

LESSON 31
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AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

Coliseum of DEATH!

About Our Cover ...

The ancient Coliseum at Rome, Italy, has long been a famous tourist attraction. It symbolizes the glory and might of the Ancient Roman Empire, and its continuation -- the "Holy Roman Empire" which ruled the world during the Middle Ages.

In this coliseum, thousands of helpless Christians were BRUTALLY MURDERED by Roman gladiators and wild beasts! It was "sporting entertainment" for the merciless Roman Caesars and citizens. This lesson tells WHY it happened!

WHAT IS THE "MARK OF THE BEAST"?

Do YOU realize the "Mark of the Beast" is about to be ENFORCED as it was during the Middle Ages?

You must be sure this brand is NOT upon YOU -- lest you SUFFER the consequences! Yet millions of professing Christians today have unwittingly allowed themselves to be branded with this mark. WHY?

Understand exactly what the "Mark of the Beast" really is, and how you can AVOID being branded!

WHY Called "Mark of the Beast"

SUNDAY OBSERVANCE is the "MARK of the BEAST"! Sunday is the day on which the ancient PAGANS assembled at sunrise, faced the east, and worshipped the rising sun.

It was Constantine "The Great," a PAGAN sun-worshipper and EMPEROR of the Roman Empire, who made Sunday the OFFICIAL national weekly day of REST in the Roman Empire!

Here are the words of Constantine's famous edict of 321, A.D.: "On the venerable day of the SUN let all magistrates and people ... REST" (Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, article "Sunday Legislation").

Notice that Constantine was a CIVIL ruler -- NOT a priest! Thus, a CIVIL Roman Government -- NOT ECCLESIASTICAL -- imposed Sunday as the accepted day of rest and worship upon the subjects of the kingdom.

In your Bible, that ancient Roman system is PICTURED as a wild animal -- a WILD "BEAST." And it was the "Beast" which ENFORCED its MARK -- SUNDAY OBSERVANCE, the "MARK of the BEAST" -- upon that ancient world!

Millions ORDERED Killed!

Once Constantine established Sunday as the day of worship, a RELIGIOUS power -- a CHURCH other than the TRUE CHURCH Christ had established -- took over the FURTHERANCE of Sunday observance. This great church has continued to be the champion of this day on down through the centuries into our time. It is a tremendous ecclesiastical power which is prophesied to VIGOROUSLY CONTINUE

the furtherance of Sunday observance to the END of this age!

 PHOTO CAPTION: INSIDE COLISEUM -- Interior view of the Coliseum
 at Rome where Christians were killed.

This church also became responsible for causing the CIVIL government of the empire to put people to DEATH if they REFUSED to rest on Sunday. The church declared: "Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, resting rather on Sunday. But, if any be found to be judaizing (keeping God's Sabbath), let them be declared anathema from Christ" (A History of the Councils of the Church, p. 316). This decree was passed by the Council of Laodicea, in about 365 A.D.!

Laws became so strict NO MAN COULD EVEN HOLD A JOB, or engage in any kind of business, UNLESS he worked on Saturday and RESTED ON SUNDAY.

When the Church declared one "anathema" (accursed as a heretic), the state police of the now Church-dominated Roman Empire (symbolically represented in the Bible as a "beast" being ridden by a FALLEN "woman" -- Rev. 17) began torturing him. Unless he recanted his "heretical Sabbath keeping," he was TORTURED TO DEATH!

Yes, it was for obeying the fourth commandment -- for keeping the Sabbath and REFUSING to observe Satan's Sunday -- that MILLIONS (including numbers of TRUE CHRISTIANS) were tortured and killed during the Middle Ages.

So it was the Roman Church which finally gained political dominance over the "Beast" -- the Roman Empire -- that ORDERED the state to ENFORCE universal Sunday observance!

Greater Tribulation Just Ahead!

This tribulation of the Middle Ages was ONLY A SMALL FORERUNNER of "the GREAT tribulation" which is yet to come!

God shows this SAME satanically inspired RELIGIO-POLITICAL system is to be in existence at the close of this age -- IN OUR TIME NOW -- in just a FEW SHORT YEARS! And THROUGH IT, the Devil will cause the "Mark of the Beast" to be enforced again WITH MORE FIENDISH BRUTALITY THAN EVER DREAMED POSSIBLE!

Notice the grim warning in your Bible: "WOE to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the Devil is come down unto you, having GREAT wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev. 12:12). This is for the days now just immediately ahead of us!

Millions will suffer through this gruesome time OF SATAN'S WRATH: "I beheld, and lo, a GREAT multitude, WHICH NO MAN COULD NUMBER, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes These are they which came out of GREAT TRIBULATION, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:9, 14).

Yes, millions are to suffer through this terrible period of great tribulation that is JUST AHEAD! Multiplied thousands of them will be the ones who are now SPIRITUALLY ASLEEP as they hear the WARNING MESSAGE of God's true servants today!

They could have AVOIDED this terrifying, calamitous experience had they acted in time by beginning a personal

spiritual exodus to God BEFOREHAND -- by KEEPING NOW His key test Sabbath Day commandment and His other commandments.

They could have been spared all of this suffering had they turned to God and come under HIS DIVINE PROTECTION NOW -- heeding the WARNING of these lessons about observing Sunday.

But you see here -- you have God's very Word for it here that hundreds of thousands of a GREAT multitude, a multitude that "no man can number," will NEGLECT this warning! They will VOLUNTARILY take the dreadful "MARK OF THE BEAST"!

LESSON 31

The Four Prophetic "Beasts"

God warned there would consecutively arise FOUR great world-dominating, destructive kingdoms. He PICTURED these four kingdoms by a huge terrible-looking four-sectioned IMAGE.

To make it even clearer, God also pictured these same kingdoms by FOUR ferocious-looking DESTRUCTIVE BEASTS.

The first of these four kingdoms was Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian Empire. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was located in the same geographical location as the ancient "Babylonian" kingdom of pagan Nimrod, on the River Euphrates. His kingdom continued the same old Satan-inspired system of Nimrod!

The following three world-ruling kingdoms continued to be satanically inspired. Its rulers were the tools of the devil.

Now we are ready to study God's warning!

1. What did the "terrible image," with its four contiguous sections, look like? Dan. 2:28, 31-33, 36-40. What four "terrible" kingdoms were they to be?

 PHOTO CAPTION: Ruins of the ancient city of Babylon -- all that remains of the world-ruling Chaldean Empire, pictured by the first "beast" of Daniel 7.

COMMENT: Here are symbolically described the four consecutive world-ruling Gentile empires. The FIRST kingdom, or empire, was Nebuchadnezzar's then-existent kingdom. Since God expects us to look into this world's history books to learn additional related facts about fulfilled prophecies, we find that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom -- the CHALDEAN EMPIRE, called "Babylon" after the name of its capital city existed from 625-538 B.C.

We also know from history that the following SECOND kingdom was to be the PERSIAN EMPIRE (558-330 B.C.), often called Medo-Persian because it was composed of the Medes and Persians.

The THIRD world-ruling kingdom was to be GREECE (333-31 B.C.), under Alexander the Great who conquered the Persian Empire.

And the FOURTH kingdom was to be the ROMAN EMPIRE (31 B.C.-476 A.D.).

2. What was the DESCRIPTION of the four "beasts" God showed Daniel in vision? Dan. 7:3-7

COMMENT: Note that the FIRST beast was like a "lion" (Dan. 7:4), the SECOND was like a "bear" (v. 5), the THIRD like a "leopard" (v. 6), and the FOURTH beast was so dreadful and terrible looking (v. 7), that it could NOT BE COMPARED to any wild beast that inhabited the earth!

3. Did these four beasts clearly represent the four

bestial-minded world-ruling kingdoms that were to arise consecutively? Dan. 7:17, 23.

COMMENT: The word "king" is synonymous with kingdom, as clearly shown in verses 17 and 23. Therefore Daniel 7 reveals that these "beasts," these wild animals, symbolize CONSECUTIVE world governments -- world empires.

4. Why was the fourth beast -- the Roman Empire -- so "dreadful and terrible (looking) and STRONG EXCEEDINGLY; and ... DIVERSE (different) from all of the (three) beasts that were before it"? Dan. 7:7, 23; 2:40. Notice the words "devour the WHOLE earth" in Dan. 7:23.

COMMENT: The Roman Empire, which the fourth beast represents, began at Rome, then spread out and gradually absorbed -- "devoured and BRAKE IN PIECES" -- all the remnants of the other preceding kingdoms, occupying all their territory. It became extremely powerful because it EMBODIED the strongest MILITARY CHARACTERISTICS of all its predecessor kingdoms.

Truly, the fourth beast was a very strange and mysterious-looking animal, for "dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly" was the Roman Empire to BECOME!

WHY Roman Empire Became EXCEEDINGLY Destructive!

So important was the fourth beast -- the Roman Empire -- to become, that God deals in great detail with its awesome destructive power. For this beast is TO EXIST AGAIN in OUR time!

God shows the GREAT CULMINATIVE destructive power of this fourth world "empire" -- an "empire" at this very moment arising AGAIN in Europe by means of a great COMPOSITE "beast." It is comprised of the most powerful parts of each of the three successive previous beasts, or world empires. Thus, it was to possess the COMBINED STRENGTH of ALL the other three.

God also warns us, through this weird-looking composite beast, that TODAY'S EXCEEDINGLY GREAT ROMISH RELIGION is once again to DOMINATE a political revival of the Roman Empire. It will be none other than the CLIMACTIC AGE-END prophesied RESURRECTION of the destructive fourth beast to which the FIERY "RED DRAGON" (Satan -- Rev. 12:3,9) HAS GIVEN HIS POWER THROUGH THE CENTURIES!

At this very moment, Satan is preparing the smashing CLIMAX of his destructiveness through this great MODERN "Beast" -- for IT IS the "Beast" which willsoon ENFORCE its "Mark" upon the world! Understand fully!

1. What was the description of the COMPOSITE BEAST God showed John in vision approximately 650 years AFTER Daniel's vision? Rev. 13:1-2.

COMMENT: Here, again, is described a very strange and mysterious-looking animal! God showed John a symbolic beast which looked as though it had SWALLOWED three different animals -- a lion, leopard, and a bear -- which in turn manifested parts of themselves so as to make up the TOTAL body of the beast. Therefore, John's total beast (Rev. 13:2) is a FOURTH beast composed of the MOST POWERFUL PARTS -- is a composite -- of each of the other three beasts.

2. Then do both John's total beast and Daniel's fourth beast each symbolically represent the Roman Empire? Dan. 7:7. Each does!

COMMENT: Daniel's and John's visions both actually portray a SUCCESSION of world-ruling kingdoms which CLIMAX with the Roman Empire! To fully understand this, we must notice the POINT OF

VIEW of both visions.

 PHOTO CAPTION: Ancient ruins in Rome, Italy -- reminders of the past glory and great military power of the world-ruling Roman Empire.

Daniel's vision -- about 650 years BEFORE John's vision -- was mainly prophetic. Three of the four empires pictured by Daniel's four beasts had not yet existed. Only the Babylonian Empire, pictured by the first beast -- a lion -- was in existence at the time of Daniel's vision.

But by the time of John's vision of a composite beast -- about 96 A.D., 650 years AFTER Daniel's vision -- John was living in the days of the FOURTH kingdom, which was the Roman Empire. The preceding three great empires had already risen to power and fallen. By that time, the Roman Empire had overspread -- SWALLOWED up and ABSORBED -- all vestiges of the preceding three kingdoms. Therefore it had all the royal splendor and POWER of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom of Babylon -- so it had the HEAD, the STRONGEST part of the "lion." Also, it had all the massiveness and NUMERICALLY POWERFUL army of the Persian Empire -- symbolized by the LEGS, the MOST POWERFUL part of the "bear."

And the Roman Empire was the greatest war-making machine the world had ever seen, for it possessed the SWIFTNESS, the CUNNING, and the CRUELTY of Alexander's army, symbolized by the BODY of the "leopard."

Now we can see WHY God showed John a beast which was composed of the first three animals Daniel saw; for John's total beast -- the Roman Empire -- EMBODIED all the DOMINANT CHARACTERISTICS of the other three kingdoms.

So John's total beast plainly pictured the FULFILLMENT of Daniel's prophetic beasts! It is very clear that BOTH John's total beast and Daniel's fourth beast represent the ROMAN EMPIRE which became EXCEEDINGLY DESTRUCTIVE! (If you haven't done so already, then SEND for Mr. Armstrong's FREE booklet, "Who Is the Beast?", for additional information about the identity of the prophetic "beasts.")

3. Was the Devil the lethal MOTIVATING FORCE directing and empowering this Beast -- the Roman Empire? Rev. 13:2 and 12:9.

COMMENT: Satan the Devil was the SPIRITUAL power behind the "Beast" -- the Roman Empire -- the political instrument through which he has worked in deceiving the world. And it is he who is now inspiring and guiding the formation of the greatest and most powerful religio-political government this world has ever known -- a space-age "Holy Roman Empire" -- a satanically inspired system which has its root beginnings in the ancient "Babylon" of Nimrod! AND HAS FOR ITS PURPOSE THE ETERNAL DESTRUCTION OF MAN!

History shows that the religion-dominated "Holy Roman Empire" of the Middle Ages, exterminated all known Sabbath-keeping Christians! And it is for this very same purpose that Satan is now reviving this powerful Romish system!

Roman BEAST Institutes Sunday Law

Let's learn how Satan, through this diabolical political instrumentality -- the Roman Empire -- BEGAN to force under threat of DEATH, Sunday observance upon millions in the Roman world. For it is a TYPE of what is JUST AHEAD!

The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. IV, pp. 2259-60, art. "Sunday," informs us: "Sunday (dies solis, of the Roman Calendar, 'day of the sun,' because dedicated to the sun), the first day of the week, was adopted by the early (apostatizing) Christians as a day of worship ... It was called the 'Lord's Day' (Satan is the 'Lord' -- the god of this world -- II Cor. 4:4) ... No regulations for its observance are laid down in the New Testament, nor indeed, is its observance even enjoined (by the TRUE God -- it is a day of observance furthered by the Devil and his servants!)"

In 321 A.D., Sunday observance was COMMANDED by Roman state DECREE! History reveals that it was the ROMAN Emperor Constantine "The Great," who made the decree to FORCE the world to observe Sunday.

Constantine's edict reads as follows: "On the venerable day of the SUN (SUNDAY) let the magistrates and people residing in cities REST, and let all workshops be closed" (Codex Justinianus, lib. 3, tit. 12:3; translated in "History of the Christian Church", by Schaff, Vol. III, p. 380).

What was Constantine's specific reason for making this decree? It was his MODE OF HARMONIZING THE DISCORDANT RELIGIONS of the EMPIRE UNDER ONE COMMON INSTITUTION ("Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church", by Dean Arthur P. Stanley, Scribner's printing of 1884, p. 184). (Isn't THERE A MOVEMENT BY A GREAT ROMAN CHURCH today TO "HARMONIZE" DISCORDANT RELIGIONS?)

So Sunday observance became the "Mark of the Beast," for it was the STATE -- the "Beast," or Roman EMPIRE -- which declared SUN-day to be observed as an imperial holiday!

History tells us that DEATH resulted for those who steadfastly opposed the Sunday observance dictates of the Roman government! (Send for the FREE booklet, "The Mark of the Beast", to learn more details about the Beast's enforcement of its Sunday "Mark.")

Roman STATE Religion Enforced!

Very soon after 321 A.D., Emperor Constantine chose a Christian-professing church with headquarters at Rome -- one which observed his pagan day of the Sun -- to further strengthen his rule and promote sun worship.

In 325 A.D., Constantine issued another decree and enforced it with armed MILITARY MIGHT! Notice what he warned all -- including TRUE Sabbath-keeping Christians who REFUSED TO observe SUNDAY -- who did not bow to his and the Church's dictates:

"To speak of your CRIMINALITY as it deserves demands more time and leisure than I can give ... Why not at once STRIKE, as it were, at the root of so great a mischief by a PUBLIC MANIFESTATION OF DISPLEASURE? Forasmuch, then, as it is no longer possible to bear with your pernicious errors (refusal to join and submit to Constantine's state church) we give warning by this present statute that none of you henceforth presume to assemble yourselves together. We have directed, accordingly, that you be deprived of all the houses in which you are accustomed to hold your assemblies: and ... (we) forbid the holding of your superstitious and senseless meetings not in public merely, but in any private house or place whatsoever ... take the far better course of entering the Catholic Church ... And in order that this remedy may be applied with effectual power, we have commanded, as before said, that you be POSITIVELY deprived of every gathering point for your superstitious meetings, I mean all the houses of

prayer ... and that these be made over without delay to the Catholic Church; that any other places be confiscated to the public service, and no facility whatever be left for any future gathering in order that from this day forward none of your unlawful (in the sight of the Roman government) assemblies may presume to appear in any public or private place" (from Eusebius' "Life of Constantine", Book III).

This same Eusebius, a CATHOLIC historian who lived during the time of Emperor Constantine, sums up Constantine's work by declaring: "And the credit of having achieved this mighty work (of driving out all non-Catholics) our heaven-protected Emperor alone, of all who had gone before him, was able to attribute to himself" (Book III, chap. 66).

For some 40 years the FALSE Christians professed to observe both God's Sabbath AND Constantine's Sun Day. But everywhere the Catholic "Church Fathers" attempted to degrade the Sabbath as "Jewish," though forced tacitly to admit that true Sabbath keepers did NOT observe the Jewish rituals. Then soon it was made absolutely ILLEGAL to keep God's Sabbath. This will shortly be made very plain.

Roman CHURCH RULED the Beast

Satan has his destructive CIVIL government on earth doing his will. He gives it "his power, and his seat, and great authority" (Rev. 13:2).

But the Devil also has an ECCLESIASTICAL organization -- a great CHURCH -- which is his RELIGIOUS instrumentality in deceiving the world.

God uses WILD beasts to picture DESTRUCTION. So God uses ANOTHER "beast" to picture this great destructive false church. For it, too, is a ruling, devouring government!

Here is God's astounding revelation, from His Word, which positively identifies the "second beast" of Revelation 13 as the "PAPACY" of the Roman Church which ruled the Roman Empire during the Middle Ages.

1. Did God, in vision, show John another beast ? Rev. 13:11.

COMMENT: Do NOT confuse this beast with the first beast of Revelation 13 which you have proven to be the civil Roman Empire.

2. Does this second beast appear "like a LAMB"? Rev. 13:11. What does the word "lamb" symbolize in the Bible? John 1:29 and Rev. 17:14. BUT is this beast's TRUE CHARACTER of the DEVIL himself? Rev. 13:11 and 12:9.

COMMENT: This two-horned "beast" appears as a lamb, FALSELY impersonating Christ and His true teachings of salvation. It actually speaks the lies of the Devil! (This beast is NOT the United States as some claim.)

3. Was this second beast -- that is, this Godly-appearing, but actually Devil-inspired false church -- to utilize all of the power of the first beast -- that is, use all the CIVIL government's might? Rev. 13:12. How and when did it begin to exercise the first beast's power? Verse 3.

COMMENT: It was when the FIRST beast's deadly "wound" -- the Western Roman Empire's fall (476 A.D.) when the barbarians overran it, thus ending its government -- was "healed" in 554 A.D. by Justinian's RESTORATION of the Roman government, that this RELIGIOUS government completely took over all the power of the Roman civil government and EXERCISED it to rule the Roman EMPIRE!

Here is how it was accomplished. Prior to 554 A.D.,

JUSTINIAN, Emperor of the eastern division of the Roman Empire, had written a letter to the pope, acknowledging his supremacy.

ECCLESIASTICAL HEAD.

And when he ascended the throne in 554, he was accepted by state were now united. Here for the FIRST time in history, the CHURCH was ruling the STATE, instead of the state controlling the state, A pattern being striven for again in our time!

We read in history that the popes were accepted as the Catholic teaching was that the Second Coming of Christ had occurred -- Christ had resumed to earth, as King of kings and (supposedly) begun.

For the entire duration of the "healed" church-dominated CHRIST'S PLACE, ruling all nations with a "rod of iron" as Christ is to do at His real coming! Consequently the Roman emperors gave

In the Encyclopedia Britannica, article "Millennium," you will find the history of how the "Holy Roman Empire" came to be

Papacy Patterned After Roman Civil Government

Let's notice exactly how the Papacy of the Roman Church was

1. Did the Roman church make an "image" of the first beast? Rev. 13:14. What is this "image" of the first beast?

representation, model, semblance, counterpart." It is a "likeness."

an IMAGE -- a MODEL, a copy of the civil Roman government"! They patterned their ECCLESIASTICAL government after the MOST

CIVIL government so they could administer their "RELIGIOUS" government more effectively.

(440-461 A.D.)," says the Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, Vol. VII, page 629. To him the

thing on earth. It became an obsession with him.

Pope Leo advocated the complete organization of the church

POPE AS ITS RELIGIOUS head. He said that resistance to his will was worthy of "hell," and advocated the death penalty for heresy.

government, thus forming the "Papacy."

Says Myer's "Ancient History": "During the reign of Leo I, state (government) which, in its constitution and its administrative system, was shaping itself upon the imperial empire, possessed a hierarchy of officers" (p. 582). The Britannica calls it an "Ecclesiastical World Empire"!

Jurisdiction." It is "the GOVERNING BODY of the Catholic Church

consisting of the Pope and the other bishops throughout the world." They possess, according to Catholic sources, "the power to make laws, to sit in judgment, and to fix SPIRITUAL penalties when necessary."

 PHOTO CAPTION: The "Papacy," headed by the Pope, is the governing body of the Roman Catholic Church. The Pope is shown surrounded by Catholic Bishops who attended Ecumenical Council meetings.

Notice its claimed attributes belong ONLY to God. To attribute them to any organization of men is to set that organization in the place of God! -- to commit idolatry -- to worship the "image" of the beast!

So the Papacy, according to these historians, is a model, a counterpart -- an image of the bestial pagan Roman Government. This ecclesiastical government compelled people, at the threat of death, to worship a man-ruled church organized by men into a worldly government.

Although palmed off as the government of God, IT IS IN REALITY ONLY AN "IMAGE" OF A HUMAN government!

Church Became a DUAL Government

1. Do the two "horns" of the second beast of Rev. 13:11 symbolize TWO TYPES of government? Dan. 7:24.

COMMENT: A "horn" represents a king or GOVERNMENT. There were TWO horns -- TWO governments.

 PHOTO CAPTION: Air view of Rome, Italy. In center is "Vatican City" and St. Peter's Basilica. The Vatican is a separate, independent, sovereign state, as well as a church government.

The Catholic Church was organized as a DUAL, two-fold government. It embodied church government, and it also was a state, or civil government, always occupying a certain amount of territory in Italy over which it, alone, ruled as an independent sovereign state -- in addition to actually ruling over the vast CIVIL kingdom called "The Roman Empire."

Even today the Catholic Church is a separate, independent, sovereign state. Most nations send ambassadors to it, just as they do to the United States, to Italy, England, or Russia.

So this "second beast" was -- and IS TODAY -- a CHURCH-STATE GOVERNMENT! And it plans to soon expand its rule and Sunday observance around the EARTH!

2. Where else in Bible prophecies do we find described the same identical facts which represent this Catholic church-state government? Rev. 17:1-7, 15, 18. What does the symbol of a "woman" mean? II Cor. 11:2.

COMMENT: In II Cor. 11:2 Paul is comparing God's Church to a VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

But in Rev. 17:1-7 God pictures a FALLEN woman -- an apostate church -- as a great church called "the great whore" and RULING over many nations!

It is well known by those who understand Bible prophecy that the WOMAN in the 17th chapter of Revelation pictures the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ruling over Satan's civil kingdom -- the

blasphemously so-called "Holy" Roman Empire.

"engaged" to the true Christ, and keeping herself true to Him as coming world ruler -- formed an illicit union with the

church sought to DOMINATE this world's governments by taking an active part in their affairs! Thus she committed SPIRITUAL

In verse 18 she is also called "that great city (Rome) ... which reigneth over the kings of the earth." And in verse 2, God great false church! A great worldwide religio-political SYSTEM for promoting SUNDAY OBSERVANCE!

By 365 A.D. there still were many Sabbath-keeping Christians who kept all of God's commandments. And by this time, the

governmental affairs of the Roman Empire, especially after Emperor Constantine's professed conversion to the "Christianity"

See now how Satan, who is wroth with God's people, began stepping up his work of putting the pressure on to destroy God's organizations!

1. Did God prophesy that the satanically inspired Roman

Dan. 7:20, 25. What was one major "time" and "law" that was "changed" by this church, and when was it done?

ECCLESIASTICAL issue. So the Catholic Council of Laodicea was called to settle, among other matters, the Sabbath question! The

thus: "Christians must NOT judaize by resting on the SABBATH (GOD'S true rest day), but must WORK on that day ... and, if they

any be found to be judaizers (God's true Sabbath keepers), let them be anathema (ecclesiastically accursed) from Christ" (Nicene

It was the CHURCH -- the "LITTLE HORN" -- which sanctioned the pagan Roman SUNDAY as the day of rest and worship. Yes, and

Law -- CLAIMING it had authority from God to "officially" transfer the true Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday!

law.

2. Did the Roman church CAUSE people of all classes to

Roman Empire's Sunday -- under threat of DEATH for disobedience? Rev. 13:15, 16.

utilized in 325 A.D. by Emperor Constantine to confiscate the property and destroy the lives of any who obeyed God's

church-influenced STATE really began to FALL HARD upon those who continued to be faithful in resting on the Sabbath as GOD

A little later, around 400 A.D., Augustine declared: "The holy doctors of the church have decreed (NOT a decree of the

Bible, but of MEN) that all glory of the Jewish (GOD'S) Sabbath is TRANSFERRED to it (SUNDAY!!). Let us therefore keep the Lord's Day (THEIR "lord's" day) AS THE ancients (the true worshippers of God) were commanded (by GOD) to do the Sabbath" ("Sabbath Laws". D. 28A)

Yes, MEN presumptuously transferred God's commanded set time to worship Him from the TRUE SABBATH to ANOTHER DAY -- SUNDAY!

Pope Gregory of Rome, in the West, anathematized "Those who taught that it was not lawful to do work on the day of the Sabbath" ("History of the Popes", Vol. II, p. 378). Sabbath keeping was completely obliterated from Rome by the sixth century (Andrews, "History of the Sabbath", p. 375). And the Eastern churches extirpated Sabbath observance in another four hundred years, about 1000 A.D.

COMMENT: The Roman Catholic Church CAUSED to be KILLED as many as would not worship the "IMAGE" -- would not WORSHIP and OBEY the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ITSELF, whose GOVERNMENT IS PATTERNED after, formed in the likeness of, the Roman CIVIL government.

Note carefully that this false church did NOT kill them itself, FOR SUCH DESTRUCTION WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO LIMITED. It CAUSED the mighty power of the CIVIL GOVERNMENT to kill them! History shows that the military of the civil Roman government martyred nearly 50,000,000 -- FIFTY MILLION who were declared "anathema from Christ" -- called "heretics" by the church!

Those millions of martyrs were killed because they would not worship THE Roman Catholic CHURCH: CONFORM TO ITS IDOLATRY, its pagan beliefs and its customs, or worship the so-called "Holy" Roman Empire. And BECAUSE THEY REFUSED TO RECEIVE THE COMMANDED "MARK OF THE BEAST"! -- refused to observe SUNDAY!!

So Satan, through his religious and political instrumentalities, successfully STAMPED OUT all known Sabbath keeping and ENFORCED the "MARK OF THE BEAST" -- enforced SUNDAY observance in the empire. No wonder these were called the "DARK AGES," for God's Truth was all but completely stamped out!

Beast Was To Continue

The pagan Roman government of the Middle Ages indeed successfully ENFORCED the "Mark of the Beast" -- Sunday observance -- on all the civilized world! People were thus BRANDED through the efforts of Satan's ecclesiastical and civil governments. The world had actually SURRENDERED to Satan, for "HIS (Satan, in this case) ye are to whom ye OBEY" (Rom. 6:16).

That's exactly why the former satanic tribulation occurred -- to FORCE mankind to obey Satan so he would OWN and DO with humanity as HE PLEASES -- to mankind's ETERNAL DESTRUCTION!

Understand now how this SAME satanic Roman system has actively continued on down into our times, and for what PURPOSE! Understand how it is laying its plans to FORCE man by a far greater tribulation -- a great tribulation now almost upon us -- to come under Satan's rule and acknowledge his Sunday in such vast numbers and with such great fervor, that there would be NONE ready to receive eternal salvation!!

1. Is the Roman Empire, which is also symbolized by the legs and feet of Nebuchadnezzar's great IMAGE, prophesied to be in EXISTENCE at the end of this age -- UNTIL the Second Coming of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God? Dan. 2:33-35. Who is the STONE? -- Does the great "stone" clearly picture that it is CHRIST who will smash the empire? Acts 4:10-11.

13:3. Was it the HEAD that specifically represented the ROMAN EMPIRE that was "wounded to death"?

saw stood for the Babylonian Empire, Medo-Persian and the Grecian Empire with its four divisions. The only "head" existing at the

the ROMAN EMPIRE is the "ONE of his (seven) heads" that was wounded to death in the vision!

Roman Empire by the barbarians who overran it in its last decaying stages, thus ending its government in 476 A.D.

deadly wound in 476 A.D., was this the end of Satan's Beast, Satan's political system, or was its wound "healed"? Rev. 13:3.

died -- it says only ONE of his HEADS was wounded to death. The ONE HEAD died. But the BEAST ITSELF CONTINUED, for his -- the

4. Do the ten horns of the fourth beast of Daniel 7:7 and the ten horns of the beast of Revelation 13:1-2 represent the

TERRITORY of the Roman Empire AFTER ITS fall? Dan. 7:23-24. Was the LAST horn or government to be in existence AT THE TIME of

COMMENT: These ten horns are TEN SUCCEEDING GOVERNMENTS -- kingdoms -- which were to rule the Roman Empire after its fall in

destroy the last stage of the Roman Empire, and establish His kingdom.

kingdoms because in actual history there have never been ten contemporaneous governments that have ruled the Roman Empire,

NINE SUCCESSIVE kingdoms ruling that territory from 476 A.D. to the present. ONE MORE IS YET to arise before Christ comes.

See comment.

COMMENT: By 476 A.D., the Roman Empire was overrun by the sacked Rome in 455 A.D. and ruled it for a brief space of time. Then Odoacer set up his government at Rome which was called the A.D.), but it did not heal the deadly wound because it was only a barbarian -- not a Roman -- government.

A.D. (the THIRD hoary), another outside foreign people who ruled in the territory. But they were shortly driven out of Italy and

Though essentially independent and NON-CATHOLIC, these three nations did profess to carry on the Roman Empire by continuing

kingdoms ("horns"), or governments sweeping into the Roman territory, filled the period known in history as the "transition

its "healing."

6. Did Daniel's prophetic vision include a separate "little description of this "little horn" and what did it do to the first three horns? Same verse, and verses 20, 24.

COMMENT: The Roman Catholic Papacy, which this "little horn" represents, was responsible for uprooting the first three "horns."

7. When and by whom was the Beast's wound "healed"? Remember, it would have to be by a ROMAN government. See comment.

COMMENT: It was the FOURTH horn, or government of Daniel 7, which, succeeding the fall of the Roman Empire, really "healed" the deadly wound and restored, or RESURRECTED, the Roman Empire. In 554 A.D., Justinian, from Constantinople and Emperor of the Eastern Division of the Empire, set up his government at Rome, bringing about what is known in history as the "Imperial Restoration" of the Roman Empire in the West, thus "healing" the wound.

Beast Continues Into OUR TIME!

1. How long was the now CHURCH-RULED Beast to CONTINUE after its wound was healed? Rev. 13:5. Does God clearly show exactly how long this symbolic time period is? Ezek. 4:4-6 and Num. 14:34.

COMMENT: This is the well-known day-for-A-YEAR principle which the Bible gives us in understanding many prophetic lengths of time. So "forty and two months" equals 1260 days (42 times 30) -- the equivalent of 1260 years in Bible prophecy -- the length of time the Catholic Church-dominated "healed" Beast was to continue.

2. What governments were the FOLLOWING FOUR "horns" that reigned in the territorial Roman Empire AFTER the "Imperial Restoration" of the Roman government? See Comment.

COMMENT: Following the "healing" in 554 A.D. by Justinian's government, came the FIFTH "horn," the Frankish Kingdom (French); then the "Holy Roman Empire" (German) was the SIXTH horn; the SEVENTH horn was the Hapsburg dynasty (Austrian); and Napoleon's kingdom (French) was the EIGHTH horn.

But, when Napoleon was crushed in 1814, the healed beast's existence was SUSPENDED. And from 554 A.D. to 1814 A.D. -- the duration of the church-ruled "healed beast" -- was exactly 1260 years! "So closed," says West's "Modern History", page 377, "a government that dated from Augustus Caesar" (from 31 B.C.).

3. What was to be the condition of the Beast after the 1260 years were fulfilled? Was its existence to be only TEMPORARILY suspended until its ninth and tenth "horns," or governments, would reign? Rev. 17:8. Remember that this great Beast, which was ruled by the Roman Catholic Church, is to be in existence at the return of Christ -- the "Stone" -- who will destroy it!

COMMENT: Eight of the "horns" having arisen and fallen, the Beast then TEMPORARILY went into the non-existent condition SYMBOLIZED in Rev. 17:8 as the "bottomless pit."

But in 1870, Garibaldi had UNITED the many little divisions of the peninsula of Italy into ONE NATION, and the kingdom thus established began the NINTH "horn," which culminated in the Fascist-Nazi Axis rule of Mussolini and Hitler.

But take heed and don't be caught in Satan's snare! This religio-political bestial system of Satan the Devil is REVIVING RIGHT NOW, arising ONCE MORE out of the symbolic "bottomless pit" to form the TENTH and FINAL "horn"!! And through it the Devil will cause the "MARK OF THE BEAST" to be RUTHLESSLY ENFORCED ONCE AGAIN!

"Mark" BRANDS Daughter Churches!

17:3-5. Does this church have "harlot" daughters? Verse 5. How did her DAUGHTER CHURCHES come out of her -- in PROTEST?

nations and commits SPIRITUAL FORNICATION by political relationships with civil governments, is also a great "MOTHER"

PROTEST TO SOME of her doctrines.

But these protesting daughters have RETAINED MANY DOCTRINES

GOD CALLS THESE DAUGHTER CHURCHES "HARLOTS"!

Yes, the early PROTEST-ANT Churches came "out of" the

but they did NOT "protest" greatly -- for they still CONTINUE to observe the SAME ROMAN CATHOLIC SUNDAY!! THE KEY DAY OF

Protestant ADMISSIONS!

The modern Protestant "daughter" Churches of the Catholic they FOLLOW THEIR MOTHER. They RECOGNIZE that SUNDAY observance is NOT COMMANDED by God in the Bible!

"They (the Catholics) allege the Sabbath changed into Sunday, the Lord's day, contrary to the decalogue, as it appears;

the Sabbath day. Great, say they, is the power and authority of the (Catholic) church since it dispensed with one of the ten

What a fulfillment of Daniel 7:25!

The early Protestant reformers continued to accept that

Luther's associate, wrote: "Concerning Sunday, one feels uneasy, because MEN have established it."

furiously. "Indeed," he wrote in a pamphlet entitled "Against the Celestial Prophets", "if Carlstadt were to write further about

i.e., SATURDAY, MUST BE KEPT HOLY."

1. see the file BCC3114.TIF in the Images\BCC directory
2. see the file BCC3115.TIF in the Images\BCC directory

The Church of England (in one of its catechisms) makes the following FRANK STATEMENT regarding Sunday: "And where are we

all? We ARE COMMANDED TO keep the seventh; BUT we are NOWHERE commanded to keep the first day ... The reason why we keep the

reason we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the (Catholic) Church, has enjoined it" ("Plain Sermons

36).

THAT IS QUITE AN ADMISSION!

"The Baptist Manual," was made before a New York ministers' conference on Nov. 13, 1893. "Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian (Catholic) fathers and the other sources. But what a pity that it (Sunday) comes branded with the mark of PAGANISM and christened with the name of the SUN GOD, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and BEQUEATHED as a sacred legacy TO PROTESTANTISM!"

WHAT A REVELATION!

Yes, the Catholic Church bequeathed this pagan first day of the week, all wrapped up in a Sunday wrapper, to the Protestant Churches -- her daughters. They have followed Mother Rome TO THIS VERY DAY!

From the beginning, the Protestants were NOT interested in obedience to God, or in the Gospel of the Kingdom. Exactly as the early Catholics, they were seeking to convert the kingdoms of this world to their own religions. The truth that was open to them passed through their fingers! This is why Protestants observe Sunday today! They have VOLUNTARILY BRANDED themselves with the "MARK of the BEAST" -- the Roman Empire's national holiday -- the day which the Roman Catholic Church VOLUNTARILY ACCEPTED and later CAUSED to be ENFORCED by the might of steel!

God's Warning

1. What is God's WARNING to YOU regarding this entire satanically inspired and empowered Babylonish religio-political system of the Devil? Rev 18:4.

2. What will be the just punishment of all those who PERSISTENTLY follow the Devil's false teachings? Rev. 20:15 and II Pet. 3:10.

COMMENT: Today, Catholics and Protestants alike are voluntarily taking the "Mark of the Beast" -- even to this hour. Therefore, they unknowingly, but PERILOUSLY, OBEY SATAN THE DEVIL -- not the true God and Creator of all things! "His SERVANTS ye are to whom ye OBEY ..."! (Rom. 6:16.)

And just as Sabbath keeping is the "SIGN" which distinguishes the true worshippers of God and pictures their destiny of eternal life with glorified spirit bodies in the Kingdom of God; SUNDAY OBSERVANCE is the "MARK" or "brand" which IDENTIFIES the worshippers and followers of Satan the Devil! They are observing a day in commemoration of the eternal destiny Satan has PLANNED for them -- ETERNAL DEATH! For God will cast the incorrigible wicked -- those who REFUSE to obey Him -- into the "LAKE OF FIRE" (Rev. 20:15) -- a time when the surface of this earth shall BURN as the surface of the sun, CONSUMING all the DISOBEDIENT upon it!

This is the IRONIC DESTINY of those who observe Satan's Sunday -- UNLESS they REPENT! Do YOU observe Sunday -- the "Mark of the Beast"?

(To be continued in Lesson 32)