

THE BEAST

Greetings everyone, as always, it's good to be with you. Today we're going to have part three in the series dealing with last day events and what the Bible says about "things which must shortly come to pass." **Revelation 1:1**. Today we're going to see that the freedom to worship according to the dictate of conscience will not be tolerated much longer, and we will identify the religiopolitical power that will restrict this inalienable right that was given us by our Creator.

I suppose I should apologize to you before we get started, because I'm going to have to talk fast and hit the ground running, because we have a lot of information to cover this morning, so please fasten your seatbelts.

The first beast mentioned in **Revelation 13** has intrigued Christians for hundreds of years, and there have been many speculations about what it is, its nature, and the time when it will appear, and the concern is well placed, because the Bible doesn't give stronger warnings about any other power than it does about the beast brought to view in **Revelation 13:1-10**, which we'll read in a few minutes. However, this speculation is not necessary, because God doesn't warn us about something and then speak in such vague and uncertain language that we're at a loss to clearly understand what He's speaking about, and this beast is no exception. As long as we allow the Bible to interpret itself by comparing Scripture with Scripture and allow history to speak, we can know without question what the various symbols in Revelation mean and how we can avoid being fooled.

You see, the Bible is not meant to be read like a novel, and that's one of the reasons people don't make it past Deuteronomy. Many people don't realize it, but the Bible itself tells us how to study it. In **Isaiah 28:9, 10** it says, "Whom shall he (**God**) teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. (**In other words, God expects us to grow up and learn like adults, and the next sentence tells us how**) For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." And in **John 5:39** Jesus Himself said we are to, "search the Scriptures," how? "Here a little and there a little." Also **Hebrews 11:6** says, "without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that (**do what?**) diligently seek him."

What all this means is that when we want to know what the Bible teaches about a certain topic, we should go here and there through the Scriptures and gather up all the information we can about that topic, and only then is it safe to draw our conclusion. That requires a little time and a little digging, and a little searching, and a good concordance is an excellent tool we should all have, and if we will study this way, we will be rewarded for it by gaining a knowledge of the truth for ourselves, and we will know for ourselves what the Bible teaches and not have to run to some pastor or Bible teacher for the answers, because many times they themselves haven't taken the time to study this way and therefore can't be trusted to know what the truth is. If I've said it once, I've said it a hundred times: with divine help we are to come to an understanding of the Bible for ourselves as we are to answer for ourselves before God someday soon, and when our name comes up in review before Him, "my pastor said" is not going to be good enough when we've been given a more sure word of prophecy as **2 Peter 1:19** says.

Now back to the importance of understanding **Revelation 13**. In Bible prophecy, it's very clear that countries and political powers are represented as animals, or as the King James Bible reads, as beasts, and this practice is not limited to Bible times, because we still use animal symbols to represent countries today. The United States uses the bald eagle, Russia the bear, Canada the beaver and so on. The term "beast," therefore, is not necessarily bad in and of itself. The appearance of this beast in **Revelation 13:1-10**, however, is different from any animal we've ever known of, so we're not able to call it by the name of any beast known to man and has become known as simply "the beast," or the composite beast, because it's made up of several different beasts all rolled into one.

The main reason this beast, as opposed to all others beasts, is of special interest, is because it demands worship in opposition to the God of heaven, and it's against this false system of worship and those who form a part of it, that God's wrath, unmingled with mercy, is soon to be poured out as it says in **Revelation 14**. Maybe we ought to read that, because this warning is the last message of mercy this world is ever going to hear just before human probation closes and Jesus descends the skies, and it also gives us a clue as to how to avoid receiving the dreaded "mark of the beast."

Revelation 14:9-12 is known as the third angel's message because it follows two others that are also important, but we don't have time to look at those today. The apostle John writes, "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, **(because God wants the whole world to hear)** if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God,

which is poured out without mixture (**that is, God's wrath unmixed with mercy**) into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that **(do what?)** keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Now, as you may or may not know, the Internet has been blowing up lately regarding the subject of hell fire, whether it's a fire that tortures the wicked for all eternity, or whether it's a fire that will go out once God's justice is satisfied. And when one reads the verses we just read about "the smoke of their torment ascending up forever and ever," that sounds like it's a fire that never goes out, doesn't it? This is a good example of why we need to study all the other verses that deal with hell fire in order to get a proper understanding of how a God of love and justice could do such a thing, or not do such a thing. I'm not going to tell you where I fall on this subject this morning, but there is a clear answer when we gather all the statements and take the weight of evidence, and I would encourage you to listen to the sermon on this platform titled "Is Hell Fire Burning Today?" And I'll leave it right there for the time being.

Now listen carefully if you want to know the difference between the worshippers of the beast and the worshippers of the God of heaven, because what we just read in **Revelation 14** lays it out plainly, and it's this: since those who keep God's commandments and the faith of Jesus are placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God's law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast. Does that make sense? The way to avoid the mark of the beast is to keep the Ten Commandments by having the faith of Jesus. But if a person is violating even one of those commandments, which Jesus never did, then they will be identified with the worshippers of the beast and receive his mark, because **James 2:10** says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

So it's clear that the beast power will threaten people and compel them to violate God's law; that's his plan, or change the law somehow so people think they're keeping it while their actually violating it, but the end result is the same either way.

Deception has always been Satan's modus operandi, and of course, he's the one behind the beast power. He is the great deceiver, and a deceiver is someone who leads people to believe something that's not true, and a person that's deceived doesn't know they're deceived until they know the truth, and God's word is the truth, so we better get acquainted with His word, amen? Satan is the master of deception and he has had thousands of years to perfect his craft, and the only way to tell the difference between truth and error is by what God explicitly says in His word. God wrote the Ten Commandments on stone for a reason, and with His own finger, which means he didn't trust man to do it, which means they are permanent and immutable, because God never changes and He never makes mistakes. So any changes to the law will never be made by the One who wrote it. So any changes would have to be made by our great adversary the devil, and I hope that's clear.

When considering the verses that deal with this beast power, we're going to notice that there are many characteristics, or clues that help to identify this power beyond question, and as we examine each of these points, it will become increasingly clear who this beast is and whether he's here already, or coming in the future as many people believe.

Let's read about it in **Revelation 13:1-10**. The apostle John gives us a detailed description of this beast when he says, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

You know, many people today who read about this beast, are looking for a diabolical secular power of some kind that will force its way into the political scene in these last days and compel people to receive a tattoo or a chip implant or a barcode on their right hand or on their forehead. But we need to notice that there's worship involved in the establishment of this beast power, and a physical mark of some kind has nothing to do with worship, but mental assent to this beast power does, and worshipping the beast is worshipping the devil, because he's the one behind it. Keep that in mind. The word "worship" in this verse means "to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand," and you don't get that kind of love and devotional worship simply by receiving a physical mark of some kind. And the thing is, **verse 8** says all the people on earth will have this devotional kind of worship, except for those whose names are written in the book of life, which means that only those whose names are written in the book of life will be saved, and all others will be eternally lost.

Jesus spoke very plainly when He was here when He said, "straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it." He also said, "broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." **Matthew 7:13, 14.**

Then a little farther down in this same chapter in **verses 21-23** He made another profound statement when He said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Two points here: #1, Jesus said the only ones that shall enter into His kingdom will be those that do God's will, and one might ask, what is God's will? Have you ever wondered what God's will is for your life? We don't have to guess, because we're given a clear answer in **Psalms 40:8** where King David said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart." That's pretty simple, isn't it? God's purpose for you and me is that we will have the kind of relationship with Him that will lead us to keep His law from the heart, because when it's in the heart to obey, it not only becomes possible to keep His law, but we will want to. Through the new birth experience God is able to give us new desires and a willingness to do what's right. That's why Jesus told Nicodemus, "you must be born again." And that's why **2 Corinthians 5:17** says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

And #2, Jesus said all who commit iniquity, which is sin, and **1 John 3:4** says, “sin is the transgression of the law,” all who commit iniquity do it because they have never known Him. In the Bible knowing God is akin to having a close and intimate relationship with Him such as a husband has with his wife. And so, keeping God’s Ten Commandment Law is extremely important if we plan on going to heaven. **Revelation 22:14** says, “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates of the city,” or into the place that Jesus has gone to prepare for us. And so, we need to understand that heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people; a people who have the faith of Jesus and have become like Him in character.

From what Jesus plainly said, we can conclude that the overwhelming majority of people on this planet will not be ready to meet Him in peace when He comes, sad to say. In other words, when **Revelation 13** says that all the world will be found wondering after and worshiping the beast, what does that mean? It means that if our names are not registered in the Lamb’s book of life, it will not be there because we have chosen not to obey God’s law from a heart of love for God. Therefore receiving the mark of the beast must have something to do with transgressing God’s law. Keep these things in mind, because we’ll be coming back to it.

The next point we should consider and recognize is that this beast comes up out of the water, that’s an important point, and we’ve noticed before that water in Bible prophecy represents what according to **Revelation 17:15**? “Peoples, multitudes, and nations and tongues,” or large groups of people inside various nations having different languages and races of people and cultures and so forth. And so, this text indicates clearly that this beast would rise to power in a densely populated area. You’ll remember last time when we talked about the 42 months in **Revelation 13:5**, that this beast would have power to persecute God’s people and prevail over them for that period of time, which we saw represents 1260 years, or the time of the “Dark Ages.” 42 months times 30 days to the month is 1260 days, and a day in time prophecy always represents a year. If you need to refresh your memory about this you can listen to the sermon titled, “What Next?” These latest sermons are numbered 1, 2, 3 and so on for a reason, and it would be well for you to listen to them in order, because there’s just far too much information to try to digest in one sitting.

Another important point, and one that helps us establish the time when this beast would come to power, is that it was to be given its seat and authority and power by the dragon, and the Bible indicates that the dragon refers to Satan, but in this instance it’s more

specifically speaking of the pagan Roman Empire that Satan was using to accomplish his own purpose. That's the way the devil works. However, since the fall of the Roman Empire wasn't until 476 A. D., that means that this beast power we've been talking about could not be firmly established with a seat of authority until sometime after 476, which means that this beast is not coming in the future, but is here today, and has been for centuries as we will see.

And so, what was it that came out of the ruins of pagan Rome? It was the church of Rome, or papal Rome, and as soon as it could, the papacy claimed the titles and authority of her predecessors, the Emperors, eventually extended her powers over the heads of state, and for centuries government officials received their crowns and ruled more or less subject to papal authority. And for those of you who think that the papacy is only a religious power, we have to understand that it's also a political power which sends and receives ambassadors and functions as a political state as well.

If you remember, I shared with you last time that the Vatican became an independent state in 1929 when Benito Mussolini signed the Lateran treaty restoring the pope's power. And so, the Vatican is its own country, as small as it is, and qualifies as a nation all its own, and therefore can fit the description of a nation represented as a beast. And don't forget, when the papacy finally gained supreme authority in 538 A. D., after uprooting the three nations called the Ostrogoths, the Vandals, and the Heruli, it was the papacy that was given power to make war with the saints and to overcome them for 42 months, or 1260 years, and afterward it was inflicted with a deadly wound when the pope was taken captive by Napoleon's army in 1798, which was exactly 1260 years after 538. And so, the papacy is the only power that can possibly fit the description of the beast that did all these things.

And here's another important point, because the idea that the papacy is the beast of **Revelation 13:1-10** is nothing new, the Protestant reformers of the 16th century understood and taught this and separated from Roman Catholicism hundreds of years ago, but how different is the teaching of the Lutherans and Methodists and Presbyterians and Episcopalians today? Rather than protesting the errors of the papacy they are cozying up to it like never before, or could we say they are wondering after the beast? I think so.

Now, in **Revelation 13** we noticed that this beast is made up of several different beasts, or animals. In **verse 2** John says this beast was like unto a leopard, a bear, and a lion, and when we studied **Daniel 7:6** we noticed that Greece was represented as a Leopard,

showing the connection between this composite beast and the kingdoms mentioned in **Daniel**. Also in **Daniel 7**, you'll remember, it was the Medes and Persian that were likened to a bear, and Babylon as a lion. And so, we have this composite beast in **Revelation 13** that has some of the elements of each of these previous world empires incorporated into it, which is natural to see different aspects of each succeeding kingdom having some of the various cultures being maintained, unless the conquering kingdom killed every last person, which didn't happen. For instance, few people realize how completely Greek philosophy has captured the world, and how it played a significant role in the formation and thought of the early Christian church, because there are several Greek philosophers that are famous for the impact they've had on religious thought.

I think of Plato who believed in the immortality of the soul. He also believed the people who go to hell are there only until they've been punished sufficiently for their sins and then they get a get out of jail free card, better known as purgatory. Plato also believed that by depriving himself of things needful to the body and by living separate from society was the way he could become pure in heart, and this is what laid the groundwork for the Catholic idea of monasticism and penance.

And during the Middle Ages when the Bible was outlawed, guess who the people looked to in their quest for truth? It was the teaching of men like Plato, and Aristotle, and Socrates. And as you might expect, their philosophy greatly permeated religious thinking and helped shape what people believed back then for which there is no Biblical support whatsoever. Nevertheless these beliefs still live today in the lives of many Christians who believe these teaching to be Biblical.

But I want you to notice a couple things: **1 Timothy 6:16** says God is the only One who has immortality, and **1 Corinthians 15:53, 54** says those human beings that will be saved are mortal and won't receive immortality till Jesus comes, and if that's true, then the dead don't wing their way to heaven when they die, or go down to an eternally burning hell, because you'd have to be immortal in order to suffer for all eternity, wouldn't you? And if we can work our way out of purgatory by suffering for our own sins, that actually does away with the fact that Jesus died and suffered for our sins. And so we see how one lie leads to another and another until nothing but confusion sets in, and **1 Corinthians 14:33** says God is not the Author of confusion, so we know where all these false ideas come from and where they lead. If you want more information about these things listen to the sermon titled, "The Myth of the Immortal Soul." You can find it on the platform you're listening to right now, and I hope you will do that.

A good example of another error that was picked up by papal Rome is the method of government the Medes and Persians had. When the king of the Medes and Persians spoke a law into existence, he was considered to be infallible, and once a law was given, it was not possible to change it.

Let's go to **Daniel 6** for a minute and I'll show you what I mean. This chapter has to do with the time when some of the princes of Medo-Persia got jealous of Daniel because the king chose him to be in charge of the whole realm rather than one of them. And so these princes devised a plan to get rid of Daniel by tricking the king into signing a 30-day decree that whoever would pray and ask a petition of any god, would be cast into the den of lions. These men were well aware that Daniel prayed three times a day with his window open for all the kingdom to see, so they were pretty sure this would cause Daniel's demise, because remember, once the king signed the decree, there was no changing it.

Notice what it says in **Daniel 6:8-15**. These wicked princes said, "Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask *a petition* of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing *is* true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, (**"that Daniel." You can almost hear the hatred they had for this man of God, can't you**) That Daniel, which *is* of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. Then the king, when he heard *these* words, was sore displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him. (**But he couldn't do it because of this unchangeable law**) Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians *is*, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed. Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast *him* into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." And He did deliver Daniel, and

those that tricked the king were themselves cast into the den of lions, and those lions had a feast.

Now, this story finds its counterpart in the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope when he speaks *ex cathedra*. *Ex cathedra* is a Latin phrase meaning “from the chair,” referring to authoritative teachings made by the Pope on matters of faith and morals, which are considered infallible, and the whole world is supposed to accept this, which of course is false, and I’m not even sure that Catholics believe this themselves. But be that as it may, where do you think the idea of the infallibility of the pope comes from? It was passed down to Rome from the law of the Medes and Persians. And out of this idea of *ex cathedra* comes the false doctrine that the Catholic priest has power to forgive sins, which is given them by the infallible pope because he said so. You’ll remember when we read **Revelation 13:1** that this beast has the name of blasphemy on its heads. Blasphemy means “evil speaking,” or saying that which is extremely disgusting to God, and when we turn to **Mark 2** we find the Bible definition of what blasphemy is.

Jesus had just healed a man who was paralyzed, and in **Mark 2:5-7** it says, “When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?” This is the authority the Catholic church claims to have, and this false teaching is another clue as to who the beast is. I don’t know of any other church that claims for its clergy the right to forgive sins, do you? And so, this is another reason why the Catholic church with the pope at the blasphemous head is identified as the beast that came up out of the sea.

We know also, and I’m not going to go into all the particulars again, but this point is important. In **Revelation 13:5** it says this beast would have power to persecute God’s people for 42 Months, or 1260 years and then its power would end in 1798, and that’s exactly what happened when Napoleon’s general went down to Rome and took the pope prisoner and returned him to France to live out his remaining days in exile, and for a short period of time the papacy was without a visible head. This is when the deadly wound happened. At that time many believed that the Catholic church had come to an end and would never again figure prominently in world affairs, but lo and behold, power was given back to the pope in 1929 when Cardinal Gasparri and Benito Mussolini signed an agreement, which restored temporal powers back to the papacy. And since that time the Vatican began to function once again as a political state and has regained much of the prestige it lost over two centuries ago.

When Harry Truman, who was President when I was born, attempted to appoint General Mark Clark as an official ambassador to the Vatican, there arose such a protest in this country that it wasn't possible for him to follow through with it, and he backed off, because there were still enough Protestants in America at that time who knew the history of the papacy and were fearful of it. However, most of us are old enough to remember when President Reagan did it 30 years later with virtually no opposition whatsoever. This goes to show you how quickly things have changed in just a very short time.

The papal beast power, says the apostle John, would make war with the saints of God and prevail over them, and no one with any knowledge of history can deny the fact that this description also fits the Catholic church. It's conservatively estimated that the church of Rome caused over 50 million people to be put to death, and what was their crime? They followed their conscience even when it differed with the established religion. And friends, history is soon to be repeated as the second beast of **Revelation 13** makes an image to the papal beast. In other words, the United States is going to form an image, or a likeness to the papacy by a union of church and state, with the church ruling over the state just as the papacy did in ages past, and when that image is fully formed, it will cause the whole world to receive the mark of the papal beast.

Now, while it's true that religious tolerance is more widespread today than ever before, the prophecies point to the fact that this will not always be the case, and that once having re-established its lost authority, the papal beast, with the help of America, the second beast, will revive the persecutions of the past. We read this earlier in **Revelation 13:15-18** where it says, "And he (**this second beast**) had power (**from the dragon**) to give life (or to breathe life) unto the image of the beast, (**in other words, it's the dragon that gives the second beast power, or the ability to become an image of the first beast**), that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 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. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man (**that's interesting**); and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six."

Now, from the description given in the Bible it's clear to see that the first beast is the papacy, and so, the Image of the Beast would be another power that would be an image, or a likeness to the Papacy. So that begs the question, what then is the Papacy? If the

United States is going to form an image of the papacy, what is the papacy? To put it very simply as I already stated, the papacy is a union of church and state, with the church being the dominant power, and using the power of the state for her own purposes, and those purposes are not good. They were not good in the past, and they will not be good in the future.

If we go back to **Revelation 14:9-12**, we find that these two beasts in **Revelation 13** are mentioned again, and this time the third angel's message is the last warning message about the beast and his image just before Jesus comes. We know that because right after the third angel's message, the following verses talk about the earth being ripe and ready to harvest. We read it earlier, but let's read it again. **Revelation 14:9-12**, "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. **(And then verse 12 gives us the remedy for how to avoid the mark)** Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

We see here that there's one thread that runs through the Scriptures that identifies who the first beast is, and there's no need to be confused about it. The books of Daniel and Revelation point out exactly who the beast power is and what the dragon is trying to do to cause people to be lost. The Bible doesn't tell us one thing here and another thing there, there's a consistency to it so we can know exactly what we have to do to be ready for the last great deception that comes as the two beasts join together to push Satan's agenda, and we are now entering upon that time.

We should understand also that God did not give us these prophecies as an indictment against individuals, but rather against a system of false worship. Later on in **Revelation 17, 18** we see this same power referred to as Babylon, which is spiritual confusion, and speaking of this power at the end of time, we find that just as God called Lot out of Sodom before its destruction, so He sends a call to His people to come out of this false system lest they become involved in its ruin. It's because of God's great love for these people who are a part of this false system of worship that He warns them of their danger, not because of any animosity toward them, but that they might choose to avoid those things that

threaten to separate them from Himself. In **Revelation 18:4** the call is given to God's people still in Babylon to come out so as not to partake of her sins and receive not of her plagues. And so clearly, God's people are not the ones who are guilty of "her sins," but if they don't come out when they hear the call, they will receive of her plagues.

And so, I must ask the question, what is the devil's bottom line agenda? We know that he wants as many as possible of those for whom Christ died to be eternally lost, that's a given, but how is he going to accomplish that goal in light of the things we've been studying? Well, we know he's going to use the papacy and apostate Protestantism right here in the United States as church and state join together, but what is it in particular that will cause people to worship this union and receive a mark that sets them apart from the true worshipers of God?

Well, we've already established the fact, when we read **Revelation 14:12**, that it has something to do with God's Ten Commandment Law, because remember, those who keep the commandments are placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. And so, the keeping of God's law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other is what makes the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast. And it's not a violation of the Ten Commandment Law in general that's being referenced by the mark of the beast, but one point of the ten, and it's one that nearly the whole Christian world has either forgotten, or just flat out ignores. What is that one point? The whole Christian world has no problem with nine of the ten commandments, and I'll give it to you direct from the mouth of the beast itself if you haven't figured it out yet.

The following quote is from someone who inquired about the Biblical day of worship back on October 28, 1895, and they were answered in a Letter from C. F. Thomas, who was Chancellor (**or chief secretary**) of Cardinal Gibbons. Notice what Thomas writes under Gibbons' direction, "Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change (**from the seventh to the first day of the week**) was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything, in matters spiritual, ecclesiastical and religious without her. This act (**the change of the Sabbath**) is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters."

In other words, this act of changing the Seventh-day Sabbath to Sunday as the day of worship, is the most important thing the Catholic church has ever done, bar none! Let that sink in for a minute. It "is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious

matters.” That is, nothing else the Catholic church has done, concerning religious matters, is more important than the change of the Sabbath by her own admission. Nothing! You see, the seventh day Sabbath was given by God’s authority, and Sunday is given by the authority of the papal beast. The Sabbath is God’s mark, or His seal, and Sunday is “the mark of the beast.”

Interesting, isn’t it? The Catholic church admits that Sunday is the mark of the beast. It’s not a barcode or a tattoo or a chip implant, or some physical characteristic that one can see, but it’s a sign of allegiance to the beast power.

This next quote is from 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.”

This next one is from *Saint Catherine Catholic Church Sentinel, May 21, 1995*, not that long ago, which shows the fact that the papacy never changes, and what the pope speaks ex cathedra cannot be altered. “Perhaps the boldest thing, the most revolutionary change the Church ever did happened in the first century. The holy day, the Sabbath, was changed from Saturday to Sunday...not from any directions noted in the Scriptures, but from the Church’s sense of its own power.”

Are you beginning to get the drift of the haughtiness and arrogance of this power? Friends, in the very near future, the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, will be an admission of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, while the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator, it’s just that simple! And so, while one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.

Notice what it says in **Exodus 31:17**, because it tells us plainly what Gods mark or His seal is. God told Moses the following about the Sabbath, “It is a sign (**the Hebrew can also be translated as “mark”**) “It is a sign (**or a mark**) between me and the children of Israel forever.”

“Now wait just a minute,” someone says, “God told Moses it’s a sign between Him and Israel, and if we’re not Jews then the seventh-day Sabbath is only for them, right? Not exactly, because if we believe what the apostle Paul said, all Christians are spiritual Israel. In **Galatians 3:26-29** he said, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For

as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed **(or the descendants of Israel's great grandfather, spiritual Israel)**, and heirs according to the promise."

And besides, when God told Moses that the seventh day Sabbath was a sign between Him and the children of Israel forever, He continued on in **Exodus 31:17** and said why, "For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."

It was 2500 years after creation before there would even be a Jewish Nation, and so the Sabbath from creation till now has always been the sign that God's people belonged to Him and not just for the Jews.

Now, before we go any farther I want to acknowledge that there were Christians in the second century that were observing Sunday as a special day before the papacy officially changed it 200 years later, but the reasoning of the early Christians for doing so were numerous and varied. Some kept the first day of the week as a special day to honor Christ's resurrection along with keeping the Seventh day Sabbath, and some honored Sunday for the purpose of distancing themselves from the Jews. Because of social pressure and political conveniences and a growing divide between Christians and Jews and to avoid persecution, there was a desire by Christians to create a distinct identity apart from Judaism, and so they began aligning their worship with existing Roman customs, and as Sunday was already honored in Roman society as the day of the sun god, it made it easier for Christians to adopt Sunday as a day of rest and worship. And so this came on gradually over the years, but there is no Scriptural authority for any of it. And just because there were Christians that adopted Sunday back then is no reason for us to follow that tradition, because just as Scripture was lacking then, so it is lacking today, regardless of what the majority are doing, or for how long they've been doing it. And besides, where in the Bible do we find that the majority were ever right? We don't, and things definitely have not changed in these last days, except that the majority becomes more and the minority less.

The seventh-day Sabbath was blessed and sanctified on the last day of creation week and **Isaiah 66** says we'll be keeping it in the earth made new. And so, are we now to suppose that Sunday is to be kept in between times? No, that doesn't make a bit of sense. The Sabbath runs through the entire Bible as the special day of worship from beginning to end, and Sunday is a day instigated by the dragon who has "said in **(his)** 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,” says **Isaiah 14:13, 14**. And what better way for Satan to do that than to usurp God’s authority by instituting his own day of worship and have people acknowledge him as the true God who changed his own law, even though the Bible says God never changes?

In his book ***The Faith of Our Fathers, 88th edition, page 89***, Cardinal Gibbons makes the case that church tradition is more important than the Scriptures by stating the following: “You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we **(the Catholic church)** never sanctify.”

That’s quite an admission, isn’t it? And so again, tradition above the Bible; that’s the way it is in the Catholic church. When the true Protestant says, “The Bible and the Bible only is our rule of faith and practice,” this is a foreign thought to the papacy. And unfortunately, it’s a foreign thought to most Protestants today as well, and without realizing it, they are paying homage to the papacy by keeping a day the Bible does not sanctify.

In his book ***“The Christian Sabbath” page, 29***, Cardinal Gibbons also writes the following, “The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her Divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday.” And that’s true, because the first Sunday law was instituted by the Roman Emperor Constantine in 321 A. D. by calling it “the venerable day of the sun,” and just a couple years later in 325 pope Sylvester affirmed it, and again in 338 Eusebius did the same, officially making Sunday a child of the papacy.

Here’s another quote from ***The Catholic Mirror, December 23, 1893***. Again Cardinal Gibbons writes, “Reason and sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping holy of Sunday. Compromise is impossible.” And I totally agree with him, “Compromise is impossible.” And this we will soon see played out on the world stage as Bible prophecy reaches its complete fulfillment.

In 1934, a man by name of J. L. Day heard that the Sabbath was changed by the Papacy and sent a letter to Pope Pius XI, who was bishop at that time, and asked him about the observance of Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath, and here’s what Mr. Day wrote from Thomaston, Georgia May 22, 1934, to pope Pius XI-Rome Italy:

Dear Sir:

“Is the accusation true, that Protestants accuse you of: They say you changed the Seventh Day Sabbath to the, so-called, Christian Sunday: identical with the First-Day of the Week. If so when did you make the change, and by what authority.” Yours very Truly, J.L. Day

And the following is the reply he received from: **THE CATHOLIC EXTENSION MAGAZINE, The Largest Catholic Magazine Published in USA, 180 Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, (Under the Blessing of Pope Pius XI)**

Dear sir:

Regarding the change from the observance of the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Sunday, I wish to draw your attention to the facts: **(now I have to stop right there for a minute, because first of all we should know that this response starts out with a lie, because the Sabbath is not “the Jewish Sabbath, because as I’ve already stated, it was instituted at creation, which was 2500 years before the Jewish nation came into existence, and secondly the term “Christian Sunday,” is nowhere to be found in the Bible)**

- (1) That Protestants, who accept the Bible as the only rule of faith and religion, should by all means go back to the observance of the Sabbath. The fact that they do not, but on the contrary observe the Sunday, stultifies them **(or makes them look ridiculous)** in the eyes of every thinking man.
- (2) We Catholics do not accept the Bible as the only rule of faith. Besides the Bible we have the living church, the authority of the church, as a rule to guide us. We say this church, instituted by Christ, to teach and guide men through life, has the right to change the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament and hence, we accept the change from Saturday to Sunday. **(Which is another lie, because the Sabbath is part of the moral law and not the ceremonial law)** We frankly say, “Yes, the church made this change, made this law, as she made many other laws. For instance, the Friday abstinence, the unmarried priesthood, the laws concerning mixed marriages, the regulation of Catholic marriages, and a thousand other laws.”

(3) We also say that of all Protestants, the Seventh day Adventists are the only group that reason correctly, and are consistent with their teachings. It is always somewhat laughable to see the Protestant churches, in pulpit and legislature, demand the observance of Sunday, of which there is nothing in the Bible.

With best wishes,
Peter R. Tramer, editor

And if you go to the end of my sermon notes you can see the original copies of both of these correspondence for yourself.

There's one more point I need to mention before we close, and that's what it says about the beast power in **Revelation 13:18** where it says, "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six."

And so, here's God's invitation for us to figure this out if we have enough wisdom to do so, and it's no coincidence that the popes triple miter have the words "Vicarious Filli Dei" written on it, which is Latin for "Vicar (**or one who stands in the place**) of the Son of God," which is itself blasphemy. But when you add up the letters that have numerical value in Roman numerals, guess what? "Vicarious Filli Dei" add up to 666, and neither is it a coincidence that this number belongs to a man, who just happens to be the pope. You can see a picture of the popes tiara at the end of the sermon notes as well.

So my dear friends, as we wrap this up I want to encourage you to study these things for yourself as I mentioned at the beginning, and I hope you will do that. It's important that you verify what you've heard today, because receiving God's mark or the mark of the beast is fraught with eternal consequences.

In the first three verses of the very first chapter of Revelation, the apostle John tells us that it was God who gave him this information, "to shew unto his servants (**that's us**) things which must shortly come to pass." And he says, "Blessed *is* he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand."

In other words, the time is near when all these things will happen just as God says, and we want to make sure that we are on the right side when they do happen. So I leave you with the words of the apostle Paul who told young Timothy, "Study to shew thyself

approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Pope Pius XI
Rome, Italy

Thomason, Georgia
May 27, 1934

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