

The Mark Of The Beast

George Burnside

www.CreationismOnline.com

I AM going to present to you one of the most serious and solemn messages to be found in the Bible. As I read the text, you can realize its importance. "He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their tight 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." Revelation 13:16, 17. "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 ascended up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name." Revelation 14:9-11.

Whatever this mark is, it will be placed upon millions of people. That is certain. We may differ as to what the mark of the beast is; but we must all agree that the consequences of receiving the mark will be the most terrible punishment that God can put upon any man.

With so many people bound to receive this mark, the punishment of which is so terrible everyone should be very attentive to every word of this lecture, with a prayer in his heart for God to reveal what the mark is, so that he may escape it.

In 331 AD, Constantine, the Emperor of Pagan Rome, Donated the City of Rome to the Roman Catholic Church Through the Church's Representative, Sylvester 1, the Pope of Rome.

First, we must find out what the beast is, then it will not be hard to find his mark. As we noticed from the reading of Revelation 14:9, this beast that has a mark, an image, also has the number of his name, and the number is 666. "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. And his number is Six hundred threescore and six." Revelation 13:17, 18. Also the beast that had an image made to him was wounded by the sword, and did live. "Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound, by a sword, and did live." Revelation 13:14. So the beast in question has a mark, an image, a number of his name (the number is 666), and he was wounded by the sword, and did live.

What beast was wounded by the sword and did live? "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." Revelation 13:2, 3.

I am sure that everyone must agree with me thus far that it is the leopard beast that was wounded and did live. Has an image made to him; has a number, 666; has a mark to be placed on millions; and that the result of receiving the mark of the leopard beast is fire-and-brimstone torment from God. Do you think, friends, that with such a terrible punishment waiting, God will leave us in doubt as to what the leopard beast is and what his mark is? If you pay strict attention for the next few minutes, you will know.

What earthly government was it? The text we just read said it got its power, its seat of government, and authority from another earthly government, called the dragon beast.

So we will go back one more step and find out what nation the dragon represented, and then it will not be hard to find from history the government that took over the dragon's capital and kingdom. Now we come to the cornerstone and foundation of the prophecy, and the interpretation of the meaning of the dragon beast must not be founded upon fancy, but upon fact.

Now, we will build upon facts, and I will let you be the judges and the jury, and I am going to give you a chance to vote on the truthfulness of my deductions when the evidence is in. It will be so clear that even children can see it.

Here is a description of the dragon government: "There appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns, upon his heads. And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne!" Revelation 12:1-5.

Who was this child born into the world who was to “rule all nations with a rod of iron”? "He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." Revelation 19:15, 16. It is Jesus Christ, the man child who was born into the world to rule all nations.

When Christ would be born, the text said, the dragon government would try to take His life. There was just one nation ruling the world when Christ was born. "It came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from, Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Luke 2:1. Caesar Augustus was emperor of the world kingdom of Rome when Christ was born. Did Rome try to take Christ's life as soon as He was born? Herod, a king with authority from Rome, tried so hard to kill Christ when He was a baby that he had every male child in Bethlehem under two years of age slain. It is the easiest thing in the world to see that this dragon represents old pagan Rome, under the Caesars.

Now going back to the prophecy: the dragon, or pagan Rome, was to give its territory, the city of Rome, and its power to the leopard. To whom did pagan Rome turn over its capital, the city of Rome? In 331 AD, Constantine, the emperor of pagan Rome, donated the city of Rome to the Roman Catholic Church through the church's representative, Sylvester I, the pope of Rome. In the Vatican today is hanging a great picture, depicting Constantine handing the image of a little warrior, representing the civil power, to Sylvester I of the Catholic Church. Under the painting is the inscription. "The Donation of Rome from Constantine to the Pope." Then Constantine poured millions of dollars of the wealth of pagan Rome into the coffers of the Catholic Church for church buildings and the care of priests. He also put soldiers at the disposal of the Catholic Church to give the church power and authority, just as the prophecy indicated. Let me read you, right from the historian's pen, of this transfer of pagan Roman power, capital, and authority to the Catholic Church:

"One of the most stupendous institutions in history has been the Papacy. Throughout the Middle Ages it dominated Western Europe. Today its power is different from what it was in 1200 AD, but who shall say it is less? This Papacy has been in many senses the legacy of the dying empire of the West. The pope in, the chair of Peter is to a large extent the successor of the emperor on the seat of Augustus or the throne of Constantine." Seignobos, "History of the Roman People," page 460. Then the leopard beast that received the city of Rome, his power, and his authority from pagan Rome, is unquestionably the Papacy.

But that you may be still more sure, we will consider the other characteristics of the leopard beast. This leopard beast had upon its head "the name of blasphemy." Revelation 13:1. Blasphemy occurs only in the realm of religion. So this political power was to deal in religion. There are two outstanding doctrines of the Catholic Church which the Bible calls blasphemy: One is its claim to have power to forgive sins. "Who is this which speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" Luke 5:21. The other doctrine is attributing to the pope the office of God on earth. "For a good work we stone You not; but for blasphemy; and because: that Thou, being a man makes Thyself God." John 10:33. With the word "blasphemy" stamped upon it, the leopard beast is branded at once as the Papacy.

Even though I have already given sufficient evidence, I will give still more, so that it will be impossible to-doubt that the leopard beast is the Papacy.

"And power was given unto him [the leopard beast] over all kingdoms, and tongues, and nations." Revelation 13:7. The-power that received its capital, power, and authority from pagan Rome and had blasphemy written over it, was to rule the whole world. Did the Pontiff ever rule the world? Gibbon, the historian, says that Innocent III was more supreme in the world than any Caesar that ever ruled the empire. Kings laid their crowns at the feet of the pope and had him crown them. They kissed the Pope's slipper to show their subjection. Any king who rebelled was dethroned, King John of England tried it, and was excommunicated by the pope; and the only way he could be reinstated was to lie a day and a night, naked, on a cold marble floor. The king complied. Henry IV, emperor of Germany, had to stay four days out in the rain and snow before the pope would let him come in, just because he opposed the pope in some matter of state. The pope was supreme over all nations and peoples. God told the story hundreds of years before it happened, representing the Papacy by the leopard beast.

After the Catholic Church became supreme it was to receive a deadly wound, as we read in Revelation 13:3. The deadly wound would be healed, and all the world would marvel again at its power. In 1798, while the Papacy, was at its height in power. Berthier, a French general, went with an army to Rome and took the pope prisoner, and he died in exile in France. Later the temporal authority of the pope was taken away. This was a deadly wound. The wound lasted many years. It was, healed a few years ago when the pope was again given temporal power, and he now sits again as a king upon a throne. All the world is marveling today at the tremendous power that the Catholic Church is wielding in the world. Friends, not-just one point is true in this prophecy, but every point is true in its application to the Catholic Church.

Now that you are to be the judges as to whether or not the leopard beast does represent the Papacy, I am going to let you decide. This is the question: Do you know of any power except the Papacy that was founded upon the ruins of the old Roman Empire, and that received the city of Rome as a capital, and was supported by the pagan Roman Empire, that finally became supreme in the world? If

you know of any other power, I should like to have you mention it. There may be two sides to some questions, but there is only one side to represents the Catholic Church.

Now that we have the, principal in the prophecy, it should not be hard to find what the mark of the Papacy is, about which God threatens such dire punishment to the individual who receives it. A mark is something that distinguishes one thing from another. A mark of a religious power would be some outstanding belief or supposed power that other religions do not claim to have. The best way to find out what the Catholics consider their great mark of distinction is to ask them what they hold it to be.

There came a time when the Protestants would not accept the authority of the pope in matters of religion. Martin Luther took his stand upon the Bible and the Bible only. And on the teachings of the Bible only Catholicism can never stand. To meet the challenge of Protestants, that the Bible alone was sufficient for religious teaching, the Catholic Church called the Council of Trent in 1545. The Catholic Church had founded its religion upon the Bible and tradition. So they set about the task of formulating an argument that would prove to the world that tradition, should be accepted by Christians. They debated for years, and then finally the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he maintained that the tradition and teaching of the Catholic Church are even above the Bible teaching. As his reason, he made this statement: "The Church has changed Sabbath into Sunday, not by the command of Christ, but by its own authority."-"Canon and Tradition," by Holtzman Consequently, from that time on "Tradition, not Scripture, is the rock on which the church of Jesus Christ is built." - "Catholic Doctrine as Defined by the Council of Trent." Nampon.

So the Catholic Church came back at the Protestants with the argument that their tradition was above the Bible because their church could actually take one of God's commandments and destroy it, and put one of their own, the institution of Sunday, in its place, making the whole world observe their day in preference to the day of God found in the Bible. This change of the world's rest day from Saturday to Sunday the Catholic Church calls her mark of authority for teaching. "Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical and religious without her. And the act is a mark of ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters." From a letter written by the chancellor of Cardinal Gibbons, November 11, 1895.

So the Catholic Church has ripped out the fourth commandment from the Ten Commandments and substituted its own day in place of it, and boasts of its power to do this. "How could you ever think of doing such a thing to Gods law?" we ask the Catholic Church. Indeed, the question is embarrassing to them, but their answer is more embarrassing to Protestants. Their question to Protestants is, "Why do you keep Sunday? You are supposed to take the Bible, and the Bible only, for your rule of faith, yet there is not one text in the entire Bible that says you should keep Sunday. The Bible teaches throughout that Saturday is to be kept. If you keep it because we made the day for you, then that is fine. But if you can observe one day that we made, why cannot you take and observe the rest of the feast days of our church?"

Listen, Protestant friends, you who, according to your name, are opposed to allowing the Catholic Church to dictate doctrines and practices for you that are not in the Bible, how can you let them take out bows down fifty-two Sundays out of the year, worshiping at the shrine of the Papacy.

The question I want to ask you, friends, is: Are you going to obey God and keep His commandments and His Sabbath, or are you going to obey man and keep and teach the traditions of men and their Sunday? Jesus asks you, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of Cod by your tradition?" Matthew 15:3. But can't we hang on to Sunday observance, now that all the world keeps it, even though it is a tradition of man? Let Jesus answer again: "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9. "Every plant that My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up!" Verse 13. Cod never instituted Sunday observance, and one of these days He is going- to root up and destroy such teaching and those who adhere to it.

But you say, "I can't really see why it makes much difference now which day we keep. Why can't we continue keeping the day that the whole world observes?"

The Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to God. It is the banner of God. If I should take the American flag, throw it down and stamp upon it, and at the same time wave high the red flag of Russia, would you think it made any difference which flag I was honoring and which I was trampling upon? Every red blooded American would protest. If I take the banner of Prince Emmanuel, the Saturday-Sabbath, and throw it down and step on it, and at the same time take the banner of the Papacy, the Sunday-Sabbath, and wave it high, do you think it will make any difference to God?

God is calling out to you today, "Come over and stand under My banner, and live!" And the Papacy is also calling, "Come over under my banner, Sunday, with all the world, and do me homage!" Under which banner are you going to take your stand? Again God speaks, "Choose you whom you will serve. If the Lord be God, follow Him; if the Papacy is God, follow it."

The Roman Catholic Church has taken the very heart of God's law, His Sabbath, and substitute their own day, Sunday, in its place, and then make you believe it and like it? As for me, I will not allow any man or church to force on me any manmade religious laws that are in direct opposition to God's law.

The Sabbath commandment is not only the heart of the Ten Commandments but it is the seal of the commandments. Take it out, and the law has no authority, for it has no official seal. A seal contains three specifications, the name of the writer of the law, his office, and the name of the territory over which he rules. In the fourth commandment alone do we have these three items given: Jehovah God, the name of the writer of the law; Creator, His office; and heaven and earth, the territory over which He rules. Take the fourth commandment out, and the rest of the commandments might be subscribed to by an adherent of any heathen religion in the world.

Now you can begin to understand why God was so stern about this power that came in and actually tore the seal off God's law, and then put his own mark of authority, Sunday in its place. God is very jealous of the Sabbath and His seal of the law, for it is the distinguishing mark that separates His people from all the heathen peoples and false religions in the world. "And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God!" Ezekiel 20:20. What Lord is our God? The Sun? The river? A stone idol? No, the God of the Sabbath commandment, the Creator of heaven and earth. God's true sign and mark that He puts on His people, the Sabbath (Saturday), will never pass away. Christ says, "Not one dotting of an 'I' or crossing of a 'T' shall be dropped from the law until it is all observed." Matthew 5:18 (Goodspeed). Jesus left the Sabbath intact, and He expected all His followers to observe it, so that the world might find His people by this particular sign. The Papacy comes in and puts its mark, Sunday, on everybody, and the whole world. And while you are making up your minds, let me read you again the terrible consequence to the man who aligns himself under the banner of the Papacy, with its mark, Sunday: "If any man worship the beast [the Papacy] and his image, and receive his mark [the substitution of Sunday as the Sabbath in place of Saturday, and forcing it upon men by civil edict] 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 ascends up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name." Revelation 14:9-11.

Why not align yourself under God's banner today and keep His Sabbath? You say. "It is too hard. Brother All the world keeps Sunday, and it would be too hard for me to stand against the world." Have you none of the spirit of the apostles who stood against the world, of the martyrs, of Martin Luther?

A dead fish floats with the current. It takes a live one to go against it. If you think it is too hard, look at Jesus as He hung upon the cross that Friday afternoon, with the blood streaming from His brow. His back had been torn by a whip of leather and iron. His hands were nailed to the tree. As He hung there in pain and agony, nearly every one forsook Him, while the whole world was mocking and jeering. Then as the pain grew more intense, the imps of hell pressed in upon Him until the mountaintop was black with their presence. Then He clenched the nails with His hands, His head dropped upon His breast; He was dead. And as you look into the marble-white face of Jesus, with its streaks of crimson, can you say, "Jesus, it is too hard, I can't do it. The world and my family and friends wouldn't like it. I might lose my job?" Jesus lost His family, friends, job, and life that you might be saved. Can't you do something for Him today as He asks you to step over on His side?

Again the dying Savior makes a last appeal to you as He points to a little group around the foot of the cross, waiting for heaven, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Revelation 14:12. Step over the line with Jesus today.

www.CreationismOnline.com