

Three Cosmic Messages

The Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast, Part 2

Lesson #12 for June 17, 2023

Scriptures: Revelation 12:6,14; 13:10; Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; Deuteronomy 6:8; 11:18; Exodus 20:8-11.

1. In this lesson we will be looking at quotations documenting many historical events related to the *seal of God* and the *mark of the beast* and related prophecies.

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] In the fifteenth century, the Piedmont valleys, high in the Alps of northern Italy, were home to the **Waldenses**, a people determined to stay faithful to their understanding of the Bible. As a result of their steadfast loyalty to Christ, they were fiercely persecuted. In A.D. 1488, the Waldenses in the Valley of Loysel were brutally murdered by the Roman Church for their faith.

Another wave of persecution came in the seventeenth century, when the duke of Savoy sent an army of 8,000 into their territory and demanded that the local populace quarter his troops in their homes. They did as he requested, but this was a strategy to give the soldiers easy access to their victims. On April 24, 1655, at 4:00 A.M., a signal was given for the massacre to begin. This time the death toll was more than 4,000.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sabbath Afternoon, June 10.^{††}

2. The Pilgrims were persecuted in England. Their pastor was killed; so, they moved to Holland. Things were still bad; so, they chartered two boats to take them to America. One of the boats was soon leaking so badly that they turned back to Holland and crowded into the single boat, the *Mayflower*. Half of them died within the first year of their sailing. All of this happened in the midst of the 1,260 years of papal domination of Europe.
3. An important prophecy is documented repeatedly in the book of Daniel and in several locations in the book of Revelation. Notice these interesting parallel prophecies.

Revelation 13:5: The beast was allowed to make proud claims which were insulting to God, and it was permitted to have authority for **42 months**.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Revelation 13:5). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].^{††}

Revelation 12:6,14: ⁶The woman fled to the desert, to a place God had prepared for her, where she will be taken care of for **1,260 days**....

¹⁴She was given the two wings of a large eagle in order to fly to her place in the desert, where she will be taken care of for **three and a half years**, safe from the dragon's attack.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

Daniel 7:25: "He will speak against the Supreme God and oppress God's people. He will try to change their religious laws and festivals, and God's people will be under his power for **3.5 years**."—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

[BSG:] The article by Pfandl also makes this telling point: "According to the context, **the expressions 'time, times, and half a time' (Dan. 7:25; 12:7;**

Rev. 12:14), ‘forty-two months’ (Rev. 11:2; 13:5), and ‘one thousand two hundred and sixty days’ (Rev. 11:3; 12:6) all apply to the same time period, but the natural expression ‘three years and six months’ is not used once. ‘The Holy Spirit seems, in a manner, to exhaust all the phrases by which the interval could be expressed, excluding always that one form which would be used of course in ordinary writing, and is used invariably in Scripture on other occasions, to denote the literal period. This variation is most significant if we accept the year-day system, but quite inexplicable in the other view’ [Thomas R. Birks, *First Elements of Sacred Prophecy* (London: William E. Painter, 1843), p. 352].”—Pfandl, “In Defense of the Year-day Principle,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 23, no. 1 (2012), p. 8.—[as quoted in *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 159].^{†‡§} [Note that these comments by Painter were made about the same time as the early years of Ellen White.][‡]

4. A very important principle in understanding how to interpret biblical prophecy is the year-day principle.

Numbers 14:34: “ ‘You will suffer the consequences of your sin for forty years, **one year for each of the forty days** you spent exploring the land. You will know what it means to have me against you!’ ”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

Ezekiel 4:6: “When you finish that, turn over on your right side and suffer for the guilt of Judah for forty days—**one day for each year** of their punishment.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

[BSG:] “Until the 19th century, most students of the apocalyptic books Daniel and Revelation used the historicist method to interpret the prophecies in these books. **One of the main pillars of the historicist method is the year-day principle which says that a day in apocalyptic time prophecies represents a year.** During the 19th century, the historicist method was slowly replaced by the preterist and futurist systems of interpretation, both of which deny the year-day principle. **Preterists** place most of the prophecies into the past up to the time of the Roman Empire; **futurists** place most of them into the future, specifically into the last seven years between the secret rapture and the Second Advent.”—Pfandl, “In Defense of the Year-day Principle,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 23, no. 1 (2012), p. 3.—[as quoted in *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 159].^{†‡§}

5. The year-day principle was proven to be correct and accurate by its interpretation of Daniel 9:24-27, pointing to the time of Christ’s anointing and baptism and then His crucifixion, and finally, the time when the gospel was sent to the Gentiles. These dates were precisely prophesied and fit into the 490-year prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27.
6. Turning back to speak about the 1,260-day prophecy, notice these historical items.

[BSG:] In the fourth century, the Roman emperor Constantine legalized Christianity throughout the empire. When he moved his capital in A.D. 330 to Byzantium to unite the eastern and western parts of his empire, it left a leadership vacuum in Rome. The **pope**, then, filled this void. He became

not only a powerful religious leader but also a political force to be reckoned with in Europe. In A.D. 538, Justinian, the pagan Roman emperor, officially granted the Roman bishop the role of the defender of the faith. The medieval church exercised great influence from A.D. 538 to A.D. 1798, including in the terrible persecution mentioned in the introduction to this ... study. **Napoleon's General Berthier took the pope captive in A.D. 1798, in exact fulfillment of the prophecy.**

Berthier and his army captured Pope Pius VI and unceremoniously *removed* him from the papal throne. The blow to the papacy was serious, but, according to Revelation 13:12, the deadly wound would be healed, and the world would hear more from this power—a lot more.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sunday, June 11.^{†‡}

[BSG:] The 1,260 prophetic days—the time, times, and half a time and the 42 months of Daniel and Revelation—equals 1,260 years. Commenting on this prophetic period, *The SDA Bible Commentary* states, “The prophetic period of the little horn **began in A.D. 538, when the Ostrogoths abandoned the siege of Rome**, and the bishop of Rome, released from Arian control, was free to exercise the prerogatives of Justinian’s decree of 533, and thenceforth to increase the authority of the ‘Holy See’ (see on v. 8). **Exactly 1260 years later (1798)**, the spectacular victories of the armies of Napoleon in Italy placed the pope at the mercy of the French revolutionary government, which now advised him that the Roman religion would always be the irreconcilable enemy of the Republic, and added that ‘there is one thing even more essential to the attainment of the end desired, and that is to destroy, if possible, the centre of unity of the Roman Church; and it is for you, who unite in your person the most distinguished qualities of the general and of the enlightened politician, to realize this aim if you consider it practicable’ (*Ibid.*, p. 158). In response to these instructions and **at the command of Napoleon, [General] Berthier, with a French army, entered Rome, proclaimed the political rule of the papacy at an end** and took the pope prisoner, carrying him off to France, where he died in exile.”—Volume 4 [of the *SDA Bible Commentary*], p. 834.—[as quoted in *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 159-160].^{†‡Ω§}

7. This prophecy was first given to Daniel about 550 years before Christ. He predicted the fall of the pope in 1798 at the end of the 1260-year prophecy which began in A.D. 538. That prophecy covered over 2300 years—550 years plus 1,798 years for a total of 2,348 years. God was able to predict exactly that many years in advance!
8. So, how is Satan going to get the whole world to follow him and even worship him? See Revelation 13:3-4,7-8.

Revelation 13:3-4,7-8: ³One of the heads of the beast seemed to have been **fatally wounded, but the wound had healed**. The whole earth was amazed and followed the beast. ⁴Everyone worshipped the dragon because he had given his authority to the beast. They worshipped the beast also, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who can fight against it?”...

⁷It was allowed to fight against God's people and to defeat them, and it was given authority over every tribe, nation, language, and race. ⁸**All people living on earth will worship it, except those whose names were written before the creation of the world in the book of the living which belongs to the Lamb that was killed.**—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

9. What can we expect from that beast that was healed?

Revelation 13:12: It exercises all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound had been healed.—*New Revised Standard Version*.^{*}

10. Satan is a very clever enemy. He does not come out in the open and do his work; if he did, the people could identify him. He works through human agencies; in this case, specifically, he acted through the papacy.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4,9-12: ³Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction. ⁴**He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God....**

⁹The coming of the lawless one is apparent in the working of Satan, **who uses all power, signs, lying wonders,** ¹⁰**and every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.** ¹¹For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion, leading them to believe what is false, ¹²so that all who have not believed the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

[From the *SDA Bible Commentary*.] A comparison with Daniel's prophecy of the blasphemous power that succeeds that of pagan Rome ..., and with John's word picture of the leopardlike beast ..., reveals many similarities between the three **descriptions [of the little horn, the beast power, and the lawless one]**. This leads us to the conclusion that Daniel, Paul, and John are speaking of the same power, ... **the papacy**.—F. D. Nichol (Ed.), *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 271.4.^{†‡}

11. Remember our previous studies suggesting that the Christian church that began as a beautiful woman dressed in white gradually became corrupted and fell away, turning into the woman wearing scarlet and purple, riding on a beast representing the Devil himself. See Revelation 17.

12. So, as a result of this, God must call His faithful people out of Babylon.

Revelation 18:4: Then I heard another voice from heaven saying,
"Come out of her, my people,
so that you do not take part in her sins,
and so that you do not share
in her plagues."—*New Revised Standard Version*.^{*}

13. We must not assume that everyone who is a Roman Catholic understands and believes in these ideas. Many who are in the Roman Catholic community are faithful members of

God's church but are deceived and following what they have been taught. We must treat them as we would want to be treated.

Matthew 7:12: "Do for others what you want them to do for you: this is the meaning of the Law of Moses and of the teachings of the prophets."—*Good News Bible*.*

14. As we know, Satan works through human agencies. He does not come out and reveal himself. So, will there ever be a future "moral leader" who appears to be faithful and true and that the world can depend upon?

[BSG:] Surveys reveal a deep lack of trust in institutions and governments. Millions wonder, "Where is there someone who is morally fit to lead the world?" Revelation's prophecies identify the beast power as the one who, under the auspices of a religious/political union, will be the power believed fit to fill this role.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, June 13.‡ [Some have suggested that the pope should lead the world!][‡]

Revelation 17:12-14: ¹² "The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet begun to rule, but who will be given authority to rule as kings for one hour with the beast. ¹³**These ten all have the same purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast.** ¹⁴They will fight against the Lamb; but the Lamb, together with his called, chosen, and faithful followers, will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings."—*Good News Bible*.*[†]

[BSG:] There are three significant points John makes in this passage. First, the political powers have "one mind" and "give their power and authority" to the beast. Second, this conglomerate of error makes war against Jesus the Lamb. Third, in earth's last war, Christ and His followers are triumphant. **The beast does not win; Jesus does.**

Have you ever wondered what strategy the devil [*sic*] might use to unite the nations? History often repeats itself. We discover valuable lessons from the collapse of the Roman Empire. When the Germanic invasions from the north ravaged Western Europe, the Roman Emperor Constantine turned to religion. **The authority of the church, combined with the power of the state, became the very instrument Constantine needed. The continual strengthening of the sanctity of Sunday in the fourth century was a calculated political and religious move to unite the empire at a time of crisis. Constantine wanted his empire united, and the Roman Church wanted it "converted."** The renowned historian Arthur Weigall states it clearly: "The church made a sacred day of Sunday . . . largely because it was the weekly festival of the sun; for it was a definite Christian policy to take over the pagan festivals endeared to the people by tradition and give them Christian significance."—*The Paganism in Our Christianity* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), p. 145.

At a time of great crisis, when all the world is scared, hurting, and fearful, people will be desperate for someone to bring some stability and protection. This is how tyranny has arisen in the past, and there's no reason to think

that it could not happen again. According to prophecy, something will bring about these final events.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, June 13.^{†§}

15. The Bible speaks about the *seal of God* and the *mark of the beast*. What do these mean?

Revelation 14:9: A third angel followed the first two, saying in a loud voice, “Whoever worships the beast and its image and receives the mark on their forehead or on their hand.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

Revelation 14:12: This calls for endurance on the part of God’s people, those who obey God’s commandments and are faithful to Jesus.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

16. In ancient Israel, God told them to do something similar.

Deuteronomy 6:8-9: ⁸ “Tie them [God’s commands] on your arms and wear them on your foreheads as a reminder. ⁹Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*††}

Deuteronomy 11:18: “Remember these commands and cherish them. Tie them on your arms and wear them on your foreheads as a reminder.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

17. But, the future seal of God is apparently not visible, except to angels. And what does the Sabbath have to do with the seal of God?

[BSG:] **One group worships the beast, and one keeps the commandments of God (which includes the fourth, the one commandment the beast power thought to change) and has the faith of Jesus. That’s the contrast.** Working through the sea and land beasts, the devil [*sic*] attempts to undermine God’s authority by attacking the heart of worship; namely, the Sabbath. The **mark of the beast** is placed either in the forehead or the hand. **The forehead is a symbol of the mind, where conscience, reason, and judgment are located; the hand, in contrast, is a symbol of actions and deeds** [convenience].—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, June 14.^{††}

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] Those who honor the Bible Sabbath will be denounced as enemies of law and order, as breaking down the moral restraints of society, causing anarchy and corruption, and calling down the judgments of God upon the earth. Their conscientious scruples will be pronounced obstinacy, stubbornness, and contempt of authority. They will be accused of disaffection toward the government. Ministers who deny the obligation of the divine law will present from the pulpit the duty of yielding obedience to the civil authorities as ordained of God. In legislative halls and courts of justice, commandment keepers will be misrepresented and condemned. A false coloring will be given to their words; the worst construction will be put upon their motives.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 592.1.[‡]

[BSG:] **The church of Rome claims that Sunday is the “mark” of its ecclesiastical authority.** “Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. . . . And the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power

and authority in religious matters.”—*The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, January 1883.

Revelation predicts that in the future, at a time of international crisis, our world will face some kind of radical political, social, religious, and moral transformation, in which Sunday keeping will be enforced and then will become “the mark of the beast.” Again, how all this unfolds we have not been told. Scripture gives us only broad outlines—but enough to show us that the great controversy is going to climax around the issue of worshiping either the beast or the Creator and that the seventh-day Sabbath will play a central role.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, June 14.†‡§

18. If we want to be on God’s side, we need to be making choices for that side every day in all that we do. Remember these words from our previous study.

[EGW:] It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that by beholding we become changed. **The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence.** Man will never rise higher than his standard of purity or goodness or truth. If self is his loftiest ideal, he will never attain to anything more exalted. Rather, he will constantly sink lower and lower. The grace of God alone has power to exalt man. Left to himself, his course must inevitably be downward.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 555.1.†‡

[BSG:] Even now, perhaps, the stage is being set for this impending persecution. On June 6, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI made an urgent appeal to more than 15,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square in Rome that Sunday must be a day of rest for everyone, so people can be free to be with their families and with God. “By defending Sunday, one defends human freedom.” This isn’t, of course, the same thing as demanding that others keep this day, as opposed to the biblical Sabbath, but it does show that the idea of Sunday as the “day of rest” is, definitely, a real issue. Sooner or later, laws will be passed, and those who conscientiously follow the Word of God and keep the true Sabbath will be labeled as opposing society’s best interests.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, June 15.‡

19. So, if worship on Sunday will ultimately be the mark of the beast, what is the seal of God?

Exodus 20:8-11: ⁸ “Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. ⁹You have six days in which to do your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me. On that day no one is to work—neither you, your children, your slaves, your animals, nor the foreigners who live in your country. ¹¹In six days I, the LORD, made the earth, the sky, the sea, and everything in them, but on the seventh day I rested. That is why I, the LORD, blessed the Sabbath and made it holy.”—*Good News Bible.**

[BSG:] The fourth commandment contains three elements of an authentic seal. **First**, there is the name of the sealer: “ ‘The LORD your God’ ” (*Exod.*

20:10, NKJV). **Second**, there is the title of the sealer: the Lord who “made” (*Exod. 20:11*), or the Creator. And **third**, there is the territory of the sealer: “the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them” (*Exod. 20:11, NKJV*). According to Revelation 7:1, 2, **the seal of God is placed only on our foreheads, a symbol of our minds**. Jesus respects our freedom of choice. He invites us to let Him shape our minds by His Holy Spirit so that we cannot be moved from the anchor of our faith in the Word of God (*Eph. 4:30*). Thus, we understand that the faithful are those who “keep the commandments of God, and [have] the faith of Jesus” (*Rev. 14:12*), and included in those commandments is the fourth, the one commandment the beast power thought to change (*Dan. 7:25*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, June 15.^{†‡Ω§}

[BSG:] According to Romans 4:11, a sign and a seal are interchangeable. Seals were well known in the ancient world. They were used to authenticate documents. They were also a sign of ownership. Seals were often made of wax or stamped on freshly formed clay. Of all the commandments, the Sabbath is the only one that qualifies as God’s seal. It contains the name, title, and domain of the lawgiver. As P. Gerard Damsteegt observes: “The Sabbath commandment can therefore be considered a seal because it ‘is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force’ (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 307). The Sabbath helps to give the ten commandments their unique significance. ‘The Sabbath was placed in the decalogue as the seal of the living God, pointing out the Law-giver, and making known his right to rule.’ Thus the Sabbath is the sign of a relationship between God and His people, serving as ‘a test of their loyalty to Him’ [*Signs of the Times*, May 13, 1886]. The mission of Seventh-day Adventists can be described as ‘presenting the law of God as a test of character and as the seal of the living God’ (*Testimonies for the Church*, 2:468).”—Damsteegt, “The Seal of God,” *Adventists Affirm*, vol. 8, no. 3, Year End 1994, pp. 37, 38.—[as quoted in *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 160].^{†‡Ω§}

Revelation 7:1-2: ¹After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds so that no wind should blow on the earth or the sea or against any tree. ²And I saw another angel coming up from the east with **the seal of the living God**. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels to whom God had given the power to damage the earth and the sea.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†} [Compare **Ezekiel 9:1-6**.][‡]

[BSG:] What conditions can you see currently developing that could potentially lead to the restriction of our religious liberty? What obstacles remain, as well?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, June 15.[‡]

20. **In answering that, consider: (1) The proposed outlawing of cash as a medium of financial exchange. What would happen to church offerings? (2) The rise of**

cooperation among rogue and communistic governments, doing everything they can to replace the United States as the dominant player in the financial world. These nations are all opposed to the God of the Bible. (3) The progress of the United States government toward controlling more and more of our lives and what affects us. Will “total control” come out of “total chaos”?

21. In order for Satan to succeed in his efforts to deceive almost the entire world, he must have several different organizations working together toward a common goal.

[EGW:] When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country [the United States of America] shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*,* vol. 5, 451.1.†

[BSG:] “We have tended to overlook the fact that Sunday is the day of worship of the opposing forces . . . in the story line of the Book of Revelation. Sunday is an extremely important symbol, revealing the unbelievable craftiness and sophistry of the dragon. . . . This . . . change of God’s law expresses in one simple action the very essence of the hatred of the dragon against God in the cosmic conflict. Its simplicity is highly deceptive. **The dragon has sought to usurp God’s place in the cosmos** by depicting himself as the true object of *worship* and arguing that God’s *law* is unjust—that it should be changed. The dragon changed the law at the juncture within the Decalogue where God is identified as Creator and Redeemer, the only one worthy of worship (Exod. 20:8–11; Deut. 5; cf. Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 13, 14). The change of the law manifests not only the dragon’s hatred for the will of the Lord (the law), but it is also his attempt to usurp God’s place by becoming the object of worship. . . . The universalization of this change in the law would assure him victory.”—Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels’ Messages,” unpublished manuscript, pp. 53, 54.—[as quoted in *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Friday, June 16].†‡§

22. As we study the events that will lead up to the second coming of Jesus Christ, we must avoid two extremes: (1) Getting so concerned that we try to set dates. That type of fanaticism is never helpful. (2) Falling into a lackadaisical attitude, believing that what is predicted in the Bible just does not seem possible given the current state of the world.

[BSG:] Another important principle of prophetic interpretation is the link between the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

The little-horn power of Daniel 7, the “man of sin” of 2 Thessalonians 2, and the beast from the sea in Revelation 13 represent the same oppressive power that persecuted God’s people during the Middle

Ages: the Papacy. In our study . . . , we will discover how the beast from the sea, in Revelation 13, also opposes and oppresses God’s last-day people, who “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (*Rev. 14:12, NKJV*).—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 158.†‡§

23. Those who have been Seventh-day Adventists for much of their lives might feel that this is a repetition of something they have heard many times. However, we should notice:

[EGW:] **When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience.** They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed in regard to the character all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart.—Ellen G. White [Written January 27, 1900, from “Sunnyside,” Cooranbong, NSW, to F. E. Belden, *Review and Herald*, Battle Creek, Michigan], *Manuscript Releases*,* vol. 18, 24.2; *Testimonies to Ministers**[€] 114.3; *The Faith I Live By**[€] 345.3.††

24. Will we have the seal of God on our foreheads? How do we make sure it is there?

[EGW:] Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads—**it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved**—just as soon as God’s people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come.—Ellen G. White, *The SDA Bible Commentary*,* vol. 4, 1161.6.††

25. It is through the Holy Spirit, whose major activity is the giving and the preservation of the Bible for us to study, that we will receive the seal of God on our foreheads. Are we becoming good students of the Bible? Or, will we grieve the Holy Spirit?

Ephesians 4:30: And do not make God’s Holy Spirit sad; for the Spirit is God’s mark of ownership on you, a guarantee that the Day will come when God will set you free.—*Good News Bible*.*

26. As we have already seen in the quotation above (Item #18) from *The Great Controversy*:

[EGW:] It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that **by beholding we become changed**. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 555.1.††

27. Are we allowing Jesus to increasingly occupy our thoughts and fill our minds? This is not something that happens all of a sudden; it takes time. Luther Warren, an early Adventist preacher said: “The only way to be ready for the coming of Jesus is to get ready and stay ready.” Will we take up the challenge?

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Last Modified: April 30, 2023