

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 (Nation) we identified as the same power as the “*Little Horn*” in Daniel chapter 7, which was clearly identified as the Roman Catholic Church, which ruled for 1260 years, from 538 AD thru 1798 AD. The second beast (Nation) we saw 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 the first beast, Papal Rome, and those that obeyed would receive their mark. Those who don’t obey and worship the first beast would be killed. In today’s study, since we have clearly identified the two beast of Revelation chapter 13, we want to identify what is the mark that could be received in either the forehead or right hand.

But first to help us understand the mark of the beast, we need to understand that the Bible says that God also has a mark or seal that identified His people.

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 can 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. **Notice that the seal of God can only be received in the forehead.** This is important because **the mark of the beast can be received in either the forehead or the right hand.** Many today believe that it is a literal mark of 666 on the forehead, a computer chip, or bar code. **But it is not an external marking!** The forehead signifies the brain-where you make your choices, and the right hand signifies your actions, where you think it’s right or not. God has always had a test of loyalty, and it will be no different in the Last Days!

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.**”*

Just like in the Garden of Eden, the great controversy is still raging on, with Christ and Satan calling for your allegiance! God will have a test to see who will honor Him with loving obedience and loyalty to Him, regardless of the consequences. Just like Noah building and getting on the ark. Shadrack, Meshack, and Abendigo not bowing down to worship King Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image. Daniel praying to God alone, three times a day that got him

thrown in the lion's den. God is calling for loving obedience, He wants to know who's side you are on and it is up to us to decide whether we will surrender to God or Satan. Let's look at these two powers that are longing for your allegiance.

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. He is the Creator that not only created the universe, but is who we owe our every breath to! But ever since there was war in heaven, Satan has wanted to usurp God's authority and pull people's loyalty away from Jesus. He wants to be your god even though he is not god, but a created being. In Isaiah 14:12-17, Isaiah tells us what Satan's problem was.

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 and allegiance. He knows that all he must do is to get 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." (1 Cor. 15:31) 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 let's 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." (Gen. 4:12) 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 genuine, there is a counterfeit and for every counterfeit there is a genuine. So before we look at the mark of the beast-the counterfeit, let's see what the Bible declares is the mark or seal of God-the genuine, that identifies God's people.

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 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!**

Paul tells us that the outward sign of circumcision was a seal of righteousness. The cutting away of the foreskin was a symbol of cutting out worldly things and submitting to God, therefore, by faith receiving the seal of righteousness.

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:”*

Just like Paul tells us that the action of circumcision was a sign or mark or token of you pledge of faithfulness to God. So, the Sabbath is also a sign, mark or token of our love and obedience or allegiance to God.

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! Because of their loving obedience, 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, that they recognize Him at the True and Living Creator God. 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, must have a seal that gives it authority. God’s law is no different; it needs God’s seal to give it authority. There are three essential elements in a seal used to authenticate a document.

Elements of a Seal: (Example: The seal of The United States of America.)

Notice, a Seal contains three 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 must 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. Remember the three elements to a seal, **the Name, Authority, and Territory.** Since the Sabbath is God’s special sign or seal, let’s look in the Fourth Commandment to see if these three essential elements 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 fourth 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 seventh day Sabbath!**

Notice the 3 essential elements:

1. His Name - **Lord**
2. His Authority - **Creator (He made)**
3. His Territory - **Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is!**

God's sign, seal, or mark that gives His whole law authority, the devil wants everyone to overlook or forget! You can see why, Satan wants your loyalty and allegiance. That's why the message of truth must go out to the whole world that they might understand God's special sign, or seal, for His people. In God's last day message to the people of this world He gives 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 seventh 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. He brings our attention back to His faithful people keeping all His commandments in verse 14.

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:**

Comparison:

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.

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, particularly, 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."*

Exodus 31:18 - Exodus 32:4

Exodus 31:18

*"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.**"*

Exodus 32:1-4

*"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. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. 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 Hebrew word used here for feast is "**CHAG.**" 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 their authority and power over a compromised Christianity. The biblical pattern does not lie.

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. Moses and Ezekiel both clearly tell us that the seal and sign of God is the Seventh day Sabbath. 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.

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-Exodus 20:3-11
1st Commandment: Worship God

The Beast's Deception-Revelation 13:8-18
Those who worship the beast. v.8, 15

2nd Commandment: No idols

Make an image to the beast. v.14

3rd Commandment: Revere God's name

666 = Number of his name. v.18

4th Commandment: 7th-day Sabbath (God's sign)

Sunday Worship-The mark of the beast. v.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 (Gaspar de Fosso) made a speech On January 18, 1562 at the council of Trent. 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.

“the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture. The authority of the church could therefore not be bound to the authority of the Scriptures, because the church had changed circumcision into baptism, Sabbath into Sunday, not by the command of Christ, but by its own authority.”

Kanon und Tradition, Heinrich Holtzman, p. 263

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.”*

In answer to a letter regarding the change of the Sabbath, Cardinal Gibbons Chancellor, C.F. Thomas wrote on November 11, 1895.

*"Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act (the change from Saturday to Sunday). **And the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters.**"*

C. F. Thomas, Chancellor of Cardinal Gibbons

What does Catholic Church Claim? 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 like God has asked them to, from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. The choice is yours, will you honor your Creator Jesus Christ by worshiping on the Seventh day Sabbath or will you choose the counterfeit worship of Sunday, honoring the Catholic Church?

Key Point:

We now must 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! Therefore, receiving the Seal of God! What will your answer be?