



Welcome to our Bible Study on **How to Avoid the Mark of the Beast.**



Some people think the mark of the beast is a microchip or tattoo, or something to do with the Illuminati or the United Nations. But the real issue behind the mark of the beast is **WORSHIP**.

What does Revelation tell us about true and false worship, and how it relates to the mark of the beast?

Revelation 14:6,7

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— (7) saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and _____ Him who _____ heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

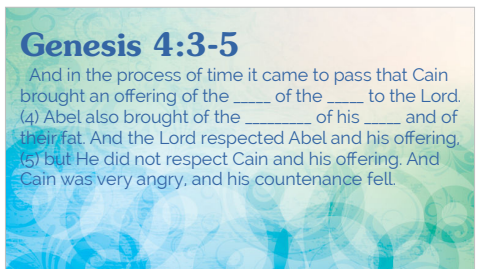
Revelation 14:6,7

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— (7) saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and **worship** Him who **made** heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."



In the three angel's messages, the final end-time warning for the inhabitants of Earth, we are called to **WORSHIP** God, the Creator of heaven and earth. This allegiance and worship is in bold contrast and opposition to **WORSHIP** of the beast.

How has worship divided the followers of God and Satan since the days of Adam and Eve?



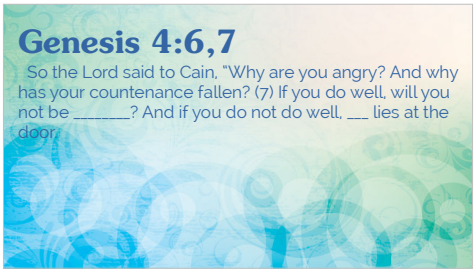
Genesis 4:3-5
And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the _____ of the _____ to the Lord. (4) Abel also brought of the _____ of his _____ and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, (5) but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Genesis 4:3-5
And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the **fruit of the ground** to the Lord. (4) Abel also brought of the **firstborn of his flock** and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, (5) but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.



Cain and Abel, sons of Adam and Eve, were very different in character. Abel was loyal to God, but Cain, like Lucifer in heaven, questioned God's justice and authority. Both knew about the plan of redemption and the sacrifices that showed faith in the coming Redeemer. Offering a lamb demonstrated their faith in the blood of Jesus *"that cleanses us from all sin"*¹ and on which forgiveness depends.²

Did Cain's offering show belief in and obedience to God's instructions for their salvation?

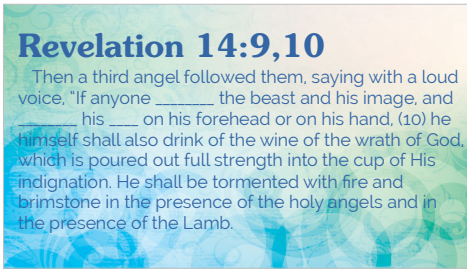


Genesis 4:6,7
So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? (7) If you do well, will you not be **accepted**? And if you do not do well, **sin** lies at the door.



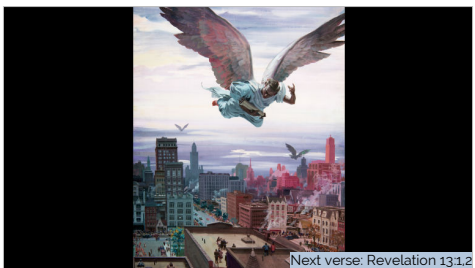
God is particular about our worship, and He called Cain's worship sin. Why? Most false religions in the world are based on the idea that our efforts can save us; that we need development, regeneration, or refinement—not redemption. Cain did not feel the need of the blood of Jesus. He wanted God to accept the products of his labor, almost as if he was doing God a favor. But real faith trusts completely in God for salvation, and is demonstrated by obedience to all His requirements.

How are these same issues involved in end-time worship?



Revelation 14:9,10
Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone _____ the beast and his image, and _____ his _____ 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.

Revelation 14:9,10
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.



Next verse: Revelation 13:1,2

The warning of the third angel of Revelation 14 is a warning against false **worship**. The whole world, except for those who “*keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus*”;³ ends up believing the lies of the “*beast*”;⁴ worshipping him, and receiving his mark.

Who is this beast, what is his mark, and how can we escape these dread threatenings of God?

Revelation 13:1,2

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the ____, having seven ____ and ten ____, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. (2) Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.

Revelation 13:1,2

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the **sea**, having seven **heads** and ten **horns**, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his head a blasphemous name. (2) Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.



Next verse: Revelation 13:1,6,7; Daniel 7:8

The beast of Revelation 13 is described as a composite of the four beasts of Daniel 7, being leopard-like, with the mouth of a lion, the feet of a bear and ten horns with crowns on them. (*refer to previous Bible Studies on **Identity of the Antichrist**, and **Prophecy of Mystery Babylon***). It incorporates pagan beliefs and practices from each empire.

What key word is used in Revelation to describe the beast?

Revelation 13:1,6

...and on his heads a _____ name. (6) Then he opened his mouth in _____ against God, to _____ His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

Daniel 7:8

...And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking _____ words.

Revelation 13:1,6

...and on his heads a **blasphemous** name. (6) Then he opened his mouth in **blasphemy** against God, to **blaspheme** His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

Daniel 7:8

...And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking **pompous** words.

Next verse: John 10:33; Luke 5:21



One of the main features of this beast power is **blasphemy**.

According to the Bible, what is blasphemy?

John 10:33

The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a ____, make Yourself ____.”

Luke 5:21

And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can _____, but God alone?”

John 10:33

The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a **man**, make Yourself **God**.”

Luke 5:21

And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can **forgive sins** but God alone?”

Next verse: Isaiah 43:25; Luke 5:24



The Bible describes blasphemy as 1) pretending to be or claiming to be God, and 2) claiming the power to forgive sins.

The Roman Catholic church has doctrines that fit this distinction. The pope claims the office of God on earth. Lucius Ferraris wrote, “*The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God.*”⁵

Pope Leo XIII boasted: “*We [popes] hold upon this earth the place of Almighty God.*”⁶

According to the Bible, who alone can forgive sins?

Isaiah 43:25

“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins.”

Luke 5:24

But that you may know that the ____ of ____ has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

Isaiah 43:25

“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins.”

Luke 5:24

But that you may know that the **Son of Man** has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

Next verse: 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4



The Bible says God alone can forgive sins.

A prominent Catholic author wrote, “*Seek where you will, through heaven and earth and you will find but one created being who can forgive the sinner, who can free him from the chains of sin and hell, and that extraordinary being is the priest, the Catholic priest.*”⁷

How does the Bible warn us about those who make these claims?

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 ___ is revealed, the son of perdition, (4) who opposes and ___ himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits ___ God in the temple of God, showing _____ that he is God.

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.

Next verse: Revelation 13:2



Paul foretold that the man of sin, the antichrist, would arise, opposing and exalting himself against God, sitting in the place of God. He would trample underfoot the great memorial of creation that God made and blessed in commemoration of his work, and set up a rival sabbath for all to observe and honor. So he would turn the world against God.

Where does the antichrist power, represented by the beast of Revelation 13, derive its power?

Revelation 13:2

...The ___ gave him his ____, his ____, and great _____.

Revelation 13:2

...The **dragon** gave him his **power**, his **throne**, and great **authority**.

Next verse: Revelation 12:3,7-9



Revelation tells us that the dragon is the one directly responsible for originating, influencing, supporting, and endorsing the beast power.

Who is this dragon and where did he come from?

Revelation 12:3, 7-9

And another sign appeared in ____; behold, a great, fiery red ____ having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads...(7) And war broke out in heaven; Michael and His angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought, (8) but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. (9) So the great dragon was cast ____, that serpent of old, called the Devil and ____, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the ____, and his angels were cast out with him.

Revelation 12:3, 7-9

And another sign appeared in **heaven**: behold, a great, fiery red **dragon** having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads...(7) And war broke out in heaven; Michael and His angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, (8) but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. (9) So the great dragon was cast **out**, that serpent of old, called the Devil and **Satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the **earth**, and his angels were cast out with him.



Next verse: Isaiah 14:12-14

The Bible is clear that this dragon is Satan, the devil, who deceives the whole world. The battle between good and evil, light and darkness, truth and error, right and wrong, goes back to Lucifer's rebellion in heaven.

Why did Lucifer, who was created the highest of the angels, rebel against God?

Isaiah 14:12-14

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!...

(13) For you have said in your heart: I will ____ into heaven, I will ____ my throne above the stars of God; ...

(14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be ____ the Most High."

Isaiah 14:12-14

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!...

(13) For you have said in your heart: I will **ascend** into heaven, I will **exalt** my throne above the stars of God; ...

(14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be **like** the Most High."

Next verse: Matthew 4:8,9



Lucifer was created the wisest and most beautiful of the angels. But *"his heart was lifted up because of his beauty"*.⁸ Lucifer's desire for self-exaltation and worship led to his downfall. His lies and deceptions, begun in heaven, now continue on this earth. (see study on **The Great Controversy**). It is this same war that is intensifying on earth today, as described in Revelation 13. The issue is still over worship...who we will serve, whose laws we will obey.

What did Satan demand of Jesus when He came to earth?

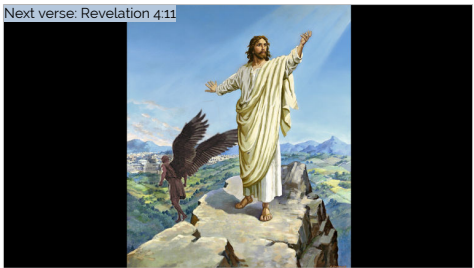
Matthew 4:8,9

Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. (9) And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and _____ me."

Matthew 4:8,9

Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. (9) And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and **worship** me."

Next verse: Revelation 4:11



Satan offered Jesus power, glory, and the kingdoms of this world in exchange for worship. The devil tempts us in the same way. "To be successful in this life", he says, "you must serve me. Your well-being is in my hands. I can give you riches, honor, and happiness. Turn your back on integrity, self-sacrifice, and eternal life."

Why is God alone worthy of our worship?

Revelation 4:11

"You are _____, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You _____ all _____, and by Your will they exist and were created."

Revelation 4:11

"You are **worthy**, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You **created** all **things**, and by Your will they exist and were created."



Next verse: John 14:15; 1 John 2:4

God alone is worthy of our worship, adoration, and allegiance because He is our Creator and Redeemer. He who made the world and everything in it is above all other gods. He is the everlasting God, all-powerful, full of wisdom, compassion and love. We are made in His image, sons and daughters of the King of Heaven.

Does worshipping God include keeping His commandments?

John 14:15

If you love Me, ____ My _____

1 John 2:4

He who says, "I know Him," and does not ____ His commandments, is a ____ and the truth is not in him.

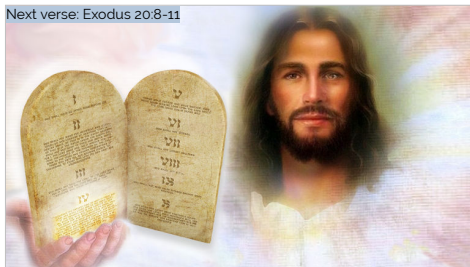
John 14:15

If you love Me, **keep** My **commandments**.

1 John 2:4

He who says, "I know Him," and does not **keep** His commandments, is a **liar** and the truth is not in him.

Next verse: Exodus 20:8-11



Worshipping the Creator finds expression in keeping the commandments of God.

What is special about the fourth commandment?

Exodus 20:8-11

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (9) Six days you shall labor and do all your work, (10) but the seventh day is the _____ of the Lord your _____. 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. (11) For in six days the Lord _____ the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord _____ the Sabbath day and _____ it."

Exodus 20:8-11

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (9) Six days you shall labor and do all your work, (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. (11) For in six days the Lord **made** the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord **blessed** the Sabbath day and **hallowed** it."



Next verse: Ezekiel 20:12; Exodus 31:16,17

The law of God as sacred and unchanging as God Himself. It is the expression of His character and the foundation of His government. It will be the standard of character in the judgment. Without obedience to God, no worship can be pleasing to Him. Satan hates God's law, especially the 4th commandment, which seals the law with the authority of God. It gives His name and title and reason to worship Him—because He is the Creator of heaven and earth and all things. To Him we owe our existence.

Keeping the Sabbath is the way we show allegiance and loyalty to our Creator.

What special designation did God give the Sabbath?

Ezekiel 20:12

Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a _____ between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who _____ them.

Exodus 31:16,17

Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. (17) It is a _____ between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."

Ezekiel 20:12

Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a **sign** between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who **sanctifies** them.

Exodus 31:16,17

Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. (17) It is a **sign** between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."



Next verse: Hebrews 8:10

God has designated the Sabbath as a sign of loyalty between us and Him, a sign that we recognize Him as the Creator of heaven and earth, and the One Who sanctifies, or re-creates us. We acknowledge that He has the power to do this.

Why is this **not** legalism?

Hebrews 8:10

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will ___ My laws in their mind and ___ them on their hearts; and I will ___ their God, and they shall be My people.

Hebrews 8:10

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will **put** My laws in their mind and **write** them on their hearts; and I will **be** their God, and they shall be My people.



Those who follow Jesus have allowed Him to write His law in their hearts. We are told, *"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God **Who works in you** both to will and to do for His good pleasure."*⁹

These are the true worshipers, those who worship God both *"in spirit and in truth"*.¹⁰ They are described in Revelation as *"the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes"*.¹¹

On the other hand, counterfeit worship involves worshipping the beast and receiving his mark.

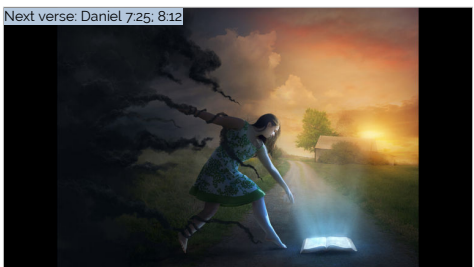
How did Jesus define false worship?

Mark 7:7,9

And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. (9) He said to them, "All too well you reject the _____ of God, that you may keep your _____."

Mark 7:7,9

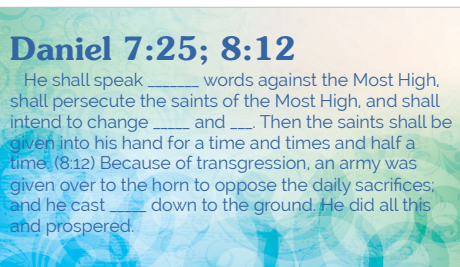
And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. (9) He said to them, "All too well you reject the **commandment** of God, that you may keep your **tradition**."



When doctrines of man are substituted for the commandments of God, and legislative power is brought to bear on God's faithful followers, each will have to make a choice for eternity. The issue is one of loyalty. One group *"worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark"*¹², and brings upon themselves the awful judgments of God threatened by the third angel.

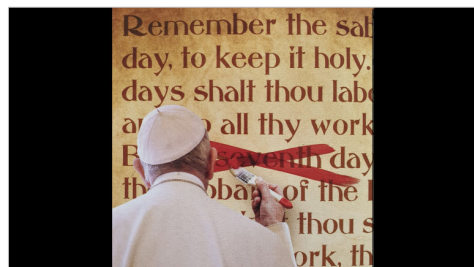
In contrast, the other group are the ones who *"keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus"*.¹³

What is the mark of the beast?



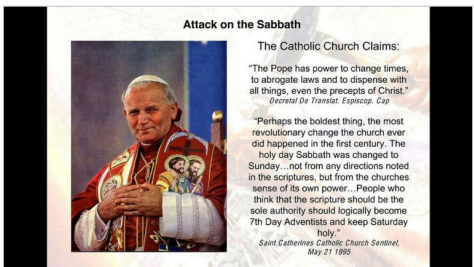
Daniel 7:25; 8:12

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. (8:12) Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast **truth** down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.



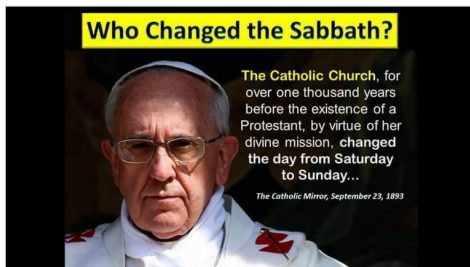
The prophet Daniel tells us that the Roman church, symbolized by the little horn, would *"intend to change times and law"*.¹⁴ This would become the "mark" of her authority. Paul described this power as the *"man of sin"*, who *"opposes and exalts himself"* above God.¹⁵ Only by changing God's law could the papacy exalt itself above God. Whoever would keep the changed law would be giving supreme honor and allegiance to the power who changed it.

How have they changed the law of God?



In the Catholic catechism, the 2nd commandment (on image worship) has been left out, the 10th split into two (so that there will still be ten), and the fourth commandment shortened to "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day". The longest of the Ten Commandments has been shortened to just eight words! What has been left out? Every one of the elements that make the seventh day God's seal of authority: His name, His title, His jurisdiction. The words, "the seventh day" have also been removed. Written this way, the Sabbath could refer to any other day.

Does the papacy admit to changing the law of God?



Yes. The papacy claims to have the power to change the law of God. How does their catechism show this?



"Q: Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?
A: Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority."¹⁶

Does the papacy acknowledge that Saturday is the Sabbath?



Q: Which is the Sabbath day?
A: Saturday is the Sabbath day.
Q: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?
A: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday."²²

Here is another section from a Catholic catechism:

*"Q: Which is the Sabbath day?
 A: Saturday is the Sabbath day.
 Q: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?
 A: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday."*²⁷

Does the Catholic church claim to be above the Bible, the Word of God?

A word from the Catholic Record:
 "Sunday is founded, not on scripture, but on tradition, and is distinctly a Catholic institution. As there is no scripture for the transfer of the day of rest from the last to the first day of the week, Protestants ought to keep their Sabbath on Saturday and thus leave Catholics in full possession of Sunday."
 — Catholic Record, September 17, 1893

SUN-day

"The Mark of the Papacy's Authority"

Sunday is our **MARK** of **authority**... The (Roman) church is above the Bible, and this transference of **Sabbath** observance is **proof of that fact**.

— Catholic Record, September 1, 1923 (Ontario).

Next verse: Revelation 13:16-18



The papacy claims to be above the Bible. In spite of there being no Scriptural authority whatsoever for changing the sacred law of God Himself, not only do they admit having done it, but they say it is a mark of their authority.

*"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."*²⁸

*"Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] church."*²⁹

What does the Bible say about the number of the beast?

Revelation 13:16-18

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 ____ (18) Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a ____ His number is

Revelation 13:16-18

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**. (18) Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a **man**: His number is **666**.

VICARIUS FILII DEI

V	5	F	0	D	500
I	1	I	1	E	0
C	100	L	50	I	1
A	0	I	1	+	501
R	0	I	1		
I	1	+	53		
V	5				
S	0				
	112	=		666	

Next verse: Revelation 7:3; Ecclesiastes 9:10

The title of the pope of Rome is *Vicarius Filii Dei*.³⁴ Taking the Roman numerical values of the letters in this title, we come up with 666. (note: The letter "u" did not exist in the latin alphabet, but its sound was written using "v".)

Translated in English, the title is "Vicar of the Son of God". Vicar is another word for substitute. Someone considered to be a substitute for the Son of God is a counterfeit.

Why is the mark placed in the forehead or on the hand?

Revelation 7:3

... "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have ____ the servants of our God on their foreheads."

Ecclesiastes 9:10

... Whatever your ____ finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no ____ or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

Revelation 7:3

... "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have **sealed** the servants of our God on their foreheads."

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatever your **hand** finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no **work** or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.



Next verse: Ecclesiastes 3:14; Psalm 111:7,8

The forehead is a symbol of the mind, and represents **mental assent**, while the hand is a symbol of what we **do**. The law of God will be made void in our land and a man-made institution exalted—showing contempt for the great Lawgiver, and allegiance to a power that is in opposition to Him. This is the culmination of the age-old controversy between the Lamb and the dragon.

Can the law of God actually be changed?

Ecclesiastes 3:14

I know that whatever God does, it shall be _____. Nothing can be added to it. And nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him.

Psalm 111:7,8

...All His precepts are sure. They stand fast ____ and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

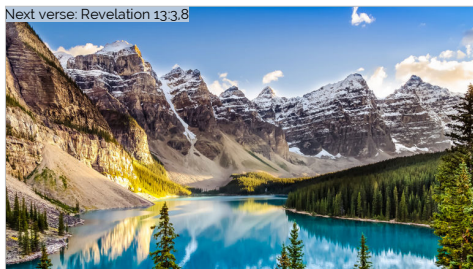
Ecclesiastes 3:14

I know that whatever God does, it shall be **forever**. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him.

Psalm 111:7,8

...All His precepts are sure. They stand fast **forever** and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

Next verse: Revelation 13:3,8



God's law, the foundation of His throne and character, stands firm forever. The Psalmist wrote, *"It is time for You to act, O Lord, for they have regarded Your law as void."*²⁰

How many will give their allegiance to the beast?

Revelation 13:3

...And ____ the world marveled and followed the beast.

Revelation 13:8

____ who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Revelation 13:3

...And **all** the world marveled and followed the beast.

Revelation 13:8

All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.



Next verse: Revelation 13:15-17

Each individual will choose whether to give their allegiance to God or to the beast. Each will receive either the mark of the beast, or the seal of God. Both the true and the false Sabbath institutions are identified by the name of their authors, showing the mark of their authority.

What kind of pressure can we expect to be brought to bear on God's faithful followers?

Revelation 13:15-17

He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be _____. (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, (17) and that no one may _____ or _____ except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Revelation 13:15-17

He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be **killed**. (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, (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.



Next verse: John 15:20; Luke 21:16

Force is the last resort of every false religion. Today many seem to have forgotten how religious freedom was lost during the long years of papal supremacy in the Dark Ages. Millions were branded as heretics and lost their lives for such things as holding the Bible as the only rule of life, believing in Christ as the one true Mediator between God and man, and hallowing the true Sabbath. As religious intolerance gains control in the United States, church and state powers unite to persecute those who are faithful to God. Economic sanctions will eventually be followed by a death decree.

What did Jesus say about this time?

John 15:20

"Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also _____ you..."

Luke 21:16

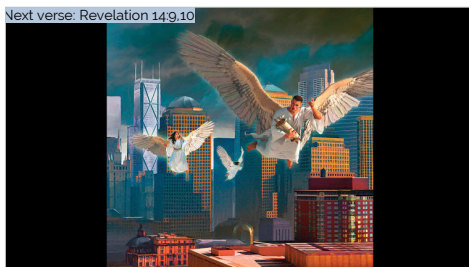
You will be _____ even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. (17) And you will be _____ by all for My name's sake.

John 15:20

"Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also **persecute** you..."

Luke 21:16

You will be **betrayed** even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. (17) And you will be **hated** by all for My name's sake.



Next verse: Revelation 14:9,10

Churches in America have declined in real spirituality, and the Word of God is not valued as it should be. Doctrines which are the very pillars of Christian faith are being denied: creation, the fall of man, the atonement and the law of God. The teaching of evolution, the deifying of nature over God, spiritualism, the eroding of the family unit, and disregard of the law of God are all contributing to moral decay. Religious freedom is being undermined. The three angels' messages of Revelation 14 are warnings for all today.

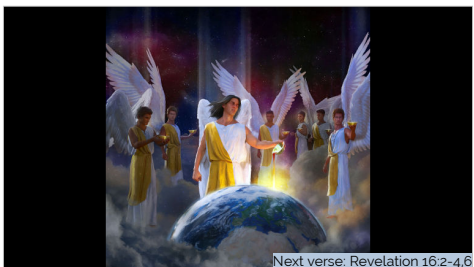
What will be the results of ignoring these last warnings to our earth?

Revelation 14:9,10

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 _____ of God, which is poured out _____ strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be _____ with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

Revelation 14:9,10

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.



Next verse: Revelation 16:2-4,6

The seven last plagues will fall on those who have rejected the warnings and obligations of God's word and received the mark of the beast. The most terrible and extensive judgments the world has ever known will be felt when God's unmingled wrath is poured out.

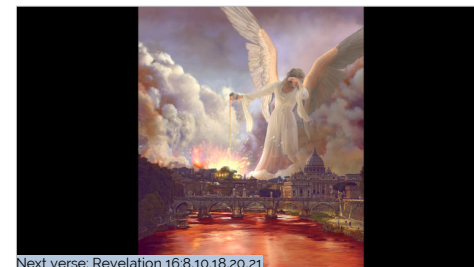
What are these plagues?

Revelation 16:2-4,6

...a foul and loathsome _____ came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. (3) Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the _____, and it became _____ as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died. (4) The the third angel poured out his bowl on the _____ and _____ of water, and they became blood... (6) for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given the blood to drink...

Revelation 16:2-4,6

...a foul and loathsome **sore** came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. (3) Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the **sea**, and it became **blood** as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died. (4) The the third angel poured out his bowl on the **rivers** and **springs** of water, and they became blood... (6) for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given the blood to drink...



Next verse: Revelation 16:8,10,18,20,21

At this time, the intercessory work of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary is finished and probation is closed. There is nothing to shield the sinners from the full measure of their guilt when the unmingled wrath of God is poured out. Then they will wish for the shelter of God's mercy, but it will be too late. They have despised every warning and rejected every plea.

What happens during the rest of the plagues?

Revelation 16:8,10,18,20,21

Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to _____ men with _____. (10) Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of _____, and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain... (18) and there was a great _____... (20) Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. (21) And great _____ from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent...

Revelation 16:8,10,18,20,21

Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to **scorch** men with **fire**... (10) Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of **darkness**, and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain... (18) and there was a great **earthquake**... (20) Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. (21) And great **hail** from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent...



Next verse: Daniel 3:1

When these judgments fall on the earth, it will be too late for anyone to decide to follow Jesus. Now is the time to make a decision for eternity, so we are not found without a shelter in that terrible time. Even now the image to the beast described in Revelation 13 is being formed. Soon, religious power will control the civil government. Dissent from her doctrines will result in civil penalties.

How is this illustrated in the book of Daniel?

Daniel 3:1,4,5

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an _____ of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon... (4) Then a herald cried aloud: "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, (5) that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and _____ the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up;

Daniel 3:1,4,5

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an **image** of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon... (4) Then a herald cried aloud: "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, (5) that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and **worship** the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up;



Next verse: Daniel 3:4-6

The false sabbath will be received and honored just like the golden image described in Daniel 3. King Nebuchadnezzar had made this image in defiance of the word of God (*see Daniel 2*), as a monument of his own greatness and power. He demanded that all worship this image, just as church and state will soon unite to enforce worship of the image of the beast in Revelation 13.

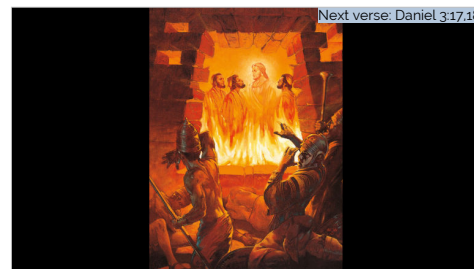
What were to be the consequences for all who did not comply with his decree?

Daniel 3:15

"...But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a _____ fiery _____. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"

Daniel 3:15

"...But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a **burning fiery furnace**. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"



Next verse: Daniel 3:17,18

Here, as in Revelation 13, we see state-enforced worship. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were pointed out as disregarding the king and his law. In rage, he commanded that they be brought before him, offering them another chance to bow, ending with the threatening words, "*And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?*"²¹

How did the three Hebrews respond to this?

Daniel 3:17,18

"Our God whom we serve is able to _____ us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. (18) But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do _____ serve your gods, nor will we _____ the gold image which you have set up."

Daniel 3:17,18

"Our God whom we serve is able to **deliver** us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. (18) But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do **not** serve your gods, nor will we **worship** the gold image which you have set up."



Next verse: Daniel 3:24,25

Everyone understood that bowing to the image was an act of worship—something reserved by these three loyal young men for God alone. Boldly and bravely they stated their determination to obey God regardless of the personal cost to themselves.

Full of fury, the king ordered them to be bound and hurled into the flames of a furnace that had been heated seven times more than usual. The fire was so hot it killed those who threw them in.

What happened to the three Hebrews?

Daniel 3:24,25

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." (25) "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, _____ in the midst of the fire; and they are not _____ and the form of the fourth is like the Son of _____."

Daniel 3:24,25

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." (25) "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, **walking** in the midst of the fire; and they are not **hurt**, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of **God**."



Next verse: Daniel 3:26,27

It was true! The Son of God Himself was seen walking with His faithful followers in the middle of the fire. In the presence of the Lord of heaven and earth, the flames lost their power to consume.

The king's triumph turned to paleness and alarm as he recognized the God spoken of by the Hebrew captives.

What did he also observe?

Daniel 3:26,27

Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came from the midst of the fire. (27) And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not _____ nor were their garments affected, and the _____ of fire was not on them.

Daniel 3:26,27

Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came from the midst of the fire. (27) And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not **singed** nor were their garments affected, and the **smell** of fire was not on them.



Next verse: Revelation 14:12

The image was forgotten. God had shown Himself faithful to those who had honored Him. They were not burned, and did not even smell like smoke.

In the trials to come— "trouble such as never was since there was a nation" ²² — the Lord will be with His followers everywhere. He will reveal Himself as the God above all gods, protecting them from Satan and all the hosts of evil.

What will we need to get us through that time of trouble?

Revelation 14:12

Here is the _____ of the saints; here are those who _____ the commandments of God and the _____ of Jesus.

Revelation 14:12

Here is the _____ of the saints; here are those who _____ the commandments of God and the _____ of Jesus.



Next verse: Acts 17:30; Joshua 24:15; Acts 5:29

In order to survive the times ahead, we need a faith grounded on the Bible, a faith that will not be shaken by any circumstances. Everything must be tested by the Word of God. Now is the time to fortify our minds with its principles and truths, to let go of any sin that God brings to our attention. Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will face opposition, ridicule, and finally, persecution. God has promised to get us through this time if we are faithful to Him.

What promises has He given?

Psalms 91:1-4

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. (2) I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will _____."... (4) He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge...

Isaiah 33:15

He will dwell on high; his place of defense will be the fortress of rocks; _____ will be given him, his _____ will be sure.

Psalms 91:1-4

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. (2) I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will **trust**"...

(4) He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge...

Isaiah 33:15

He will dwell on high; his place of defense will be the fortress of rocks; **bread** will be given him, his **water** will be sure.



God's people will suffer, they will be persecuted and distressed, but not forgotten or forsaken by God. When the wicked are dying from plague or hunger, angels will protect the righteous and provide what they need.

What are we called to do now in order to prepare?

Acts 17:30

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to _____.

Joshua 24:15

... _____ for yourselves this day whom you will serve...

Acts 5:29

But Peter and the other apostles answered and said, "We ought to _____ God rather than _____."

Acts 17:30

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to **repent**.

Joshua 24:15

... **choose** for yourselves this day whom you will serve...

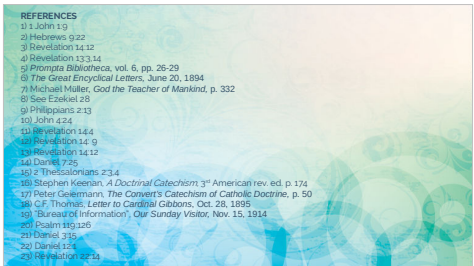
Acts 5:29

But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to **obey** God rather than **men**."



The choices we are facing are not easy. But eternal life is worth every sacrifice made now. Nothing in this life is worth hanging onto if it will jeopardize our eternal future. Jesus has made every provision for our salvation. Those "*who do His commandments*," He says, will have "*the right to the tree of life*" and "*enter in through the gates into the city*" of God.²³ We can trust Him every step of the way. Someday soon the great controversy between good and evil will be over, and God will have a group of people free of sin.

Will you choose today to put your entire trust in Jesus and follow Him no matter the cost?



- 1) 1 John 1:9
- 2) Hebrews 9:22
- 3) Revelation 14:12
- 4) Revelation 13:14
- 5) *Prompta Bibliotheca*, vol. 6, pp. 26-29
- 6) *The Great Encyclical Letters*, June 20, 1894
- 7) Michael Müller, *God the Teacher of Mankind*, p. 332
- 8) See Ezekiel 28
- 9) Philippians 2:13
- 10) John 4:24
- 11) Revelation 14:4
- 12) Revelation 14:9
- 13) Revelation 14:12
- 14) Daniel 7:25
- 15) 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4
- 16) Stephen Keenan, *A Doctrinal Catechism*, 3rd American rev. ed. p. 174
- 17) Peter Geiermann, *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, p. 50
- 18) C.F. Thomas, *Letter to Cardinal Gibbons*, Oct. 28, 1895
- 19) "Bureau of Information", *Our Sunday Visitor*, Nov. 15, 1914
- 20) Psalm 119:126
- 21) Daniel 3:15
- 22) Daniel 12:1
- 23) Revelation 22:14