

Great Controversy Sermon Series

Sermon 41: The Mark of the Beast

We determined that the beast in Revelation 13 with 7 heads and ten horns that comes from the sea is the papacy. In the same chapter the beast with two horns like a lamb but speaks like a dragon is the United States. We are definitely not saying that all Catholics and Americans are evil but the Bible clearly explains that these two powers will oppose God and the true believers in the end time.

When the Protestant churches in the United States come together and unite on common doctrine and provide that the state will enforce church decrees and support established institutions then America will have formed an image to the beast. Dissenters to this will be heavily persecuted. The United States will do the following:

Revelation 13:16-17 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

The current economic crisis compared to the crisis in Revelation is nothing. There are not bright days but difficult days ahead.

Revelation 14:9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,¹⁰ "he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

Perhaps the Bible's most serious warning is this one.

The beast is the papacy. We know this. We know what the image to beast is: It is apostate Protestantism appealing to the government to enforce their dogmas. O.K., what is the mark of the beast?

After the fearful warning in Revelation 14:9-10, we read the following:

Revelation 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

The ones who worship the beast and his image and who receive the mark of the beast stand in contrast to those who keep God's commandments. Thus what separates those who worship the beast and his image and who receive the mark of the beast from true believers is the keeping of

God's commandments. The special characteristic of the beast and his image is this: the breaking of God's commandments. The Bible says:

Daniel 7:25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, **And shall intend to change times and law.** Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Only by changing the law of God can the papacy lift itself above God. Those who knowingly obey the changed law honor the one who changed the law. Instead of obedience to the law of God, obedience to the laws of the papacy is a sign of allegiance to the papacy.

The papacy has worked to change God's law. It dropped the commandment forbidding the worship of idols. But papists say that the second commandment is not necessary because they say it is included in the first commandment. This cannot be the prediction of the prophet Daniel. It must be an intentional change. **It will intend to change times and the law.**

The papacy commands the keeping of Sunday instead of the Saturday Sabbath. For the authority to make this change it appeals only to church authority. Thus the papacy openly puts itself above God.

As an example, I have in my hand a photocopy of a newsletter of a church. The church is the Saint Catherine Catholic Church of Algonac, Michigan in the USA. The date is May 21, 1995. It reads like this:

The Church has always had a strong sense of its own authority. "Whatsoever you bind on earth is bound in heaven" Jesus said.

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. "The Day of the Lord" (dies Dominica) was chosen, not from any directions noted in the Scriptures, but from the Church's sense of its own power. The day of resurrection, the day of Pentecost, fifty days later, came on the first day of the week. So this would be the new Sabbath. People who think that the Scriptures should be the sole authority, should logically become Seventh-day Adventists, and keep Saturday holy.

I want to draw your attention to a few points. First of all, the Catholic Church says, "We made the change." Secondly, the Catholic Church says that there is no direction in Scripture for the change of the worship day. The watchword of Protestants is: Sola Scriptura, the Bible and the

Bible only as the rule of faith and practice. By keeping Sunday Protestants recognize the Catholic Church's authority because there is no command in Scripture. Sunday-keeping is the mark of the Catholic Church's authority.

Right away some zealous people can go out and say to Sunday-keepers, "You have the mark of the beast." Please don't do that. First of all, no one yet has the mark of the beast. Why? They are not opposing God knowingly. Most of the people who love God and Jesus do not know these things. Even many Catholic priests. When the obligation of Sunday-keeping comes to the fore and people knowingly reject the Sabbath and recognize the Catholic Church's authority, then they receive the mark of the beast. Don't go to churches and speak with hard accusations. Jesus didn't behave like that. He explained the truth slowly as they were able to understand and He spoke in loving tones. We are trying to win people to the truth not push them away.

In the Catholic Church and in Sunday-keeping churches there are true believers. What does the Bible say?

Revelation 18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

Now you are hearing the message of the beast and his image and you have begun to hear God's call to come out of Babylon.

Sunday is not the Lord's day:

Mark 2:28 "Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

Jesus is the Lord of which day? He is Lord of the Sabbath day. Therefore the Lord's day is the Sabbath.

Exodus 20:10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.

The seventh day is who's Sabbath? The Lord's Sabbath.

Isaiah 58:13 " If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the LORD honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words,¹⁴ Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the LORD has spoken."

The Sabbath is who's holy day? Your holy day or the Lord's holy day? The Sabbath is His holy day.

Many people say, "Jesus changed the day." Let the answer come from Jesus:

Matthew 5:17 " Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸ "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹ "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Someone will say, "Such a thing could never happen in Turkey. Turks will never recognize the Catholic Church's authority." Is that so?

At first, the January 2, 1924 Weekly Rest Law recognized Friday as the weekly day of rest. On May 27th 1935 the Law of Weekly Rest was changed and the word "Friday" was substituted by "Sunday."(<http://www.isvesosyalguvenlik.com/hafta-tatili-hakkinda-kanun/>)
(www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.3.394.doc)

On June 18, 2017 (published July 1 2017) this first law was canceled but another law still exists. In Turkey, the third article of the National Holiday and General Vacation Law number 2429 and accepted on March 17, 1981 reads thus:¹

The weekly rest day is Sunday. This vacation, not less than 35 hours, begins on Saturday at the latest at 1 pm.

O.K., where did Sunday as the weekly rest day come from? These days all the stores are open on the Sabbath but they are closed on Sunday.

Sunday observance showing allegiance to the papacy is already a part of Turkish law but few people know it or understand it. Thus Turkey, like the rest of the world, is being deceived religiously by economic adaptation to policy of the papacy and European law. This will soon be followed by the insistence of the United States that all keep Sunday as a day of rest. In light of recent events do you think it is possible that America would use economic pressure against Turkey to achieve its aims?

Revelation 13:16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,

The acceptance may be one of the mind (forehead) in religious obedience or one of practical compromise for the sake of economic prosperity (hand). Regardless of why it is accepted, God's people will not join in honoring the day of the week set up by the papacy in defiance of God's law.

Revelation 15:2-4 And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. ³ They sing the

¹ <http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.2429.pdf>

song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints!⁴ Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested."

I hope that you will be one of these.