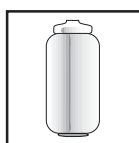


Firstly, with regard to the Cimmerians, they are indeed sometimes linked with Gomer. Brother John Allfree, in his book *Ezekiel*, comments: "The descendants of Gomer are mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions as the Gimarrai who were known to the Greeks as the Cimmerii" (p. 396). Of these Cimmerii, or Cimmerians, Laing, in his book *Celtic Britain*, writes: "The Cimmerians swept down into Europe, swarming over the Hungarian plain to the Swiss lakes, and possibly even as far as southern France and Belgium" (p. 15). Laing identifies archaeological evidence for this from around 700 B.C. So, by the time Ezekiel gave his prophecy, the Cimmerians were firmly

located in western Europe. Some claim that the descendants of the Cimmerians in western Europe became part of the Celtic peoples.

Secondly, it is interesting to note what Young says in his concordance about Galatia: "The *Gallia* of the East; Roman writers call its inhabitants *Galli*, just as Greek writers call the people of ancient France *Galatia*". In the first century it was recognised that the Galatians in Anatolia were just an offshoot of the Gauls or Celts, known to the Jews as Gomerites, the main body of which was located in western Europe, particularly, as Young indicates, "ancient France".

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The mark and number of the beast (2)

David Green

IN THE [FIRST article](#) we outlined the beasts of Revelation 12, 13 and 17, and presented arguments for regarding the mark of the beast of Revelation 13:16,17 as being the sign of the cross. We complete our study by looking at the name of the beast and the number of the beast (vv. 17,18).

The name of the beast

From a Biblical point of view, a name implies "authority, character, rank, majesty, power, excellence, etc."¹ The attributes and characteristics of a person or an organisation are involved in the name it bears.

The sea beast has "a blasphemous name" (13:1, NKJV) or "the name of blasphemy" (AV) on his heads. The scarlet beast of chapter 17 is "full of names of blasphemy" (v. 3). This is because one of their chief characteristics is the blasphemous nature of their pronouncements and doctrines, by which God is dishonoured, and attributes and powers are claimed that belong to Him and to His Son Jesus alone. We are told that the sea beast "was given . . . a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies", and that "he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven" (13:5,6).

The same aspect is expressed differently in the book of Daniel, where we are informed that the little horn that has "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things" will "speak great [pompous, NKJV] words against the most High" and in his declarations will presume "to change times and laws" (7:8,25). Some examples of these blasphemies are listed in [Tables 1 to 3](#) opposite.

With regard to blasphemous teachings and practices, other examples would include the doctrine of the Trinity, the selling of indulgences and the worshipping of images of saints.

Why are the worshippers of the beast described as having "the name of the beast" (Rev.

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1. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, under "name".
 2. See *The Man of Sin*, p. 66, Ron Abel, Christadelphian Scripture Study Service, 1984, and *The Wicked One Revealed*, pp. 56-61, Frank Walker, Christadelphian Scripture Study Service, 1987.
 3. *Popery: Its Character and its Crimes*, p. 298, William Elfe Tayler, Partridge & Oakley, London, 1851.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp. 215-22.
 5. *Ibid.*, pp. 282-96.
 6. *Ibid.*, p. 292. The reference given is 'Dens., tom. v., p. 382'.

Table 1 Blasphemies concerning the pope²	
"The Pope is of so great a dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God . . ."	Pope John XXIII, 1958
"The King of Glory has come forth"	Ascription to Pope Leo X on his coronation, 1512
"I am able to do all that God can do"	Pope Nicholas, 1447-55
"The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ Himself hidden under the veil of flesh. Does the Pope speak? It is Jesus Christ who speaks"	The Archbishop of Venice in 1895 before becoming Pope Pius X
"The Pope is God"; "All the princes of the earth adore and worship him as highest God"; "A dispensation from sin, granted by the Pope, must be valid because he is God upon earth"; "The Pope lawfully elected, is called God upon earth"; "Our Lord God the Pope"	Quotations from the writings of papal doctors ³

Table 2 Blasphemies concerning Mary⁴	
"The Empress of Heaven and Earth, and of all that is therein"; "More present help is sometimes found by commemorating the name of Mary, than by calling on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"	Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1033-1109)
"All power was given to her, in heaven and in earth, and that nothing was impossible to her"	Peter Damian, Bishop of Ostia and Cardinal of Rome in the eleventh century
"The Queen of angels, Patroness of the Church, Advocate of sinners"; "By innumerable titles, she claims the utmost duty of every Christian, as a proper homage to her greatness"	Contemplations on the Life and Glory of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, 1685

Table 3 Blasphemies concerning priests⁵	
"The priest remits sins as God"	The Council of Trent, 1545-63
"The most holy sacrifice of the Mass . . . is also a true propitiatory sacrifice, by which God is appeased, and rendered propitious to us"	The Catechism of the Council of Trent
"The priest has great power over both the bodies of Christ", that is, the Church of Christ and his corporeal body. "He that has created me . . . has given me power to create him; and He that created me without my help is created by my means"	Biel, in his first and fourth lessons on the Canon of the Mass
"The value of the sacrifice of the Mass is infinite . . . there are no blessings too great for it to procure"	Source of quotation unclear ⁶
"Creating the Creator"	Frequently used in Spanish devotional books when referring to the Mass
"The priesthood and the Deity . . . are almost of an equal grandeur, for they have the same power . . . Seeing that the priesthood is equal to the Deity and that all priests are Gods, therefore it far exceeds the kingly office"	Beste, a famous seventeenth-century preacher, writing on the Priestly Office

13:17) and receiving “the mark of his name” (14:11)? The explanation is that those who accept the teachings and claims of the Roman Church and her daughters partake of her blasphemies and so take upon themselves her name. They become marked with her name of blasphemy by accepting the mark of the beast.

The false prophet

The false prophet is mentioned only three times in the Apocalypse (16:13; 19:20; 20:10). The second of these three passages reads as follows: “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone”.

By comparing this passage with 13:14-16 it can be seen that the false prophet represents a latter-day phase of the land beast. It is the false prophet and the seven-headed beast of Revelation 17 that are to be destroyed in the lake of fire when Christ establishes God’s Kingdom on earth (19:20; 20:10). In 19:20 there is specific mention of “These both” or “these two” (NKJV). However, why is there no mention of the image of the beast being destroyed at the same time, although its former existence is alluded to in the phrase, “them that worshipped his [the beast’s] image”?

The answer to this question must lie in the fact that the image of the beast had by then ceased to exist, the papacy having lost its temporal power by 1870 at the end of the 1,260 years of persecution suffered by heretics at the hands of the Catholic powers. Although the successive popes before that date had acted as false prophets, they were symbolised in the Apocalypse in other ways—firstly as part of the sea beast, then as part of the land beast, and finally as the image of the beast. Now, stripped of all secular power and territorial possessions other than the Vatican State, the final role of the papacy remains pre-eminently that of a false prophet.

The dragon of 16:13 is not completely destroyed until the end of the millennial reign of Jesus (20:2,10). Table 4 summarises the last days situation.

Some exponents of the Apocalypse have given a Muslim interpretation to the false prophet, but this view does not fit in with Revelation 19:20, where we are told that it is the false prophet who deceived with miracles the people carrying the mark of the beast. This shows us that a ‘Christian’ false prophet is involved. The papal system has made use of a multitude of miraculous signs over the years in order to deceive the people. In addition, the papacy claims to speak out for God and His Son Jesus; but this claim is false, since lies are taught in place of Bible truth.

The false prophet is the “man of sin”, “that Wicked” or “the lawless one” who deceives the people “with all power and signs and lying wonders” and causes them to “believe a lie” (2 Thess. 2:3-12). It is a system that has been headed up through the ages by a line of men usurping the prerogatives of God and His Son Jesus, as we have seen in the previous section of this study. The identification of the false prophet as the “man of sin” links up nicely with the final verse of Revelation 13, where 666, the number of the beast, is described as “the number of a man”. A consideration of this number brings this article to a conclusion.

The number of the beast

The first mention of the number of the beast occurs in the phrase “the number of his name” in Revelation 13:17 (cf. 15:2). However, in this study we will concentrate on the information provided in verse 18, which reads as follows: “Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666” (NKJV).

The number 666 is made up of three Greek letters: *chi* = 600, *xi* = 60 and *sigma* = 6. It is both a number to be calculated and “the number of a man”. Before studying these aspects of the number we should consider the Old Testament background.

The Old Testament background

The number six aptly points to man since he was created on the sixth day. In addition, the use of this number in the Old Testament on certain

Table 4 The last days situation

<p>The scarlet beast Seven heads and ten horns</p>	<p>The false prophet The papacy headed by a line of popes</p>	<p>The dragon</p>
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occasions directs our attention to characteristics associated with man and human nature:

- Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, was a very proud man who boasted in human might and defied the God of Israel (1 Sam. 17:8-10,45). His height was six cubits and a span, he had a spearhead weighing 600 shekels and he had six pieces of armour (vv. 4-7).
- Nebuchadnezzar made a golden image that was sixty cubits high and six cubits wide (Dan. 3:1). In his pride he ordered all his court to worship this image at the sound of six musical instruments (v. 5).
- Solomon received a weight of 666 talents of gold annually (2 Chron. 9:13).

These examples, which all have a combination of three sixes, suggest the following characteristics:

- pride
- human might
- false worship
- opposition to God, blasphemy
- worldly wealth
- persecution of those who refuse to conform.

The New Testament context

To arrive at the correct conclusion regarding the number 666 we must also apply the information available to us from a study of the context, which includes the rest of Revelation 13, already considered. The following points should be noted:

- There is a connection with Rome and important historical developments that have taken place in the arena of the Western Roman Empire over the ages since the days of John
- The number is related to the blasphemous name or character of a powerful system, since it is described as “the number of his name” (13:17; 15:2)
- Since the phrases “the mark of his name” (14:11) and “the number of his name” are used, there must be a connection between the number and the mark, which has already been identified as the mark of the cross
- The number is “the number of a man” (13:18). This suggests a system headed up by a succession of individual men of similar character and aims
- Those that have understanding can calculate the number (v. 18). It is almost 2,000 years since the Apostle John wrote these words, and it is inconceivable that no one has yet solved the enigma of this number.

Calculating the number

The numerical values of words or phrases can be calculated by adding together the standard values that are associated with the various letters of a particular alphabet. The calculated value is called the gematria of the word(s) concerned. It was a customary practice in New Testament times to use the gematria of a name when referring enigmatically to a god, object of veneration or special person. The Apostle John was inspired to make use of this practice to name the “man of sin” in a symbolic manner.

Since the New Testament is written in Greek, the most likely solution to the problem is a Greek name. However, as we have already seen, there is a Roman connection to the “man of sin”, so a Roman or Latin⁷ name is not impossible. Regarding the Roman or Latin connection it should be noted that in ancient Latin only *six* letters⁸ had numerical equivalents and these total up to the value of 666 as follows:

$$D = 500, C = 100, L = 50, X = 10, V = 5, I = 1$$

It is also an interesting fact that there are only two nouns in the New Testament that have a gematria of 666. These are *euporia*, meaning ‘wealth’ and *paradosis*, meaning ‘tradition’.

When all the foregoing clues have been carefully considered, we are led to conclude that the number relates to the false prophet, the Roman or Latin man, who heads up the papal system operating from Rome. The papacy is a system that has accumulated great *wealth*. It places the authority of church *tradition* above that of the Bible and makes great use of the mark of the cross. It is a blasphemous system teaching a false religion and it has in the past persecuted the saints over a long period of time.

An early tradition dating back to the second century A.D. suggests that the number 666 symbolises the Greek name *Lateinos*.⁹ This name, which means the ‘Latin one’ or ‘Latin man’, does

7. The word ‘Latin’ is derived from *Latinus*, meaning ‘belonging to Latium’, the district round Rome.

8. There was no numerical equivalent for ‘M’ in ancient Latin, though today it has the value of 1,000.

9. Both Irenaeus, who died *circa* A.D. 200, and Hippolytus, his successor as overseer at Lyons, gave this antique Greek spelling of *Lateinos* as the preferred solution. Irenaeus attended expositions given by Polycarp, who had known the Apostle John. The meaning of 666 could very well have been one of the subjects discussed. See *Eureka*, pp. 408-9, Vol. 4, Logos edition.

indeed add up to 666 using the Greek numerical system:

L = 30, a = 1, t = 300, e = 5, i = 10, n = 50,
o = 70, s = 200.

As an alternative, the Greek phrase *He latine basileia*, meaning 'the Latin kingdom', also adds up to 666. These suggestions are very apt because Latin became the official language of the Roman Catholic Church in all countries where it was established, even those with a very different native tongue.

Starting with the decree of Pope Vitalian in 666 A.D., which made the Latin language the religious tongue of the Roman Church, all aspects of the church, its services, decrees, councils, communications, etc., eventually became

fully Latinised over the next 500 years. As a consequence of the establishment of Latin as the language of the papal system, all the kingdoms under its sway then became known as Latins.¹⁰

Another fitting suggestion regarding "the number of his name" concerns the Latin title for the Pope, *Fili Vicarivs Dei*, which is inscribed on the Pope's triple tiara. This title, having the meaning 'The Vicar of the Son of God', also adds up to 666 when using the Latin numerical system. It should be noted that in this case the letters 'F', 'A', 'R', 'S' and 'E' have no numerical value.

(Concluded)

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 410-11.

Around the Sea of Galilee

6. A tour round the lake (Part 1)

Tony Benson

WE CONCLUDE this series with a two-part look at several other sites of Biblical interest around the lake, taking an imaginary circular tour, beginning on the east side at Kibbutz En-Gev, with its popular guest-house.

En-Gev itself is overlooked by a prominent hill on which are the unexcavated ruins of Hippos, now generally referred to as Susita, the two names being the Greek and Aramaic words respectively for 'horse'. Here in the time of Jesus there was an important city, not mentioned in the Gospels.

It was one of the cities of the Decapolis (Greek for 'ten cities'), a league of ten cities given a degree of independence by the Romans, and mentioned three times in Matthew and Mark in connection with the preaching of Jesus. As it is the closest of the ten cities to the Sea of Galilee, it is likely that he visited it at least once, on the occasion when he "came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis", as recorded only by Mark (7:31), in what seems to have been a miniature mission to the Gentiles. Perhaps it was this prominent hilltop city that Jesus pointed to across the lake when he said, "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid" (Mt. 5:14), in exhorting his followers to display openly to their fellow-men a life in accordance with God's will.

Where Legion was healed

From En-Gev we set out northwards, going round the lake in an anticlockwise direction. The east side of Galilee is relatively thinly populated compared with the west, most of it being part of Syria until the Six-Day War of June 1967. From En-Gev it is about three miles northward to a site now bearing the name Kursi. This appears to have been the place where Jesus carried out one of his most famous miracles, recorded in Matthew 8:28-34, Mark 5:1-20 and Luke 8:26-39, the restoring of health to a man ravaged by mental illness. Only Luke records that the man's name was Legion, and only Matthew records that there were in fact two men who were healed.

Each Gospel refers to Jesus and the disciples arriving by boat at "the country of . . .", and then the record varies. Some texts say Gerasenes, some Gadarenes and some Gergesenes, and this is the case for all three Gospel records.

Three different places are indicated by these names. **Gerasenes** indicates the inhabitants of Gerasa, a city of the Decapolis, now in Jordan and today noted for its Roman remains under the name Jerash. It is situated about forty miles from the Sea of Galilee, so it cannot be the place where the miracle occurred. **Gadarenes** indicates the inhabitants of Gadara, another city of the Decapolis and situated on the south side of the Yarmuk river, about six miles southeast of the