

THE WORD OF

TRUTH

Bible Study Course

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:32



THE SEAL OF GOD OR THE MARK OF THE BEAST

The three angels' message, introduced in lesson 19, carries the most solemn warning given to men that can be found anywhere in the Bible. It alerts the inhabitants of earth concerning the mark of the beast and directs all men to receive the seal of God.

We today, live in the most exciting time of this world's history, we have past records from which to learn, fulfilled Bible prophecy to inspire confidence in the Bible and the revelations of the most credible forewarnings outlining the events lying immediately before us.

To the enlightened, Bible prophecy is seen to be fulfilling right before their eyes and what they now see are the ominous signs of the imminent fulfilment of Revelation 13 and the imposition of the mark of the beast.

There are quite a number of theories among different groups that have attempted to explain the mark of the beast, each with an enthusiastic certainty that they know how to identify those who are on the side of the enemies of God. But the Bible is plain and clearly shows how God discerns His people (2Tim.2:19). In this study we shall examine the well defined points that tell us where we are in the last battle of the great day of God.

1. What does the message of the third angel warn men against receiving?

Revelation 14:9,10,11 _____

Note: See lesson 19, p.6 re the smoke of their torment ascending up for ever.

2. By what power is this mark enforced upon those who receive it?

Revelation 13:2b,3b, 14-16 _____

Note: From the previous lesson, we learned that Satan is the real power working to force the allegiance of men to himself; his human pawns are the governments of men and religious bodies that do not teach, or observe, the *whole* law of God.

3. What group of people will worship the beast?

Revelation 13:3b,8 _____

4. What coercive methods are used to compel all the earth to receive the mark of the beast?

Revelation 13:15-17 _____

5. We have just identified those who receive the mark of the beast and observed the extreme danger, or peril, facing those who do receive it. By contrast, how does God describe those who have withdrawn from apostasy and the mark of the beast?

Revelation 14:12 _____

GOD HAS A MARK, SIGN OR SEAL

The mark of the beast identifies those who choose not to serve God. But God also has a mark, or sign, or seal by which His people may be clearly seen. You will recall from the study in lesson 20, Q.15 and Q.16 that the people of the Philadelphian Church have written upon them -- the name of God and the name of the city of God, New Jerusalem....

6. Where is the name of God said to be written on God's people?

Revelation 14:1 _____

7. In describing the future estate of the redeemed, where are they said to be located?

Revelation 14:3 _____

8. Those standing before the throne of God, are there because of what victory?

Revelation 15:2,3 _____

Note: The last three questions clearly indicate that God has His identifying signature upon His people, just as Satan has his mark upon those who are in league with him in his rebellion against God. It does not matter whether that alliance is with consent or by compulsion, the result is the same -- rebellion against God and receiving the mark of the beast.

9. When God writes His name upon the forehead of a man, what is it that He is actually placing there and what is represented by the term "forehead"?

Hebrews 8:10, Forehead is _____

That written on the forehead is _____

Note: It is the law (Word) of God that is written upon the mind of the one surrendered to Christ. What else would be represented by the forehead, but the mind? The following details may help clarify this understanding.

10. What does God do in the forehead, or mind, of His people to secure them as His?

Revelation 7:2,3 _____

11. What is it that God uses and has the seal, whereby God knows them that are His?

2 Timothy 2:19a _____

12. If the "foundation" stands sure and is the seal, what does God say is the foundation of His people?

Psalms 111:7,8 _____

13. What did Jesus say was required that a true believer be counted as one of His disciples?

John 8:31. Compare 2 Timothy 2:19b _____

Note: The Word of God written upon the heart, is not a reference to an academic knowledge of the Scriptures, but a doing of the things that we learn from the Sacred Word (James 1:21-25; Matt.7:24-27). Those who truly name the name of Christ will depart from iniquity.

14. What is another expression used in Scripture that indicates that the law of God is bound up, or sealed, in the heart of Christ's disciples?

Isaiah 8:16, compare John 3:33 _____

Note: The word translated "testimony" is the Hebrew word TEUWDAH (Strong's 8584) and means to attest, that is, to witness, declare correct or true, to confirm. The same word is used in Ruth 4:7 and confirms the contextual application of the word in Isa.8:16. To bind up the testimony, is to confirm positively, the sealing of God's people, or disciples, by His law. John 3:33 uses the word "testimony" (Greek MARTURIA, Strong's 3141) to indicate a witness, record, or report. In other words, by *receiving and obeying* the message that Jesus has been sent to give to the fallen race, we are thereby sealed and give evidence that God is true. Now we may understand that the words of Christ, in the mind, seal that mind for Jesus.

15: Christ's people gain the victory over the mark of the beast. How do they accomplish this?

Revelation 12:11 _____

Note: The testimony of the saints is to show that God is true, that is, that what God said He can do, he will do. And what is God saying He will do for us? -- *Keep us from falling, He will enable us not to sin* (Jude 24; 2Tim.4:18; John 1:12). When we are washed in the blood of the Lamb, Jesus cleanses us from all unrighteousness (Rev.7:9,10,13,14; 1 John 1:7,9), that is, enables us to stop sinning.

16. When the Word of God speaks of the blood of Jesus removing sin from our character, what is meant by this figure of speech, or how is it done?

John 6:53-56,63 _____

Note: It is not the literal eating of the flesh and blood of Jesus that accomplishes the work of transformation of character, but it is the *taking in of the Word*, that found in the sacred testimony of the Bible (not the modern versions) and practising its teachings, that wroughts a new mind. The thoughts become changed (2Cor.3:18; Eph.4:21-24; John 3:21), the character of God becomes the character of the soul. The name of God is then written on the forehead.

17. What is the classification of the child of God who "eats" the Word of God and rejoices over it?

Jeremiah 15:16 _____

Note: The soul that knows the Words of the Bible and does not practice them will not be rejoicing over them (2Cor.2:16).

God identifies His people by placing His Holy Word into their minds. Not for the mere knowledge of it, but that it may be lived out in the very thoughts, words and actions of the born again Christian (Eze.20:11). Notice Matthew 25:1-13 and observe the difference between the church members who have the oil (Spirit of Christ, John 8:12; Eph.5:8,9,13-17) in their lamps (Bible knowledge, Psalm 119:105) and the Church members who do NOT have the oil.

The indwelling of Christ (the oil of the Spirit) is the source of power for the conversion of the soul and the observance of the Scriptures (Eze.36:25-27; 1Thess.2:13).

What God is doing in sealing His people is to place His own righteous character into the mind of the willing, obedient and repentant sinner. It is the Father's name written upon the forehead.

18. When Jesus prayed to His Father, requesting that the Father keep His disciples in the ways of the Father, for that was how He had taught them, what terms did Jesus use to express this?

John 17:11,12 _____

Note: To be kept in the name of the Father is to have the Father's name written on the forehead. The character of God is the character of the obedient. Notice the next question....

19. What did Jesus give to His disciples that the character of the Father may become the character of the disciples?

John 17:8a,14a _____

20. When God presented His name to Moses, what descriptive words did He use?

Exodus 33:19, 34:5,6 _____

Note: The terms God used to describe His name to Moses were all character traits. It follows, that to be kept in the name of the Father, is to have the character of God and of Christ written upon the mind. The soul thus converted will think and act like Christ and like the Father God (1John 2:3-6; 3:19,22; John 8:29).

21. Under the figure of Judah and Israel, God's people are represented as having a certain name. What is that name by which the saints are called?

Jeremiah 23:6 _____

Note: Righteousness is a character, not a name (1John 2:29).

So how does God MARK His people? --- By SEALING His righteous character into the mind, or forehead. The SIGN of that SEAL having been applied is obedience to all the commandments of God.

The SEAL of God will identify His people. --- They will shun every impure thought and unholy conversation. God's people will do no iniquity for they will live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Psalm 24:3-5; 1 Peter 1:15; Zephaniah 3:13; Matt.4:4; Ezekiel 20:11). We should be careful that "every word" is not interpreted to mean "some words", or some of the commandments. Every word means all the commandments or statutes, the same laws written by the finger of God and spoken by God Himself from Mount Sinai (Nehemiah 9:13; Ex.31:18).

Can we now see that *we are sealed for Christ by the Word of God written upon the heart*? Is it any wonder that Satan will work with all his cunning delusions and force to discredit the Holy Scriptures. If he cannot destroy the Bible in the flames, he will introduce a counterfeit Bible, one that has truth mixed with error. Such a Bible will deceive a soul into thinking they cannot gain the victory through the power of the Son of God and therefore cannot overcome their sin. This is a hellish doctrine and if adopted, will lead that soul into DEATH.

Satan also uses the teachings of men, otherwise known as the wine of false doctrine from Babylon the great, the mother of harlots. Revelation 16:13,14 reveals a threefold confederacy from which the deceptions emanate. This union is made up of the dragon (paganism, Satan), the beast and the false prophet (Lesson 29. See also Rev.13:13,14; 14:8; 18:2,3).

Most Churches claim to be teaching all the commandments of God, all ten, unabridged and unaltered. Actually, nine of the commandments could be adopted as the creed for most religions, but only the fourth commandment can rightfully belong to the Creator God. Only the fourth commandment, relating to the Sabbath, turns the minds of men away from all other, so called, gods and unprofitable worship to focus on the living God, the Creator.

22. How did God use the Sabbath in identifying His people as being distinctly His?

Exodus 31:12-17, notice vv. 13,17 _____

Note: The Jews were distinctly different (peculiar 1Peter 2:9) from the other nations and religions of Palestine. At that time, no other people kept the Sabbath of the Lord's making, the day God sanctified at creation. Other nations observed the first day of the week, Sunday, in honour of their deity, the sun.

With their "peculiar" day of worship, their faithfulness to the commandments of God (a holy code) and the blessing and presence of that powerful God, the Jews were a testimony to the world of the Holy One, the Creator, the true and living God. The Sabbath made the difference. It showed that they were sanctified, or set apart as God's own people, for *only a holy people can keep a Holy Sabbath*.

Looking at how God identified His people (Israel) and showed the world that they were His, is He still doing this today? Does He still delight in gloryifying His name in a holy people (spiritual Israel)? Does God now have a new standard and changed the way He works? Notice Numbers 23:19,20; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8; 1Chronicles 17:27; Ecclesiastes 3:14. God said -- I am the LORD, that is my Name, I will not give my glory to another, neither My praise to graven images (Isa.42:8), nor to a day dedicated to the worship of other gods.

23. When God's people rebelled and departed from Him, what happened to their observance of the Sabbath?

Ezekiel 20:11-13 _____

Note: It is impossible for a man not empowered by the indwelling of the Spirit of God to keep the Holy Sabbath, just as it is impossible for a man to observe any of the laws of God without the power of God abiding within the heart (forehead). It is our sins that separate us from God (Isa.59:2) and separate from God we will not keep His Sabbath! Why would we spend a whole day not doing our own thing

and enjoying the world when we do not keep the other nine commandments? And conversely, why would we keep the other nine Commandments when we lightly regard the fourth and profane the Sabbath? Either way, we know in our own heart that both of these lifestyles are unproductive of eternal life, so far as God is concerned. God said, *be ye holy for I am Holy* (1Peter 1:15). That means observe all of His commandments and live by them.

24. What did God use to prove the loyalty of His people and whether or not they would obey Him and keep His law?

Exodus 16:4, 23-29. Notice vv. 4,28,29 _____

Note: By not keeping the Sabbath, Israel demonstrated their resistance toward the instructions of God (Jer.17:23; Ex.32:9).

The SIGN of God's people, that, by which, they know they are SANCTIFIED by their Creator, is the SABBATH. It is the MARK, or SEAL, that clearly shows that they observe and do ALL the commandments of God.

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

The "mark of the beast" is the MARK, SIGN, or SEAL of Satan. Given the extreme penalty for having received this mark, who would accept a token of allegiance to Satan? This is why the mark of the beast must be some sign that can be mistaken for the sign or seal of God. It must be a mark by which people, upon receiving it, may be able to convince themselves that they are receiving the seal of God. For this reason the mark of the beast must be a counterfeit of the seal of God and the seal of God is the Sabbath. Therefore the Deceiver needs a seal or mark that will look like the Sabbath.

The counterfeit Sabbath is the day that is the result of the working of him who would change times and laws. It has already been shown that the power responsible for this blasphemy is the same power described as the little horn of Daniel 7 and the first beast of Revelation 13, that is,

the Roman Catholic Church (lesson 9,10 and 29). Notice the position this church has taken concerning the question as to her authority to change times and laws and the MARK of her authority to so act :--

"Sunday is our MARK of authority! ... The Church is above the Bible and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact."
-- The Catholic Record, London, Ontario, Canada, 1 September, 1923.

"Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act... and THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters." -- From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H.F. Thomas, 11 November 1895.

I will give \$1000 to any man who will prove by the Bible alone that Sunday is the day we are bound to keep... The observance of Sunday is solely a law of the Catholic Church... The church changed the Sabbath to Sunday and all the world bows down and worships upon that day in silent obedience to the mandates of the Catholic Church." -- Hartford "Weekly Call" quoting priest Thomas Enright, C.S.S.R., 22 February, 1884.

In 1994 Catholic and Evangelical representatives signed a historic document of unification called "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium"

For the first time in 1000 years, the Pope in his twelfth Papal encyclical of May 1995, entitled "That They May All Be One", stated that he has called all Christians to unite under the Vatican. In that encyclical, Pope John Paul II "has challenged world leaders by claiming that the people of the world already recognise the absolute authority of Rome, because they observe the Sunday Sabbath that was ordered by the Pope in the Council of Laodicea (364 AD)" -- William Cooper, Behold A Pale Horse p.90.

In the Council of Laodicea, the statement was made --- "Christians

must not Judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day... If any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ" Canon 29, Scribners "Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers, 2nd. Series vol.14, p.148.

"Anathema" -- a curse; an execration; a person, or thing consigned to damnation, or destruction; a person, or thing, detested or loathed; something devoted to evil. -- Macquarie Dictionary.

Pope John Paul II..."*insists that men have no reliable hope of creating a viable geopolitical system (One World Government... IBS) unless it is on the basis of Roman Catholic Christianity"* -- Malachi Martin, The Keys of This Blood, p.492.

The Pope's 1991 Centesimus Annus encyclical is viewed by the Washington Ethics and Public Policy Centre as "*John Paul's vision of a New World Order*". This was the result of comments from twenty-three essays by distinguished Catholic, non-Catholic, American and European political theorists, theologians, social scientists, lawyers and journalists, as noted in the document "A New World Order: John Paul II and Human Freedom" Edited by George Weigal, published 1992 by The Ethics and Public Policy Centre, Washington DC.

Further to his vision for a Roman Catholic New World Order, John Paul II, in his 1991 Centesimus Annus encyclical has the following record -- "*The state must guarantee to the worker the exercise of his freedom... the need for Sunday rest so that people may turn their thoughts to heavenly things and to the worship of Almighty God.... In this regard, one may well ask whether existing laws and the practice of industrialised societies effectively ensure in our own day the exercise of this basic right to Sunday rest"* p.21, 22

Concerning the life of individuals under the New World Order, Professor Carroll Quigley of the Jesuit, Georgetown University, mentor of the U.S.

President Bill Clinton states: *"His freedom and choice will be controlled within very narrow alternatives by the fact that he will be numbered from birth and followed as a number, through his educational training, his required military or other public service, his tax contributions and his final retirement and death benefits."* Gary Allen, *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* p.12, 13.

Sixteen Papal articles concerning this system were presented at a conference in Kenya, Africa 26 June, 1985 and they stated that *"The Churches shall unite on one day, Sunday, according to the number"* (article 12). *"If anyone does not recognise or denies the articles of this union, he shall be severely punished with death."* (article 7).

Avro Manhattan, author of *"The Vatican Imperialism In The Twentieth Century"*, states in his book -- *The Vatican created and now controls the United Nations*.

In 1995 at the United Nations 50th. anniversary, the Pope addressed both UN staff and delegates calling for the United Nations to become a moral centre for the family of nations.

In June and July 1996, the fourth session of the Provisional World Government Parliament convened with the purpose -- *"To make rapid progress toward the establishment of a functioning world federation and world government under the constitution for the Federation of Earth."* Upon confirmation by twenty-five countries, the Manifesto dated 1995 will become fully implemented.

Under this Manifesto more than 70% of earth is immediately included in the Federation of Earth. The Manifesto includes a Bill of Rights for those citizens of Earth who are within the Federation of Earth.

Professor Kurk E. Kock, is a lecturer at 100 universities in 65 countries, on 5 continents. His subjects of expertise include: the New World Order,

Occultism, Extreme Movements and Parapsychology. Professor Kock gives his assessment of the one world government. -- *"The system will be made up of a single currency, a single centrally financed government, a single tax system, a single language, a single political system, a single world court of justice, a single state religion and a single head (one individual leader)...."*

Each person will have a registered number, without which he will not be able to buy or sell; and there will be one universal church. Anyone who refuses to take part in this universal system will have no right to exist."
-- Operation Vampire Killer 2000. -- Written by, Police against the New World Order. p. 20.

From this series of statements it may be seen that The Papacy is set to take control of the New World Order and that Sunday as a worship day will be mandatory. An electronic or computer number system will be introduced to enable ultimate surveillance and control of every man, woman and child on the face of the earth, and those who do not conform will, in the end, be eliminated.

25. How does the image to the beast, with the authority of the state, impose its control over the masses?

Revelation 13:15-17

Note: The following is not to say that this is how it will happen, but with present technology it would certainly work. One method of applying the computer number is to inject a small microcircuit, smaller than a grain of rice, below the surface of the skin. When in place, this pellet, called a "transponder", may be scanned to disclose the identification number of the individual, the number is then entered into a computer and the full dossier of the subject becomes accessible. The same scanning technique may be used in all business transactions. But there is a more sinister use for the transponder, the device is continually monitored by orbiting satellites. The authorities know

exactly where you are at all times, you can run but you cannot hide. The potential for control, surveillance and extermination is obvious.

This technology is *now* being used on animals; let us not be so naive as to believe that the New World Order constituents have not thought of its application to human beings. It is even now considered as a means of controlling criminals.

But this is not the mark of the beast, it is the instrument, or means, of enforcing the people of earth to take the mark and show their allegiance to the self proclaimed ruler of earth, Satan and his agents. That mark, or sign of allegiance, is Sunday sacredness and when it is made mandatory, then forced upon the people and policed by the government, that mark will take effect. Then, bowing to the dictates and holding sacred the day designated for the worship of the sun, or Satan, IS to take the MARK of THE BEAST (lesson 29, p.12).

GOD'S PEOPLE NEED NOT FEAR

26. When the people of the earth will be forced to worship on the venerable day of the sun (Satan), how does the God of heaven and earth regard this day dedicated to another god?

Isaiah 42:8 _____

Exodus 20:3 _____

27. When the adversaries of God's people work against them, of what is this a token or sign?

Philippians 1:28 i) To the adversary _____

ii) To God's people _____

As the people of God, we will pass through the last great conflict and suffer much, many will even be martyred, yet we have nothing to fear except we forget the way in which the Lord has lead us. Our faithfulness and steadfastness to His Word will be our sure defence. Thus, if we depart

from His word we will fall (Ps.119:11). Amidst the conflict of the last days when men's hearts fail them for fear, the greatest conflict in the minds of the saints will not be - *will I be overcome by the image to the beast?* Instead it will be earnest soul searching and the question -- is my every sin confessed and forsaken, has all gone beforehand to judgement, am I right with God, have I made things right (to the best of my ability) with those I have wronged?

As the persecution accelerates, the saints will be pouring out their hearts to God in earnest and importunate prayer, pleading for the forgiveness of and cleansing from every sin. This experience of the faithful, is described in the experience of Jacob when he humbly pleads and agonises in prayer for the forgiveness of all his sin. The final outcome of his importunity was forgiveness, righteousness, peace and deliverance from the one he feared and from his enemies (Gen.32:24-30; Hos.12:4,5; Jer.30:5-8).

The forcing of conscience is a common Satanic oppression, yet God delivers His faithful and obedient people. One case cited in Scripture and parallels the "image to the beast" concept, is that given in Daniel 3, when the king of Babylon built an image and commanded all nations under his dominion to bow down and worship that image. Those who did not comply to the dictates of the state were killed. Just as that image was a test for the people of God, so the mark of the beast, under spiritual Babylon, will prove to be a test for every professed follower of Jesus Christ.

Terrifying, though all this may be, God has promised to care for His children and preserve them faithful (2Tim.4:18). Even if they should lose their lives for their faith, their final deliverance will be to rise to everlasting life when Jesus comes to claim His own (Rev. 6:9-11).

Fear not (Matt.10:28; 16:25), God's people are on the winning side, for the prince of this world is already defeated (John 12:31; Rev.17:14). Soon Christ will crush all kingdoms and set up His glorious kingdom, there to reign with the redeemed of all ages, world without end. **EVEN SO, LORD JESUS COME.**

I will love Thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength in Whom I will trust, my buckler and the horn of my salvation and my high tower.

I will call upon the LORD who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from mine enemies. The sorrows of death compassed me and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me.

In my distress I called upon the LORD and cried unto my God: He heard my voice out of His temple and my cry came before Him, even unto His ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken because of His wrath.

He delivered me from my strong enemy and from them which hated me, for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place; He delivered me because He delighted in me.

The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands hath He recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all His judgements were before me and I did not put away His statutes from me. I was also upright before Him and I kept myself from my iniquity. Therefore He recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands.

Psalm 18: 1-6, 17-24.