

LifeSavers Bible Studies

#8: Does it Matter?

One of the major questions in Christendom today is, "Which day is the Sabbath?" Should it be observed on Saturday, the seventh day of the week according to the commandment (Exodus 20:8-11)? Or, as many believe, on Sunday, the first day of the week, in honour of Christ's resurrection? Or does it make any difference?

Many believe that Christ authorized the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. Jesus Himself denies any such intent, and we lack any Scriptural authority for such a change. We must, therefore, look elsewhere for this pretentious authorization.

Check one answer for each question:

I. Scripture Predicted an Assault on God's Law.

1. Jesus said His Law would remain unchanged until the very end of time.

Matthew 5:17-19: TRUE FALSE

No doubt Jesus made this statement because He knew the day would come when people would try to change it. In fact, hundreds of years before Christ appeared on earth, the prophet Daniel dreamed about a "power" who would do this.

2. This power, represented by the "little horn," would attempt to change to God's law.

Daniel 7:25: TRUE FALSE

In the next chapter, Daniel reports that the "little horn" will "fling truth to the ground" (8:12). He says that it would "speak out against the Most High" (7:25), and would "even magnify itself to be equal with the Commander of the host" (8:11), who, of course, is Jesus Himself. (See Joshua 5:13-15).

3. Paul says the "man of sin" will exalt himself above all that is called "God" and portray himself to the world as God.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4: TRUE FALSE

The "little horn" effectively exalted itself above God by announcing that it had, with God's approval, made alterations to His law. Then, it enforced the observance of this modified law on the church.

II. Revealing the Identity of the “Little Horn”

It would be difficult to make positive identification of a crime suspect if the only description one had was that it was a person with brown hair. But if there were five or ten identifying features given in the description, it wouldn't be long before the suspect would be in custody.

Similarly, in order to assure a positive identification, let's examine **eleven identifying features** the Bible gives regarding the “little horn”—who seems so intent on stealing God's authority.

4. According to Daniel's vision, the power represented by the "little horn" is similar to the kingdoms that preceded it.

Daniel 7:23-24: TRUE FALSE

Number 1 - The other kingdoms were strictly political, whereas this force would be a religious political power, exercising political strength to enforce matters of conscience.

5. The domain of the beast would be divided into 10 kingdoms.

Daniel 7:7, 24: TRUE FALSE

Number 2 - When the Roman Empire fell it was divided into ten regions controlled by territorial tribal factions. Most of these regions survived to become the independent nations in Europe today. The Anglo-Saxons became England; the Lombards evolved into Italy; the Franks, France; the Alemanni became Germany; etc.

6. A "little horn" appears that uproots 3 of the 10 horns mentioned above.

Daniel 7:8, 24: TRUE FALSE

Number 3 - The fall of Rome is acknowledged by historians to have occurred in 476 A.D. At that time the ten tribes were in place to absorb the territories around them. The “little horn's” rise to power would have to be after this event.

7. The "little horn" secured its power by destroying others.

Daniel 7:8, 24: TRUE FALSE

Number 4 - Being the head of a world organization in the capital city placed the Bishop of Rome in an advantageous position when the Roman Empire crumbled. In a venture to unify the remnants of the empire under his religious political banner, he made an alliance with Justinian, a general in the Roman Army. They made a pact that if Justinian would help the bishop by routing out the three Arian tribes who were opposing the bishop's coalition attempt (the Ostrogoths, the Vandals and the Huns), the bishop would reward him by crowning him as the first emperor in the new empire. Justinian fulfilled his part of the agreement in 538 A.D. and was elevated to be the first emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

8. The attitude of the "little horn" was characterized by expressions of humility and meekness.

Daniel 7:8, 20, 25; 8:11: TRUE FALSE

Number 5 - Here we have a human being making boasts against God and proclaiming himself to be like the Son of God. Forgiving sins and admitting people into heaven is the sole prerogative of God (Colossians 1:12-14). Yet, the papacy claims this authority and much more. Jesus refers to Himself as the door (John 10:1-2, 9-11) to salvation and that no one can receive grace or forgiveness apart from Him. He is man's sole intercessor, and there is no need for anyone else to come between the sinner and the Saviour. Anyone who attempts to do so this is a thief.

9. To establish its authority and rule, the "little horn" persecutes God's people.

Daniel 7:21, 25: TRUE FALSE

Number 6 - Throughout the Dark Ages the papacy massacred untold millions of heretics for refusing to accept its authority regarding matters of conscience. By contrast, Jesus repudiates any use of force that compels people to follow Him. (Matthew 16:24).

10. The ability to institute, change and annul laws gives one great power. The "little horn" claims to have the authority to change God's "times and law."

Daniel 7:25: TRUE FALSE

Number 7 - In Peter Geiermann's the Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, which received the blessing of Pope Pius X, the question is asked why Sunday is observed as Sabbath instead of Saturday. The answer given is: "We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday."

Closer inspection of this Catechism shows other changes were made in God's law. The second commandment, which forbids the worship of idols, is omitted altogether. The fourth has become the third and is reduced to read: "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day." The tenth commandment, condemning covetousness, has become the ninth and is divided into two parts to make up for the one that was deleted. How does God feel about this? "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:19. See also Revelation 22:18-19).

11. According to prophecy, the "little horn" power would be allowed to rule 1,260 years.

Daniel 7:25, Revelation 12:6; 13:5: TRUE FALSE

Number 8 - Using the Hebrew calendar, these three time periods are actually one and the same; forty-two months is 1,260 days as well as three and a half years. These are prophetic periods of time and translate into 1,260 literal years. (The biblical key for symbolic time prophecies, that a day represents a year, is based on God's usage of this principle in Ezekiel 4:6 and Numbers 14:36.) God foreknew the era of papal dominion: 1,260 years; from 538-1798 A.D.

12. According to John, the "little horn" power, or "beast," will suffer a setback.

Revelation 13:3 (the first part): TRUE FALSE

Number 9 - Berthier, a general in Napoleon's army, plundered Rome in 1798, terminated papal rule and exiled Pope Pius VI to France, where he died a political prisoner. Many believed this event would be the deadly wound that would be the doom of Roman Catholicism.

13. The day is coming when the world at large will embrace and follow the "little horn" power.

Revelation 13:3-4, 8: TRUE FALSE

Number 10 - On January 11, 1992, diplomats from over 100 nations gathered at Vatican City to hear Pope John Paul II deliver his major foreign policy statement of the year. In the 1990 Spring issue of Foreign Policy, a journal published for the diplomatic corps, an article entitled, "Papal Foreign Policy," describes "the most activist [sic] papacy in modern history." In fact, "Not since the Middle Ages can a comparably broad conception of papal activity be found" (p.27). Why is it that one particular religious leader has such a powerful influence in the world? The deadly wound began to be healed in 1929 when the Italian dictator, Mussolini, signed a concordat with the papacy to restore some of the former papal land, thus raising the papacy to the status of a geopolitical power once again. The subsequent growth of the Catholic Church truly has been a wonder!

14. Prophecy predicts that persecution will befall those who refuse to recognize the "little horn" power and remain loyal to God. Scripture identifies the beasts ("little horn") as having a number.

Revelation 13:14-18: TRUE FALSE

Number 11 - A note in the Douay (Catholic) Bible on Revelation 13:18 says, "Six hundred sixty-six. The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number." In the Catholic Manual of Christian Doctrine, it says, "The Pope is the vicar of Christ, the successor of St. Peter, and the visible head of the Church." Inscribed in the Pope's mitre is the Latin phrase, "Vicarius Filii Dei"(Vicar of the Son of God). The sum of the Roman numerals in this title adds up to six hundred and sixty-six. The dictionary defines "vicarious" as: "One who takes the place of another." Would you feel comfortable allowing a human being to stand in the place of Jesus for you?

III. The Bible Makes Positive Identification

There is only one power in history that conforms to all the preceding eleven characteristics: Roman Catholicism. The reason the Bible identifies this power so plainly is NOT to condemn Catholics, for many of them are God's people who have been unwittingly misled. It is not people that Scripture condemns, but a corrupt system that Satan has imposed against humanity so that he might accomplish his goal of winning the worship from every human being away from God to himself.

However, we should also recognize that there are more subtle ways to ally yourself with Satan's camp than by remaining loyal to a religious system that puts itself in the place of God. Anyone who assumes control of their own destiny by neglecting daily prayer and Bible study, is living as if he doesn't need God.

This is in total disregard to Jesus' own words: "Apart from Me, ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Living your life without Jesus is as much the "spirit of Babylon" as keeping the traditions of all the false ideologies of the world.

15. In light of the Biblical and historical evidence regarding Satan's attack on God's authority and law, can you see why it is important to honour God's Ten Commandment laws? YES
 NO

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