
The Image of the Beast

What is the “image of the beast?” The two-horned beast, the United States of America, makes an image to the beast. Whenever the church has obtained secular power, she has used it to punish differences of opinion from her doctrines. The apostasy of the church led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government. The apostle Paul said there would “come a falling away, . . . and that man of sin be revealed.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3. So apostasy in the church is what Paul predicted would occur. Timothy wrote that they would have “a form of godliness, but deny God’s power.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3, KJV; 2 Timothy 3:5.

“In the last days perilous times will come. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.” 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

“The Spirit says that in the latter times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.” 1 Timothy 4:1. The

devil will work his deception “with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness.” Notice that the apostle Paul says that in the last days the devil will work with “*all power and signs.*” He also says, “They will have a form of godliness.” So expect the devil to work within the church with those who “have a form of Godliness” and work in the name of Christ performing miracles. Real miracles come both from God and from the devil. The Bible says so. 2 Thessalonians 2:9, NKJV; 2 Timothy 3:5.

Have you ever seen a counterfeit seven-dollar bill or a counterfeit nine-dollar bill? No? Why not? Because a counterfeit always resembles the real thing in order to be accepted. Jesus warned us that our great danger would be from “false Christs and false prophets” who would “perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect.” Matthew 24:24.

I must warn you right now that there are thousands of different books on the market today teaching false prophecies in the name of Jesus Christ. Some of these books have been written by seemingly “nice people” who may have been deceived. Let me ask you—how many false prophets do you think lived in the days of Noah? If you happened to enter a religious bookstore in one of the towns near Noah’s home, how many of those books do you think predicted the coming worldwide flood correctly? Not one. A worldwide flood was not a popular topic mentioned by any of the religious leaders of Noah’s day.

Noah and the Ark

The false prophets predicted prosperity and peace and condemned Noah as a crazy old lunatic. Noah preached for 120 years as he and his family built the ark. Noah told all his friends and neighbors that a worldwide flood was coming and that their only safety would be in getting aboard the ark. A few days before the flood came, God’s invisible angels led the animals aboard the ark. People gathered around the ark to watch this mysterious event. Noah came to the door and made a final appeal for the people to come aboard. He said, “God will wash this world clean of sin and sinners. Your only hope is to come aboard this ark as you saw the animals coming aboard.”

They weren’t sure what to do, but no one wanted to look like a coward in front of their friends, so no one got on board except Noah, his wife, and his three boys and their wives. Out of the entire world, only eight people believed God enough to actually step inside the ark.

God shut the huge door on the ark with His own invisible hand, and then

it was too late. Nothing happened all that day or all the next. It was seven days before the first raindrops fell, and then the sky opened up and water just seemed to pour down without let-up day after day. People moved to higher ground.

Some tied themselves to the outside of the ark. Others pleaded, “Noah, we believe you now! Please open the door!” But Noah could not open the door. The door was so huge only God could open it. They all drowned because they would not believe. You, reader, have a choice—you can believe and prepare for the coming crisis, or you can be like the people in Noah’s day. The choice is yours. If you make the right choice, it will be no more popular than the choice of Noah. But it will bring you ultimate happiness.

Let’s look at a different time period. Let’s walk into a religious bookstore around the time Christ was born in Bethlehem. How many of those religious books accurately predicted the coming of the Messiah? How many showed evidence of understanding the great prophecies? Many very educated people did not know that the Messiah had come “to take their sins away.”

The popular religious opinion of the day and the popular religious teachings promoted by word of mouth or written book was that the Messiah would come to lead their armies to victory. Jesus Christ chose twelve men. He spent three and one half years educating them and teaching them that His purpose was to die on the cross. Jesus said that He “must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.” Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord,” he said. “This shall never happen to you.” Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God but the things of men.”

Peter was never “the first pope.” Peter was not infallible, and Jesus rebuked Peter with the words, “get behind me, Satan.” Surely Peter would have known that Jesus had come to die on the cross, because Jesus had told him so. But no. Peter chose to believe what the popular religious teachers were teaching. He chose to believe that there would be no cross. He wanted a crown, not a cross. Human nature looks for the crown and rejects the cross. It is a hard thing to realize, but the popular religious opinion concerning prophecy has always been wrong. A good counterfeit, but wrong nevertheless. Mark 8:33.

Prophecies of Christ's First Coming

The blindness of the people who lived during Christ's appearance on earth as the Messiah should not surprise us. It is not a question of race—it is a question of human nature. God says that modern man is no less blind to spiritual truth than were the people who lived at that time. God says to modern man, “You say, I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing. But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.” Revelation 3:17, 18.

The religious writers and teachers avoided prophecies like Isaiah, chapter fifty-three. Isaiah predicted that the Messiah would be “a man of sorrows,” “pierced for our sins,” and that He would carry “the sins of everyone.” And Isaiah even wrote that a rich man would provide him a grave: “he was assigned a grave . . . with the rich in his death.” You recall how rich Joseph of Arimathea helped take Christ off the cross and then put Him in Joseph's own tomb.

Why the ignorance concerning this prophecy? The actual words Christ spoke on the cross were predicted by David in the book of Psalms. “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Psalm 22:1. (*Compare Psalm 22:1 with Matthew 27:46.*) David, in the book of Psalms, predicted the very words Christ would speak on the cross hundreds of years later. Also, the very mocking words of the religious leaders were predicted in the same chapter. “He trusts in the Lord; let the Lord rescue him.” (*Compare Psalm 22:8 and Matthew 27:43.*)

The prediction was that they would “divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.” (*Compare Psalm 22:18 with Matthew 27:35.*) Psalm 22:16 predicted that “they have pierced my hands and my feet.” His birthplace, Bethlehem, was predicted by the prophet Micah. The exact year He would be anointed in baptism, A.D. 27, was predicted by the prophet Daniel hundreds of years earlier. And the actual year He would be crucified, A.D. 31, was also predicted by Daniel hundreds of years earlier. Micah 5:2.

Why were the people blind to these prophecies? Because they were taught to leave their religious lives in the care of “religious experts.” They did not do enough independent Bible study. Jesus taught that the people “worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.” Matthew 15:9. “You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the tradi-

tions of men.” Mark 7:7 History repeats itself. The issues today are the same. We “have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”

It is really sad that this generation has no greater knowledge of coming events than did the people who lived in the days of Noah or the people who lived at the time of Christ’s first coming. “False prophets” churn out books filled with false prophecy that overwhelm the prophetic areas of most bookstores. In Matthew 25 Jesus separates His church into “the wise” and “the foolish.”

The devil was able to deceive Peter and all the disciples into believing the religious writers and speakers of their day even though Christ Himself taught them for three and one half years about the cross. Are we greater than Peter, who wrote part of the Bible? What is the possibility that this modern generation really understands the prophecies? If you or I had been taught by Jesus Christ for three and one half years, we would have believed Christ. Isn’t that right? I doubt it! When Christ died on the cross, we would no doubt have been as hopeless as the disciples. The disciples went into hiding behind locked doors, fearing that they would be crucified next.

Revelation. Notice the name. The name is not “Hidden.” The name is “Revelation.” That means that God has something He wants to reveal to us. Like gold, it requires some effort to search Revelation. Take the time. Make the effort. You must dig deep to find gold, because it does not lie on the surface. Dig deep into Revelation.

John writes about the coming of Christ in Revelation 14:14: “I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one ‘like a son of man’ with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.” Notice that in Revelation 14:6-12, just before John writes about the return of Christ as described in verse 14, he gives us three messages from God that prepare the world for this second coming of Christ.

Why the ignorance of the religious world concerning these three messages? When is the last time you read about these three messages? When is the last time you heard a sermon on these three messages? The usual answer is, Never. Most people have never heard of the “three angels’ messages.” John writes, “I saw another angel” . . . “a second angel followed” . . . “a third angel followed.”

Occasionally you may hear someone mention or read what someone has written about the *mark of the beast*. When they do mention it, they are usually very inaccurate about it. If they do not share all of the

three angel's messages, they are "false prophets." The message concerning "the mark of the Beast" is part of the third angel's message and never stands alone. These three angels' messages always are to be taught together. Together they are God's warning message to the people of Planet Earth. We are not to guess at who the beast is or what his mark is. We are to know and understand these messages as a unified message. We can know—and we must know and understand. God says, "Blessed is the one who reads and hears and takes to heart what is written, because the time is near." Revelation 1:3.

The Worst Curse in the Bible!

The worst curse in the entire Bible is pronounced on those who "worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name." They will "drink of the wine of God's fury which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath." Shake off your sleepiness and search these truths out. Your eternal happiness and destiny depend on your knowing what will happen and how to prepare for it. Your very safety and that of your loved ones depends on being prepared!

Many who have claimed Christianity "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Have you received a love of the truth? Do you love God and His truth, even though truth is unpopular with many Christians? Those who do not love the truth accept a "powerful delusion, so that they will believe the lie." 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11.

Notice that 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4 predicted that there would be a major "falling away" in the church and that a man would assume a dominant leadership role, to the point of claiming to be God on earth. (*For the fulfillment of these verses through the papacy, see the Appendix.*) The words *falling away* also lead down through the stream of time to our day. God's final call is: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen. Come out of her, My people." (See the NIV and KJV.)

The church has been falling for a long time and will reach its ultimate fall in the law against Sabbathkeepers worldwide and the punishment of those who honor God, not allowing them to "buy or sell." The effort will be made to starve them into submission—an effort which will backfire and result in worldwide plagues. God promises His children that their "bread and their water will be sure," and He also promises protection from the plagues that are killing millions.

Those who try to starve God's children will themselves face starvation and the most destructive plagues that have ever been known in the

history of mankind. The persecutors will “drink of the wine of God’s fury which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath.”

An Image = a Copy

You see your image when you look in the mirror. The churches of the United States will make an image—a mirror-like copy—of the beast. Leading churches of the United States will unite upon the doctrines they commonly believe. They will get local, state, and national government to enforce their decrees and to maintain their organizations. Then Protestant America will have formed an image of the papacy. Protestant America will punish those who do not agree with their unscriptural belief in Sunday sacredness. Punishment will include such methods as boycott, fines, and prison. (See Revelation 13:14-16.)

The Mark of the Beast

He “also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is 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 will drink of the wine of the wrath of God.” Revelation 14:9, 10. Since the worst curse in the entire Bible comes on those who receive “the mark of the beast,” wouldn’t everyone in the world want to understand who the beast is and how to avoid receiving its mark?

To avoid receiving the *mark of the beast* and the seven last plagues, we must keep all of God’s commandments.

After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image, the prophecy says: “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12, KJV. Those who keep God’s commandments are placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark.

This means that the difference between the worshiper of God and the worshipers of the beast is between keeping God’s law or not keeping it. The special characteristic of the beast, and therefore of his image, is the breaking of God’s commandments. “He will think to change times and the law.” Daniel 7:25, R.V. The only law that deals with time is the Sabbath commandment. Only by changing God’s law could the papacy raise itself above God.

The Catechism or the Bible

The papacy dropped the second commandment, forbidding image worship, from the law. They changed the fourth commandment. God said in the fourth commandment, “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.” The papacy claims in their catechism, “Saturday was the day sanctified; but the church has substituted Sunday for Saturday; so now we sanctify the first, not the seventh day.” God predicted this change in His Holy Word, the Bible. God had Daniel write that “he will think to change the times and the law.” Daniel 7:25.

“The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord.” God calls it “My holy day.” Mark 2:28; Isaiah 58:13, KJV. “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, nor the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:17-19.

The papacy did “break one of these least commandments,” and they do “teach men so.” The papacy did this, not with just one, but with two commandments. It removed the second commandment regarding image worship. It then divided the tenth to give the appearance of still having ten commandments.

The papacy also changed the fourth commandment from the day God made holy, the seventh day, to the first day of the week. According to this verse, how does God look at the papacy? God recognizes the papacy as “least” in the kingdom of heaven. “Least” does not mean that in God’s rating system, He has a place for the papacy—a very low place. It means He has *no* place for the papacy.

Papal leaders teach that Protestants, by observing Sunday, recognize her power. *The Convert’s Catechism of the Catholic Doctrine*, by Peter Geiermann, p. 50, says: “Saturday is the Sabbath day. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.” Yet God’s law is holy, and God says, “I the Lord do not change.” The change of the Sabbath is a sign, or mark, of the authority of the Roman church—“the mark of the beast.” Malachi 3:6.

Protestant churches claim the authority of Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants. The papacy can see that they are deceiving them-

selves. The enforcement of Sunday keeping by Protestant churches is an enforcement or worship of the papacy—of the beast.

The Issue: Either . . .
Honor the Papacy by Keeping Its Commandments
or
Honor God by Keeping God's Commandments

You cannot do both!

Whoever will disobey the command of God, to obey a teaching that has no higher authority than that of the pope, will then honor the papacy above God. Such will accept the sign of allegiance to the papacy—"the mark of the beast." The issue will be plainly set before the people. All will be forced to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. It is at this time that those who continue breaking the fourth commandment will receive "the mark of the beast."

Can I depend on miracles to tell me what God wants me to do?

Many will say "God is performing wonderful miracles for us, proving that Sunday is sacred." Can we depend on miracles? Isn't it a miracle when a snake speaks to people, calling them by name and carrying on a conversation with them? That happened to our great grandmother Eve in the garden. Remember that Eve is related to every one of us. Lucifer, alias the devil, used a miracle to deceive her then, and he uses "Christian miracles" to deceive us today. We must depend on God's Word, regardless of what miracles are performed.

"The Spirit says that in the later times some will abandon the faith, and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons." 1 Timothy 4:1. The devil will work his deception "with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness." It does not say, "the devil will work with power." It says he will "work with *all* power."

Oh how much those words "all power" include. Not only will he work with *all* power, but he will include "signs and lying wonders, and all decieveableness." When someone deceives you, they are lying to you and getting you to believe they are telling the truth. 2 Thessalonians 2:9, KJV.

Identical twins can often times deceive those around them into believing that one of them is really the other. In these last days the devil will deceive the world into believing that popular Christianity is the religion of the Bible.

Identical twins can deceive friends or sometimes even close relatives into believing they are the other twin because they look so much like each other. To deceive the Christian church, the devil must not come as the devil but rather “as an angel of light.” There must be enough good mixed in with the error to make it hard to tell the false from the true.

There Will Only Be Two Choices

This crisis will divide Christianity into two classes—not three.

1. Those who keep all the commandments (including the fourth commandment.
2. Those who do not.

In the coming crisis, all who claim to be Christians will make a choice.

Will I obey God—or will I obey a man?

Doing both will be impossible.