

The Study of the Book of Revelation

The Mark of the Beast-part 2

Chapter 13 - part 2

Review:

In our last study of Revelation chapter 13 we saw two beast or nations. The first beast was the same power as the “*Little Horn*” in Daniel chapter 7, which we clearly identified as the Roman Catholic Church, which ruled for 1260 years, from 538 AD thru 1798 AD. The second beast (Nation) we saw was rising to prominence around the same time that the Papacy was ending its reign, in 1798. This nation rose from an unpopulated area of the world. A new nation that opened her shores for safety from the persecution of the pope and the tyranny of the king. This nation could be none other than the United States of America. The Bible says that at some time the United States of America would legislate worship to Papal Rome, the first beast, receiving their mark. Those who didn’t worship that way would be killed. In today’s study we want to identify what that mark is.

Revelation 7:1-3

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”

In verse two we see an angel coming down “*having the seal of the living God.*” In the last days, everyone will choose between receiving the seal of God or the mark of the beast. During the seven last plagues, the people receiving the seal of God will be protected, while those receiving the mark of the beast will receive the wrath of God poured out through the seven last plagues. The whole issue is worship! We each have the opportunity to choose to surrender to Jesus, allowing Him to be our guide. Those who follow Him in loving obedience will receive His seal. Obviously, the people who don’t take that decided stand will receive the mark of the beast and all that goes with it.

Genesis 2:16-17

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

God has always had a test of loyalty, and it will be no different in the Last Days! God will have a test to see who will honor Him with loving obedience and loyalty to Him, regardless of the consequences. Just like in the Garden of Eden, the great controversy is still raging on, with Christ and Satan calling for your allegiance! We have to decide which one we will surrender to. Let’s look at these two powers...

Jeremiah 10:10-12

“But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.”

Jesus is the true and living God, and the everlasting King. But ever since there was war in heaven, Satan has wanted to pull people’s loyalty away from Jesus. Notice the problem Satan had with, “I” in the next

passage...

Isaiah 14:12-17

*“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, **I** will ascend into heaven, **I** will exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I** will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: **I** will ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I** will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?”*

Satan has a problem with “I,” and he wants everyone to look to him as their god, he wants their worship. He wants us to focus on ourselves, taking our eyes off Jesus. That’s why it is extremely important that we follow the example of the Apostle Paul when he said, “*I die daily.*” That’s a daily surrender of our carnal nature to Jesus. By praying and studying His word, we will grow more and more like Him. Without that daily experience we slide further away from Him, giving leeway for Satan to gain control. The seal of God and the mark of the beast simply identify whose side we have chosen to be on.

Revelation 7:3 tells us that the servants of God are **sealed** in their **foreheads**. Revelation 13:16 says that the **mark** of the beast can be received in either the **forehead** or in the **right hand**.

Revelation 13:16-17

*“And he causeth 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.”*

So let’s look at what this mark is and how it is received. To help us understand it better lets look at the story of Cain and Abel. Cain was jealous that God had accepted Abel’s offering and not his, so he killed Abel. God tells him of his punishment, “*When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.*” Cain responded with, “*My punishment is greater than I can bear.*” God promises to put a special mark on him, to protect him.

Genesis 4:13-15

*“And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And **the LORD set a mark upon Cain**, lest any finding him should kill him.”*

Obviously, Cain didn’t walk around with a sign on his forehead or around his neck that said, don’t kill me, this mark was a special token of God’s care. In the last days Paul warns us of a power that would rise, requiring worship that would eventually lead to a mark given to those who pledge their allegiance to him instead of the True God.

II Thessalonians 2:3-5

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?”

We now know who the Apostle Paul was referring to! The Roman Catholic Church that wants to sit “As God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” For every counterfeit there is a genuine, so before we look at the mark of the beast, let’s see what the Bible declares as the safe alternative, the seal of God.

Ezekiel 20:11-12

“And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.”

The Lord says that there is a sign between Him and you, and that is **The Sabbath!** God says the Sabbath is a sign that we might recognize **that He is the Lord that can sanctify us or make us holy.** Only a holy God, can make a person holy. The Seventh-day Sabbath is not only a memorial of creation, but, also a special sign between Him and His people that they recognize Him as their Creator God, the One that can re-create us! We will push pause for a moment and then come right back to this, but we want to look at the word “Sign” and how Paul uses the word interchangeably with “Seal.”

Romans 4:11

“And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:”

Here in Romans, Paul uses the words, “Sign” and, “Seal” interchangeably. Another word that fits, is the word, “Mark.” So let’s go back to Ezekiel and continue our study...

Ezekiel 20:19-20

“I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.”

Are you catching the point? God says that the Sabbath is a sign, a seal, or a mark, that identifies His people! It points to the fact that they recognize He is the only true and living God. The Creator and the only One that can re-create us and make us holy! Let’s look at another passage of Scripture that continues this thought.

Exodus 31:12-17

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six

*days may work be done; but in the **seventh** is the **sabbath** of rest, **holy** to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall **keep** the **sabbath**, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a **perpetual** covenant. It is a **sign** between **me** and the children of **Israel** for ever: for in six days the LORD **made** heaven and earth, and on the **seventh** day he rested, and was refreshed.*

Here God says that the Sabbath is a **sign (or seal)** between Him and His people for **Forever!** It is to be a perpetual covenant. What does, “*Perpetual*” mean? **It means forever, ongoing, everlasting, never-ending.** God has a special sign, between Him and His people. We have now learned that this special sign or seal is **The Seventh-day Sabbath!** In our next text, God makes an interesting statement.

Isaiah 8:16

*“Bind up the testimony, **seal** the **law** among my disciples.”*

What does God mean, when He says “***Seal the law among my disciples?***” God wants His law sealed in His disciples, His people. But, what seal, and how? Every law, before enforced, has to have a seal that gives it authority. God’s law is no different; it needs God’s seal to give it authority.

Elements of a Seal:

There are **three essential elements** in a seal used to authenticate a document.
(*Example: The seal of The United States of America.*)

Notice, a Seal contains 3 elements:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Name of the law-giver | - George Washington |
| 2) His Authority or Title | - President |
| 3) Territory over which he rules | - United States of America |

Every Seal will contain those 3 elements. Every law passed has to have a seal! Whether it’s local, state, or federal government. This is for all laws, including God’s Law! Which means we need to look at God’s Law to see where His seal is. Do you remember the 3 parts to a seal? (**Name, Authority, & Territory**) Since the Sabbath is His special sign or seal, let’s look in the Fourth Commandment to see if these three parts of a seal are there.

Exodus 20:8-11

*“**Remember** the sabbath day, to keep it **holy**. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all **thy** work: But the **seventh** day is the **sabbath** of the **LORD** thy God: in it thou shalt not do **any** work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy 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.”*

In the 4th commandment we find the **three essential elements of a seal**, the Name, Authority, and Territory. Here, in the heart of God’s Law, we find the Seal that gives the whole law authority. **The Fourth Commandment, the 7th day Sabbath!**

Notice the 3 elements:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| What is His Name? - | Lord |
| What is His Authority? - | Creator (He made) |
| What is His Territory? - | Heaven, Earth & all that in them is! |

The seal that gives God's whole law authority, the devil wants everyone to overlook! And you can see why, Satan wants your loyalty and allegiance. That's why the message of truth has to go out to the whole world that they might understand God's special sign, or seal, for His people. Notice, in the message for the last days, we hear a call...

Revelation 14:6-7

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

The last part of this first angel's message, is the call to, **“Worship Him that made.”** Another word for, **“Made”** is **“Created.”** So, how do we worship Jesus as the Creator God? By honoring the memorial, He set up, back at creation, the 7th day Sabbath. Remember, Ezekiel. 20:12 said that the Sabbath is a sign (or seal) that we recognize Him as the Lord that does sanctify us, or makes us holy. It is God's special sign, or seal, that identifies His people in the last days. That's why we find that here, in Revelation 14:12, it says...

Revelation 14:12

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

Jesus tells us, the people that live to see Him come will be commandment-keeping people! How many commandments do you think that they will be keeping? **ALL 10**--including God's special sign, or seal, His Seventh day Sabbath.

A Golden Calf and Man's Sabbath

Did you know that the picture of Revelation chapters 13 and 14 is an echo of the Old Testament story of the golden calf recorded in Exodus chapters 31 and 32. Forty days after the law was given, Israel forgot God, by desecrating His commandments. It is the first apostasy in Scripture of the Old Testament church. It contains Satan's pattern for corrupting God's people. **Let's consider the similarities in the two stories. It is no accident that both scenes have the following elements in common:**

1. There is an image to a beast.
2. There is the seal or sign of God.
3. There are true and false worshipers.
4. The worshipers of the image are threatened with fire and the wrath of God.
5. There are the commandments of God as opposed to the commandments of men.
6. There is a mountain and test.
7. There is a false priesthood. (In Exodus, Aaron leads his people astray to worship the calf.) The false prophet of Revelation 13 does the same.
8. In Revelation 13, the beast makes fire miraculously appear. In Exodus 32, Aaron claims the image of a calf appears miraculously from the fire.
9. In Revelation 14, there is the everlasting gospel linked with the Sabbath. In Exodus 31, the everlasting covenant is linked with the seventh-day Sabbath.
10. In Revelation 14, those who worship the beast die at the foot of Mount Zion. In Exodus 32, those who persisted in the worship of the golden image die at the foot of Sinai.

A thousand years later, the prophet Ezekiel gives an inspired commentary on what happened in this first apostasy at Sinai. In we read:

Ezekiel 20:10-13

*"Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also **I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.** But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them."*

Ezekiel simply says they broke the law of God, in particular, His Sabbaths. How did they do that? Exodus chapter 31 tells us.

Exodus 31:12, 13, 17

v. 12 "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,"

*v. 13 "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily **my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you...**"*

*v. 17 "**It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made** heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."*

In Revelation chapter 7, the seal of God is the sign which separates the true worshipers of God from the worshipers of the image to the beast. What do Moses and Ezekiel both tell us is the seal and sign of God? It is the Sabbath, isn't it? Now, if God's seal and sign is a day, then it stands to reason that the counterfeit mark must be of like character. In other words, another day of the week. Let's read on beginning with verse 18 of Exodus 31:

Exodus 31:18 - Exodus 32:4

*"And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, **two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.**" (32:1) "And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, **make us gods,** which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him...." (vs. 3) "**And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron.** (vs. 4) And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, **These be thy gods, O Israel which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.**"*

Verse 5 is the clincher.

Exodus 32:5

*"And when Aaron saw it, **he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.**"*

The word used here for feast is "**CHAG**" in the Hebrew. It literally means, "**a sacred Sabbath festival feast.**" Ezekiel says they broke the Sabbath at the foot of Sinai. How did they do it? The Bible simply says they chose their own Sabbath festival to the Lord.

Revelation teaches that the last apostasy of the Christian church will be like the first apostasy of his people at Mt. Sinai. With the image of the beast comes a substitute day of worship. Just as surely as the Sabbath is the seal of the living God; Sunday, the papal day of human invention, is the mark of the beast. It is the mark of his authority and power over a compromised Christianity. The biblical pattern does not lie.

Identifying the Mark of the Beast in 4 Easy Steps

Revelation 13 shows that the first beast and the lamb-like beast together attack the moral law of God by enforcing the mark of the beast. The context indicates that the first four commandments given at Sinai are attacked and subverted. The first four commandments found in Exodus 20:2-11 focus on our relationship with God. Thus, they are the special object of Satan's anger in the last days.

Commandment of God

The Beast's Deception

First Commandment: Worship God → Those who worship the beast. (Rev. 13:8, 15)

Second Commandment: No idols → Make an image to the beast. (Rev. 13:14)

Third Commandment: Revere God's name → 666 = Number of his name. (Rev. 13:17)

Fourth Commandment: 7th-day Sabbath (God's sign) → The mark of the beast. (Rev. 13: 16)

A Little History:

As the Christian church emerged from the Dark Ages, the reformers revolted against the authority of Rome. Their cry was simple and honest. They wanted the Bible and the Bible only. It was a cry for "Sola Scriptura."

The Archbishop of Reggio made a speech On January 18, 1563. He presented the basis for papal authority over every part of Christianity. It was Rome's answer to the reformation claim of the Bible only.

I quote from the book of the Cannon and Tradition, by Holtzmann, page 263:

"The Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scriptures The church had changed...Sabbath into Sunday, not by command of Christ, but by its own authority."

In the Catholic Record Sept 1, 1923:

*"**Sunday is our Mark of Authority**...the church is above the bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact."*

Cardinal Gibbons, a well known spokesman for Catholic Church wrote:

*"Of course, the change was her act [the change from Saturday to Sunday] ...and **the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical authority** in religious matters."*

What does Cardinal Gibbons say? Sunday is the mark of the authority of Rome. My Bible says the mark of Rome is the mark of the beast.

God's Victorious People

In Revelation 15:2-4, John sees those who have conquered the beast and his image standing upon the sea of glass with golden harps in their hands.

Revelation 15:2-4

*“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and **them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb**, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”*

In Verse 4, they sing a song that has its roots in an Old Testament passage. It is a direct quote from Isaiah 66:23

Isaiah 66:23

“And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.”

There is no missing the significance of this. Those who gain the victory over the beast are pictured keeping the Sabbath holy.

Key Point:

We now have to ask ourselves a few questions:

1. What are we going to allow to be our authority, tradition or the Bible?
2. Who is our leader, the church or Christ?
3. Are we going to walk in the light of Truth or in the darkness of error?

My friend, it is a decision that only you can make! Today, Jesus is calling you to give your whole heart to Him and walk in the light of His Truth! Keeping all ten of His commandments, including the fourth-the Seventh Day Sabbath! Receiving the Seal of God! What will your answer be?