (Leviticus 26:30; 1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 16:4). Thus, the seven heads with blasphemous names are seven hills, representing the seven false religious philosophies Satan has used throughout history to capture minds in order to separate people from God.

At the time John was writing Revelation, the first century after Christ's ascension, five of these systems had already been exposed as false by their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. One was in power at the time but had not yet betrayed Christ and fallen into corruption, and one would arise in the future and remain for a short while before Jesus returns.

The seven false religious systems are:

1. Paganism—earth and nature worship, sun and moon worship, idol worship, all forms of beliefs in pagan gods (Baal, Molech, Voodoo, witchcraft, etc.)
2. Godlessness—the belief that there is no God or gods (evolutionism, humanism, scientism, etc.)
3. Eastern mysticism—the mystical religions of spirit worship, ancestor worship, or energy/cosmos worship (Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.)
4. Islam—while not formalized until much later, this refers to religious beliefs going back to Ishmael and his twelve sons. Islam recognizes Muhammad as the last of the prophets, not the first. Thus, Muhammad did not create Islam; he organized and codified it based upon the religious beliefs of the Arabic people, who have historically believed that the promised Messiah would come through Ishmael.
5. Judaism—it fell when they rejected Jesus as the Son of God, our Messiah, crucified Him, and then persecuted those who accepted Him. Their system was left to them desolate (Matthew 23:37, 38).
6. Roman Catholicism—it fell when it rejected the truth that Jesus taught, a religion based on design law, freedom, and healing, and replaced it with a religion based on Roman law, imperialism, and authoritarianism. It has taken the “rule of law” concept and created a religion modeled after the Roman hierarchy while co-opting Christian language. Thus, the Roman church became beastly and persecuted the saints throughout the Dark Ages.
7. False Protestantism—the Protestant churches that continue to embrace Romanism's lies about God's government and methods and seek to advance their self-styled plan of salvation through the imposed-law lie, teaching that salvation is a legal process rather than a process of restoration and healing.

Again, in the first century after Christ, when John wrote the book of Revelation (circa ad 96), the first five of these religious systems had all rejected Jesus, the Son of God, as our Messiah and proven themselves to be fallen into corruption, blasphemy, and lies.

The new head, the sixth—Christianity—was just arising, soon giving way to the Roman church that became corrupt when it embraced pagan Rome's imperial law as the way God's law also functions; as a result, it built a false legal system of salvation.

This sixth head was followed by the final head to rise (the seventh)—apostate Protestantism, which, while protesting some doctrinal differences with Rome, continues to embrace and promote the imposed-law view of God's kingdom, a legal plan of salvation, while wielding worldly methods to forward its view of justice.

It should be noted that true Christianity is not fallen; it is represented by the virtuous woman that fled into the wilderness (Revelation 12:1-6) so as not to be destroyed by the dragon and his beastly powers.

### **The Chameleon Beast of Revelation 13:1**

This beast, depicted with seven heads and ten horns, is actually a composite representation of all the earthly powers that Satan has used and is using to advance his kingdom on this earth. This beast is a chameleon that manifests itself with different attributes, dominating in different places and times in history, but always using the methods and powers of Satan and always working to oppose God.

Remember, heads do the thinking; the horns are the weapons used by the heads to advance their agendas. Thus, in all societies throughout history, it is the religious beliefs and philosophies (heads) embraced by the leaders that direct the governmental powers (horns) to advance their agendas using the powers of Satan (also horns).

- During the Dark Ages, it was the Roman Catholic head that advanced its agenda and controlled populations through the use of various state powers (horns): lies, imposed laws, police (accusations of people, even kings, as heretics), judicial (Inquisition), economic (taxation, indulgences), death (executions), war (Crusades), education (restricting access to the Bible, teaching catechisms), ownership (church ownership of property and wealth), and fear—the fear of earthly suffering, punishments, and torment *and* of eternal torment and damnation to hell if one rejected the church's dogmas.
- In many Arab countries (Iran, Saudi Arabia, etc.), Islamic beliefs (head) direct the horns (state powers) to enforce its dogmas.
- In much of ancient Rome, Greece, and Africa, it was pagan beliefs (head) that directed the horns (state/tribal powers) to enforce its dogmas.
- In communist countries (China, Cuba, etc.), the godless beliefs of evolution and humanism (head) direct the horns (state powers) to enforce its dogmas.
- In modern Israel, the Jewish beliefs (head), including that the Messiah has not yet come, direct the horns (state powers) to enforce its dogmas.

This first beast is a chameleon; it changes and adapts as social, political, and religious circumstances change. At one point and place in history, the Roman Catholic head dominated; at another point and place, the godless head dominates; at another point and place, the Islamic, Jewish, or false Protestant heads dominate. But whatever head dominates, it is the same beast using the same beastly powers to

compel, coerce, control, and oppose God and His people—because this beast receives its power from Satan, the dragon.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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