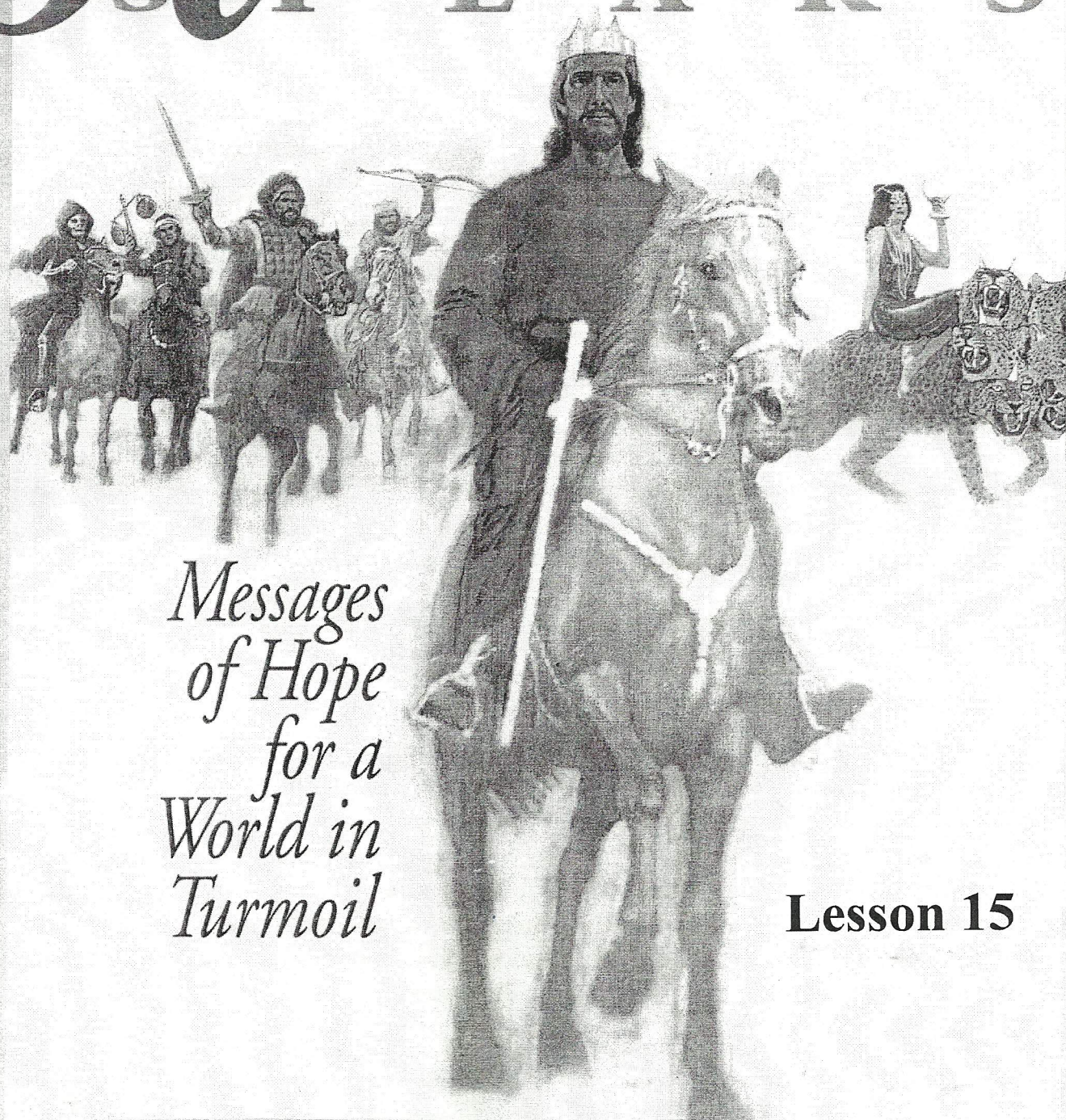


# Revelation

S P E A K S



*Messages  
of Hope  
for a  
World in  
Turmoil*

**Lesson 15**



# **The Mark of the Beast and Mystery Number**

## **666**

**[This chapter is based on Revelation, Chapter 13]**

**T**he most solemn warning ever given to mankind is found in Revelation, chapter 13. A crucial test is coming. The conflict will focus on true and false worship. The central issue is the law of God.

The Book of Revelation reveals the plans of God and unmask the delusions of the enemy. Every person has a choice. Our eternal destiny hinges upon the choice we make. Let's study about the issues soon to break upon the world.

*READ: Revelation 13:1-9.*

**1. How did God attempt to warn the apostolic church of the coming apostasy? Acts 20:29, 30.**

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**2. What does the Bible say will be received by those who reject the teaching of Scripture in the last days? Revelation 14:9-11.**

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**3. As the crisis approaches, what penalties will eventually be issued upon those who do not receive the Mark of the Beast? Revelation 13:15, 16, 17.**

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**NOTE:** A great crisis is approaching in which everyone will be coerced, through an economic boycott or under threat of death, to receive the Mark of the Beast. Those who yield to these pressures, both religious and economic, will do so with the clear understanding that they are violating the commandments of God.

## Revelation Speaks - 2

**4. What will eventually happen to those who receive the Mark of the Beast? Revelation 15:1; 16:1,2**

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**5. What is God's sign called that stands in opposition to Satan's mark? Revelation 7:1-3.**

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NOTE: In the last chapter, we studied about God's seal. Let's briefly review it. The seal relates to God's law (Isaiah 8:16, 20). As an ancient king's seal contained his title and dominion, giving authority and making official his letters, so God's seal contains His name, title, and area of authority.

We find God's seal in the fourth commandment (Exodus 20:8-11). "For in six days the LORD (His name), MADE (Maker or Creator) HEAVEN AND EARTH (His dominion)." Thus, the Sabbath is a special sign, or seal, between God and His people (Ezekiel 20:12, 20).

In the last days of earth's history, the great question to be answered is, Will I accept a day God has never sanctified in place of God's true Sabbath? Those who receive the Mark of the Beast stand in direct contrast to those who are keeping God's commandments (Revelation 14:9, 12). Those who keep the commandments of God eat of the tree of life (Revelation 14:10, 11; 22:14). Those who receive the Mark of the Beast receive the seven last plagues and are eventually eternally lost.

These signs represent two systems of religion—one initiated by God; one initiated by man. One the way of truth! One the way of error! To every soul will come the crucial test: shall I obey God, or shall I obey man?

*Who is the beast?*

**6. What three things did the dragon, or the devil, working through pagan Rome, bestow upon papal Rome, its eventual successor? Revelation 13:1, 2.**

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

### Revelation Speaks – 3

NOTE: You will remember that it was the dragon, or the devil, working through pagan Rome, who tried to destroy Christ. And it was that same power that gave the beast its seat, or capital city, power and authority. Nations don't do that very often! To whom did pagan Rome give its seat of government? How did it take place? History is clear about what happened. Professor Labanca of the University of Rome declares:

"To the succession of the Caesars came the succession of the Pontiffs in Rome. When Constantine left Rome he gave his seat to the Pontiff."

"The popes filled the place of the vacant emperors at Rome, inheriting their power, prestige, and titles from paganism. . . . Constantine left all to the Bishop of Rome. . . . The papacy is but the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon its grave. Pagan Rome gave its authority to papal Rome." -*Stanley's History*, p. 40.

The papal system of religion is the one mentioned in Revelation 13. We must remember here that we are talking about a system, not about individual members of that system.

#### 7. How else is the beast power identified? Revelation 13:3, 5.

a. All the world \_\_\_\_\_

b. This power speaks "great" \_\_\_\_\_

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#### 8. According to the Bible, what is blasphemy? John 10:33; Luke 5:21.

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NOTE: Here we find that if anyone claims to be God, he has committed an act of blasphemy. It also tells us that if an earthly religious leader claims the ability to forgive our sins, he has committed blasphemy. He usurps the authority that belongs to God alone!

The papacy makes these claims:

Pope Leo XIII declared, "We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty."

Again, "Were the redeemer to descend into a church and sit in the confessional to administer the sacrament of penance, and a priest to sit in a confessional, Jesus would say over the penitent, 'Ego to absolvo,' the priest would likewise say over the penitent 'Ego to absolve,' and the penitents of each would be equally absolved." -*Antonia Liguori, Dignities and Duties of the Priest*, p. 39.

#### 9. What will this power do to God's people? Revelation 13:7

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## Revelation Speaks - 4

NOTE: Throughout the centuries, millions of martyrs have paid with their blood the price for faithfulness to God. Church history is filled with examples of such persecution. Why? From this Catholic textbook, we quote this amazing statement: "The church may by divine right confiscate the property of heretics, imprison their persons and condemn them to the flames. . . . In our age the right to inflict the severest penalties, even death, belongs to the church. There is no graver offense than heresy, therefore, it must be rooted out." *Public Ecclesiastical Law*, Vol. 2, p. 142.

### **10. How long was this persecuting power to continue? Revelation 13:5.**

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NOTE: As we discovered before, the 1,260 days are actually 1,260 years (Ezekiel 4:6). In A.D. 538, Justinian, the pagan Roman emperor, officially granted the Roman bishop the role of defender of the emperor's empire, definer of heretics, and defender of the faith. In this church-and-state marriage, Pope Vigilius II was exalted to the highest position of any religious leader in the Empire. The papacy exercised great influence from A.D. 538 to A.D. 1798. In A.D. 1798, the pope was a threat to Napoleon's military ambitions. Napoleon commissioned his leading general, Berthier, to enter Rome and capture the pope. Exactly as foretold, the pope was taken captive and eventually died in captivity.

### **11. What does God say the number of the beast's name is? Revelation 13:17, 18.**

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NOTE: One of the official titles of the papacy is *Vicarius Filii Dei*. These three words, "Vicarius Filii Dei," are Latin for "Vicar of the Son of God," or, Webster says, "a person who acts in the place of another." Since this is a Roman power, it is only logical that the method of computation would be in Roman numerals. Taken numerically, the papal title is seen to be 666.

## Revelation Speaks - 5

### *Pope's Title: Vicarius Filii Dei*

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

NOTE: Putting all the evidence together, it becomes clear that the papal power of the Roman Catholic system is the beast power of Revelation 13. What is the mark of papal authority? What does the Roman Catholic Church itself say about the sign or mark of their authority? On the 18th of January, 1563, "The Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above the Scriptures because the church had changed the Sabbath into Sunday-not by a command of Christ, but by its own authority." -*Canon and Tradition*, p. 263.

The basis of papal authority, he declared, was founded upon the right to change the Sabbath from Saturday, the seventh day, to Sunday, the first day. "The church," says the *Catholic Record*, "is above the Bible and this transference of Sabbath to Sunday is proof of that fact." September 1, 1923.

In a letter written in November, 1895, Mr. H. E Thomas, chancellor to Cardinal Gibbons, replying to an inquiry as to whether the Catholic Church claims to have changed the Sabbath, said: "Of course, the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act, . . . and the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical authority."

What does the cardinal say of the change from Saturday to Sunday? It is a mark of the power and authority of the Roman Church, and, as such, it is the mark of the beast!

You may wonder, do all who now keep Sunday have the mark of the beast? No! Sunday is the sign of papal authority now, and as such is the mark now. But no one will receive the mark until issues are made crystal clear in the future, when the Sabbath question is brought to the attention of the entire world. Then everyone will be forced to decide on which side they will stand.

**12 What is the basic issue involved in the crisis at the close of this earth's history? Romans 6:16.**

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*My Response*

\_\_\_ By the grace of God I choose to be loyal to Jesus and keep his commandments.

\_\_\_ I have decided to keep the true Bible Sabbath.

\_\_\_ I desire baptism in the near future.