

Nearly two thousand years ago, the Bible warned that just before the end of the world, an event would take place to bring about the final conflict on earth. The event is referred to as the mark of the beast. We are now living in the days just before its fulfillment. While some think it is very mysterious, the mark of the beast is actually very simple to understand. The prophecy says, “the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed” (Rev. 13:15). Many get so caught up on side issues that they overlook the main issue involved. The prophecy says that the “beast” will “cause” people to “worship.” If you cause something, that means you force it. The mark of the beast is forced worship. Since the way to enforce something is by making a law, the mark of the beast must be a law that forces some form of worship. Now let’s look at it in more detail.

First – A Beast is a Nation

Notice that the prophecy is about a beast. That means, the mark of the beast must be something that comes from, or is related to, the beast. The reason so many cannot understand the mark of the beast is because they do not first identify the beast. To do this, we simply have to look to the Old Testament. Like the antichrist “beast rising up out of the sea” (Rev. 13:1), the book of Daniel shares a similar vision where “four great beasts came up from the sea” (Dan. 7:3). However, Daniel is later told what these beasts represent. He is told that the “fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth” (Dan. 7:17, 23). Daniel is told that these beasts in vision represent kingdoms. Since the beasts rising up from the sea in Daniel represent kingdoms or nations, this beast that institutes the mark must also represent a kingdom or nation on the earth, which will eventually institute the mark.

Second – The Mark is a Law

The next major clue we have is that this beast will speak and cause the mark. Look at the words closely. The prophecy says the first beast “spoke” like a dragon (Rev. 13:11). We are told that he will both “speak and cause” everyone to worship the image, and he “causes all” to receive a mark (Rev. 13:15, 16). The mark of the beast is set up when the beast speaks and causes it to happen. Since the beast is a country or nation, we must ask ourselves, ‘How does a nation speak and communicate what it wants with its people?’ If a country wants to tell its people to drive slower, or to refrain from stealing, it must make laws. When we see the beast “speaking,” that means a country is making a law. This is confirmed by the fact that it not only speaks but also “causes” people to act. As noted, the word cause implies force. That means the mark of the beast must be a law that forces people to do something, but there is something wrong with this law.

Third – Mark Goes Against God’s Law

While it is natural for nations to make laws, this law will go against God’s law, the Ten Commandments. We know this because right after speaking of “the mark,” the prophecy then immediately commends all “those who keep the commandments of God” (Rev. 14:11, 12). That means the mark of the beast must be a law that goes against one of God’s Ten Commandments. Of course, this should be obvious since God is so firmly against the mark. If God is so firmly against this law, it obviously violates God’s law, and the entire world will obey it.

Fourth – The Mark is a Global Issue

The prophecy tells us that this law will become universal. We are told that the beast

“causes all,” as in “causes the earth and those who dwell in it,” to receive a mark (Rev. 13:16, 12). As a result, all nations will be “of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast,” and in setting up the law proposed by the beast, “all the world” will follow the beast (Rev. 17:3; 13:3). While this law will first be proposed by the beast, all the other nations will eventually follow the beast in also setting up this same law. Since the mark becomes universal, spreading across the entire earth, it would have to be related to something that affects the entire world. It must involve a major global issue which the entire world is concerned about. Since the Bible has warned of global weather disasters in the last days (Luke 21:25; Rev. 7:2, 3), climate could play a role. Whatever it is, the mark will be sparked by a global concern that will pressure the governments of the world to make a law. While this universal law will be embraced by all nations as some form of global solution, it will be a clear violation of religious liberty, as we will see.

Fifth – The Mark forces Worship

As we read the prophecy, we find that the central theme in it is “worship.” The prophecy tells us that the beast will “cause as many as would not worship” to be killed (Rev. 13:15). God then warns, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark,” he will receive His wrath (Rev. 14:9). That’s why just before the warning of the mark of the beast is given, God tells His faithful people to “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water,” taken almost verbatim from the fourth commandment which calls us to worship God on the Sabbath, “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” (Rev. 14:7; Ex. 20:11). Since most equate Sabbath worship to Sunday church

service, it is not hard to believe that the mark will involve enforcing Sunday laws. While some may think this could never happen, Sunday laws have been around for centuries. It is not difficult to imagine that a revival of Sunday laws would be proposed as a solution for protecting the earth from climate change. Ironically, that's exactly what is happening.

Sixth – A Call to Worship

In his encyclical on climate change, the pope proposed the idea that the world adopt Sunday as a universal rest for the land stating, “Sunday, like the Jewish Sabbath, is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world,” using this as a suggested solution to heal the earth (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, 237). The pope is now proposing Sunday rest as a solution for climate change. Christians who have embraced Sunday as the Sabbath think this is a good idea, but those who believe the fourth commandment calls believers to worship on “the seventh day,” which is Saturday, are alarmed by it (Ex. 20:10). If this idea is embraced and the world goes along with this proposal, faithful Jews and Christians who still worship on Saturday will be viewed and attacked as enemies. Again, the prophecy says the mark of the beast will occur when a beast, or nation, makes a global law, over some universal issue, enforcing a form of worship.

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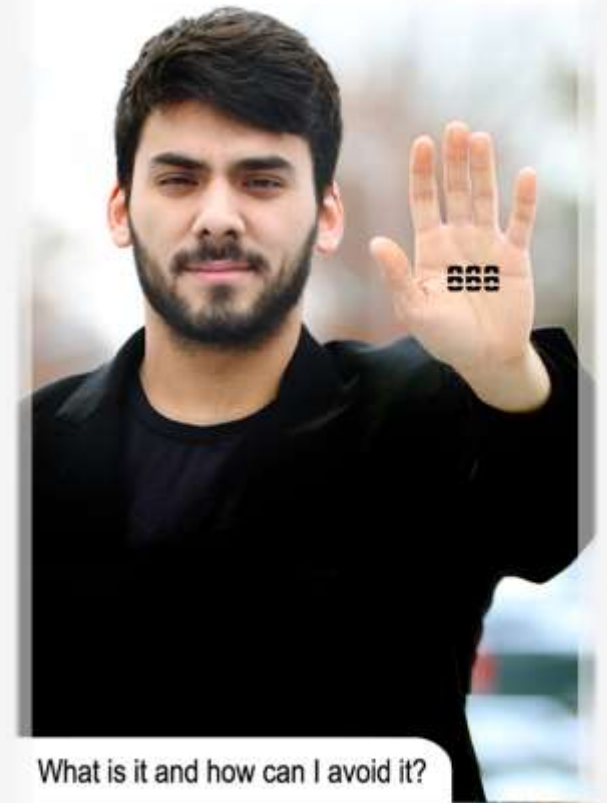
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The Mark of the Beast



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