

Lifting Up Jesus

#22

GOD’S WARNING—THE MARK OF THE BEAST!

Throughout our study of the Bible we have seen the continuing efforts of our heavenly Father to save the human race from certain destruction. As various times of calamity came upon the world, God sent special messages of warning and entreaty to the human race to save them from danger. Before the destruction of the earth by flood Noah proclaimed God’s final warning message for 120 years. Now, before the world will be destroyed by fire, can we expect a special message of pleading and warning to earth’s inhabitants that will prepare a people for this great calamity? Absolutely!

In our last study we learned that the Sabbath is a covenant of God’s creative and salvation power and that it would be a special seal of His people in opposition to the mark of the beast. We also learned that there would be an “unholy trinity” that would usher in the sign of the anti-Christ or mark of the beast. So far we learned that Satan was the cornerstone of this trio and that the beast (nation) of Revelation 13 is Papal Rome. Now we will learn who or what will complete this evil plan.

1. How long was granted to the beast (Papal Rome) to remain in abusive power? Rev. 13:1–10

Note: The Roman emperor Justinian, made a decree giving the papacy unlimited power over all the churches. This decree went into effect in 538 A.D. when the three opposing kingdoms were “pulled up by the roots”. This began the period known as the ‘Dark ages’.

2. How are we to interpret “dates and times” in the Bible? Ezekiel 4:6

Note: Forty-two months would be 1260 days, or years. A Jewish year contained 12 months of 30 days each, or 360 days. This same time period is also referred to in Rev. 12:5, 6, 13, and 14. A year was sometimes called a “time”, as when King Nebuchadnezzar was with the beasts of the field for “seven times” or seven years. Allowing 360 days for a “time”, 720 or twice that amount for “times” and 180 days for a half of a time, it totals the same as 42 months or 1260 prophetic years. (Daniel 7:25) God wants to make it very clear who this beast power is by giving the same time clues over and over.

3. What happened to Rome at the end of the 42 months from 538 AD when the Pope was made king and began the most heinous of persecutions to all who opposed the Roman church? Revelation 13:10 (NKJV)

Note: In 1798 the Pope was taken prisoner by Napoleon's army. He died in the French fortress of Valence 18 months later. Therefore, he who sent others into captivity went himself into captivity. But "the deadly wound was to be healed". In 1929, the Italian government recognized Vatican City as an independent state. Papal Rome's power was reinstated and has been growing in the political arena.

4. What does the King of the North do that tells us that he is the anti-Christ? Daniel 11:36

5. What is the anti-Christ's (Papal Rome) attitude towards God's Holy Covenant (Sabbath)? Daniel 11:28

6. How does this beast power relate to those who forsake and violate God's Holy Covenant? Daniel 11:30–32

Note: The anti-Christ sets his heart against God's holy covenant and takes action against it. The Roman Catholic Church admits that it changed the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday. The Bible says that God's people will resist this power.

7. Describe the beast nation that John saw coming up out of the earth. Rev. 13:11

*Note: This beast or nation comes up out of the **earth**—not the sea, as did the others. Therefore it must arise in a relatively **unpopulated** area. It appears about the time (1798) when the pope is taken captive. It is a young beast unlike the other more mature beasts indicating a young nation. Only one power meets these specifications—the **United States**. Cradled and nourished in the wilderness of the New World, it rose to world prominence in the latter part of the eighteenth century.*

8. What does this beast force people to do? Rev. 13:12

9. What will those who worship the beast or its image receive? Rev. 13:15–17

*Note: If the seal of God is the **Sabbath** and the issue is worship, then the mark of the beast must be **Sunday**. This was the action taken against God's Holy covenant by the beast power.*

10. What about those who don't comply? Rev. 13:15

Note: This "image" will not be fully formed until political authority enforces religious laws to set up mandatory Sunday worship.

11. What is the number of the beast, the man's number? Verse 18

Note: What 'man' represents the Papacy? It is none other than the office of the pope who bears the Latin title, "Vicarius Filii Dei", or "Vicar of the Son of God." Following the ancient custom of a person having both a number and a name, let us add the Roman numerals in this title:

Add 'Vicarius', V = 5+I = 1+C = 100+A&R = 0+I = 1+U (u and v are equal in Latin) = 5+S = 0 is 112.

Add to it 'Filii', F = 0+I = 1+L = 50+I = 1+I = 1 is 53.

Add 'Dei', D = 500+E = 0+I = 1 is 501.

Now add the three, 112+53+501 = 666.

12. What is the special message that God gives to the people in these last days? Rev. 14:6–12

13. What is the special message of the 1st angel? Rev. 14:6, 7

Note: God states that before the end comes, the gospel must go to all the earth (See Matthew 24:14.) God's Holy Spirit will be poured out in a special manner so that the earth will be illuminated with His glory.

14. What commandment specifically points to God as Creator? Exodus 20:8–11

15. Who is Babylon? Rev. 18:1–5, 23, 24

Note: Babylon is symbolized by a “she” or woman. Therefore Babylon refers to a church especially since worship and marriages were conducted there. The term ‘Babylon’ is derived from Babel and signifies spiritual confusion. It is used in Scripture to designate the various forms of false religion. In Rev. 17 Babylon is represented as a woman. This figure is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church. A virtuous woman represents a pure church and an evil woman represents a false church. Since this scarlet woman is sitting on the beast, it is indicative of a false church united with a nation or power. This dominant religious power has introduced a false worship system not based on God’s pure gospel and was also responsible for the blood of many martyrs. This is Papal Rome.

16. What is the message of the 2nd angel? Rev. 14:8

Note: Since the message of the 2nd angel follows the 1st it appears that the pure gospel message that points to God as Creator will result in the falling of Babylon.

17. What does God tell His people in Babylon (false churches) to do? Rev 18:4, 5

18. What does God warn against in the 3rd angel’s message? Rev. 14:9–11

19. In contrast, how are those saints described in the next verse? Rev. 14:12

Note: In contrast to those who receive the mark of the beast, God’s people will remain true to His commands, including His Holy Sabbath.

Conclusion: In the most startling prophecy ever the Bible predicts that church and state will unite under the banner of Satan. As calamities and disasters continue to mount one can see how the world will respond to return once again to God and with that ... a mandate for total community worship ... on Sunday, the mark of the beast.

God however will not bring the end of the world without first providing all with knowledge of His messages as well as a way of escape. With this knowledge in mind, Sabbath becomes much more than an alternative day to worship God. It becomes the symbol for loyalty to God or to Satan.¹

¹ Lewis, K. A. (2010). *Lifting up Jesus: Bible Study Lessons*. Walla Walla, WA: Karen Ann Lewis.