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GOD'S WARNING – THE MARK OF THE BEAST!

Throughout our study of the Bible we have seen the continuing efforts of our heavenly Father to save the human race from certain destruction. As various times of calamity came upon the world, God sent special messages of warning and entreaty to the human race to save them from danger. Before the destruction of the earth by flood Noah proclaimed God's final warning message for 120 years. Now, before the world will be destroyed by fire, can we expect a special message of pleading and warning to earth's inhabitants that will prepare a people for this great calamity? Absolutely!

In our last study we learned that the Sabbath is a memorial of God's creative power and that it would be a special sign or seal of His people in opposition to the mark of the beast. We also learned that there would be an "unholy trinity" that would usher in the sign of the anti-Christ or mark of the beast. So far we learned that Satan was the cornerstone of this trio and that the beast (nation) of Revelation 13 is Papal Rome. Now we will learn who or what will complete this evil plan.

1. How long was granted to the beast (Papal Rome) to remain in abusive power? Revelation 13:1-10

Note: The Roman emperor, Justinian made a decree giving the Papacy unlimited power over all the churches. This decree went into effect in 538 AD when the three opposing kingdoms were "pulled up by the roots." This began the period known as the "dark ages."

2. How are we to interpret "dates and times" in the Bible? Ezekiel 4:6

Note: Forty-two months would be 1260 days, or years. A Jewish year contained 12 months of 30 days each, or 360 days. This same time period is also referred to in Revelation 12:5, 6, 13, 14. A year was sometimes called a "time," as when King Nebuchadnezzar was with the beasts of the field for "seven times" or seven years. Allowing 360 days for a "time," 720 or twice that amount for "times" and 180 days for a half of a time, it totals the same as 42 months or 1260 prophetic years. (Daniel 7:25) God wants to make it very clear who this beast power is by giving the same time clues over and over.

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3. What happened to Rome at the end of the 42 months from 538 AD when the Pope was made king and began the most heinous of persecutions to all who opposed the Roman church? Revelation 13:10 (NKJV)

Note: In 1798 the Pope was taken prisoner by Napoleon's army. He died in the French fortress of Valence 18 months later. Therefore, he who sent others into captivity went himself into captivity. But "the deadly wound was to be healed." In 1929, the Italian government recognized Vatican City as an independent state. Papal Rome's power was reinstated and has been growing in the political arena.

4. Describe the beast nation that John saw coming up out of the earth. Revelation 13:11

*Note: This beast or nation comes up out of the earth—not the sea, as did the others. Therefore it must arise in a relatively unpopulated area. It appears about the time (1798) when the Pope is taken captive. It is a young beast unlike the other more mature beasts indicating a young nation. Only one power meets these specifications—the **United States**. Cradled and nourished in the wilderness of the New World, it rose to world prominence in the latter part of the eighteenth century.*

5. What does this beast force people to do? Revelation 13: 12

6. What will those who worship the beast or its image receive? Verses 15-17

7. What about those who don't comply? Verses 15 _____

Note: This "image" will not be fully formed until political authority enforces religious laws to set up mandatory Sunday worship.

8. What is the number of the beast, the man's number? Verse 18 _____

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Note: What “man” represents the Papacy? It is none other than the office of the Pope who bears the Latin title, “Vicarius Filii Dei,” or “Vicar of the Son of God.”

*Following the ancient custom of a person having both a number and a name, let us add the Roman numerals in this title: V-5, I-1, C-100, A & R, no value, I-1, VU-5 S & F, no value I-1, L-50, I-1, I-1, D-500 E, no value, I-1. **This totals 666.***

9. What is the special message that God gives to the people in these last days?
Revelation 14:6-12

10. What is the message of the 1st angel? Revelation 14:6, 7

11. What commandment specifically points to God as creator? Exodus 20

12. What is the application of the 2nd angel’s message to the last days?
Revelation 14:8. See Revelation 18:1-3, 23, 24

Note: The term “Babylon” is derived from Babel and signifies spiritual confusion. It is used in Scripture to designate the various forms of false religion. In Revelation 17 Babylon is represented as a woman. This figure is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church. A virtuous woman represents a pure church and an evil woman represents a false church. Since this scarlet woman is sitting on the beast, it is indicative of a false church united with a nation or power. This dominant religious power has introduced a false worship system not based on God’s pure gospel and was also responsible for the blood of many martyrs. This is Papal Rome.

13. What does God warn against in the 3rd angel’s message? Revelation 14:9-11

14. In contrast, how are those saints described in the next verse? Verse 12

Conclusion: In the most startling prophecy ever, the Bible predicts that church and state will unite under the banner of Satan. As calamities and disasters continue to mount one can see how the world will respond to return once again to God and with that...a mandate for total community worship...on Sunday.

God however will not bring the end of the world without first providing all with knowledge of His messages as well as a way of escape. With this knowledge in mind, Sabbath becomes much more than an alternative day to worship God. It becomes the symbol for loyalty to God or to Satan.