

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Many people are finding it more difficult to pay the bills and stay in their homes. Tremendous tension is present in the economies of the world. What is going on in the world? Does God care about us?
- B. Money and the economy is one of the key issues in the End Times according to the Bible. We must know what the Bible teaches so that we will not be ignorant, so that we will prepare now, and so that we can proclaim to others.

II. HARLOT BABYLON: A COMING ONE-WORLD ECONOMIC NETWORK AND RELIGION (REV. 17-18)

- A. Rev. 17:1-6, gives us details about the emergence of the Harlot Babylon as a one-world demonic religion and economic network (cf. Isa. 13-14; 21; Jer. 50-51), describing her evil seductions and cruel persecutions. Not too long after the flood that destroyed the earth, Babel was the city in which the first organized religion in history developed resulting in the first organized rebellion and war against God by mankind.
- B. Unified in wickedness, there is no height to which their wickedness cannot reach, which would force God's wrath to come again. As the great restrainer is lifted, the world will be unified again through a common language and network. Sin will be allowed to reach its fullness in the End-Times and not before. God is the restraining force, through the use of the power of the state, to keep the Antichrist to come to a place of international political power.

2 Thes. 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.

- 1. As we approach the last years of this age, we will see the movement toward this one world economic, governmental, and religious system.
- C. The Babylon system will be destroyed by the 10 kings who will burn it (Rev. 17:16). They will replace it with the Antichrist's strict religious system and re-established it as one of the Antichrist's headquarters. This is the system that the Antichrist will use to come into power.
 - 1. It will fall when Jesus returns (Rev. 18).

III. SATAN WARS THROUGH THE ANTICHRIST AND FALSE PROPHET (REV. 13)

- A. Satan will war against God's people by using his main two weapons of war, the Antichrist and the False Prophet (Rev. 13).

- B. The Antichrist (Rev. 13:1-10) is the final world leader who wages war against God and persecutes His people. Besides the Messiah, the Bible gives the most prophetic information about this man than any other person who has ever lived. He is referred to as the man of lawless (2 Thes. 2:3), the Antichrist (1 John 2:8), or the beast (Rev. 11:7; called the Beast 36 times). The Antichrist's empire will include political authority, military force, economic and religious control.
1. The Antichrist will have a political, military, and economic alliance with ten powerful nations in Europe and the Middle East, giving him the largest empire, the most powerful army, and the most money of any leader in history.
 2. The word antichrist comes from combining two Greek words. The first Greek word "anti" is a preposition which can mean either "to substitute" (to be in place of/counterfeit) or "in opposition of" (to against). The second Greek word is "christos" (Christ) which means the "anointed one".
- C. The Antichrist will be fully human, yet fully demonized with Satan's authority (Rev. 13:2). ***Revelation 13:2-7...The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority...⁴ So they worshiped the dragon ... and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" ...⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.***
1. The Antichrist will set himself as god and demand worship (Dan. 9:27) as he seeks to be the king of kings over all nations. The Abomination of Desolation will occur when the Antichrist declares himself to be God by setting up his image or idol (which is the abomination) in the Jerusalem Temple (Dan. 8:13; 9:26, 27; 11:31; 12:11; Mt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14; 2 Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 13:12-18).
 2. The Antichrist along with the false prophet will be captured alive then thrown in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:19-20). Jesus consumes and destroys the Antichrist with the breath of His mouth and the brightness of His appearing (2 Thes. 2:8).
1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.
 3. Throughout history, there will be the "spirit of the antichrist" that works in every generation to rally and influence people against Jesus. In the End-Times, there will be a literal worldwide leader called "The" Antichrist.
- D. In Rev. 13, we see the counterfeit trinity. Satan counterfeits the Father as he empowers the Antichrist, who counterfeits the Son and is supported by the False Prophet, who counterfeits the Holy Spirit (Rev. 13:1-2, 11-18).
- E. John revealed the False Prophet's three most effective strategies. First, he is a "prophet" with a message. His demonically empowered public speeches will be confirmed by great miracles to deceive the masses (Rev. 13:12-14).

Rev. 13:12-14 He exercises all the authority of the first Beast ... and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first Beast ... ¹³ He performs great signs ... ¹⁴ He deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs.

- F. Second, he establishes a worldwide worship system promoted by the abomination of desolation (Mt. 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:3-4), which will be based on an image of the Beast, or a statue of the Antichrist, being set up in the Jerusalem temple. It will be a demonically empowered statue that breathes and speaks, causing the nations to worship the Antichrist.

Rev. 13:14-15 Telling those who dwell on earth to make an image to the Beast ... ¹⁵ He was granted power to give breath to the image of the Beast, that . . . [it] should speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the Beast to be killed.

- G. The abomination of desolation will be a series of abominable, or evil, events. They will be an abomination to God that will result in a global desolation (destruction). The abomination will be the Antichrist's claim to be God and his demand that all recognize it, followed by a global embrace of his claim. Thus, it will be the abomination that leads to great desolation.

- H. Third, he will establish a worldwide economic system that forces the nations to worship the Antichrist by the mark of the Beast put on their hand or forehead, forcing everyone to publicly declare their loyalty to the Antichrist. Any who refuse this mark will not be able to buy or sell. The mark of the Beast will provide economic support for the Antichrist's worship movement and will penalize those who resist.

Revelation 13:14-15 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. ¹⁵ He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

IV. THE MARK OF THE BEAST (REV. 13-15)

- A. The Bible speaks of a mark that many people will receive on their hand or forehead in the End Times. Rev. 13:16-18; 14:9-10; 15:2-4

Revelation 13:16-18 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

- B. The mark of the Beast will be a public mark on people's right hand or forehead. It will be used to regularly identify the people that promise to worship the Antichrist (Rev. 13:16-17). Those who refuse this mark will not be allowed to buy or sell the necessities of life. They will be viewed as criminals of the state who are guilty of the death penalty. It will be illegal to refuse the mark. All who refuse to worship the Antichrist will be sought out. There will be economic and family dynamics adding pressure to worship the Antichrist.

- C. Parents will betray their children and children will betray their parents who refuse to receive this mark (Luke 12:49-53).

1. We will not be able to “calculate” it before the time that the Antichrist takes his seat in the temple claiming to be God (2 Thes. 2:4). Some believe that calculating the number will involve the ancient practice of gematria which was used to hide messages in numbers by substituting numbers for letters of the alphabet in order to give a numerical value to the letters, for example, “a” stands for 1; “b” for 2; “j” for 10; and so on.
- D. This mark will be the outward proof of one’s covenant to worship Satan and the Antichrist. In other words, people will not accidentally take this mark, nor will it be given to them against their will. The significance of the mark is found in making a heart commitment to worship Satan. Just as no one can accidentally commit their life to Jesus and receive salvation, so the mark will only be taken by those who willingly understand what they are doing.
1. Until the actual time, we probably won’t know who the actual Antichrist is and the mark is probably some sort of technology chip – type of idea, but there are things that we can do right now to prepare:
 2. The foundational technology for the mark of the Beast currently exists in the form of implanted microchips. Microchip technology itself is not evil, but it gives us insight into how the mark could operate. The mark will undoubtedly be much more advanced than our present technology.

V. THE SEAL OF GOD (REV. 7:3; 9:4)

- A. There are two groups of people that are sealed:
1. The Antichrist has a counterfeit seal for his worshipers as well. They will be filled with demons and deception that seems so real.
 2. The Father seals His worshippers on the forehead. This speaks of the living understanding that God’s people will have. This speaks of being awakened in our understanding God will mark us and it will make us loyal to the Lord in love and loyal to His Word (Rev. 7:3; 9:4).
 - a. Every believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit, but this is apparently a fuller sealing. We need to be concerned about getting the seal of God.

B. OT Gives us insight into the seal: mark on head and forehead

1. The commandment of God was to be bound on their mind and their hand. This is prophetic foreshadowing. This mark is about loving God.

Deuteronomy 6:4-8 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. ⁶ "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

- a. This is what Satan is counterfeiting with the mark of the beast. The very thing that Satan wanted from Jesus in Matt. 4 is what he demands from the whole earth. The Antichrist will claim to be God and will demand that the whole earth worship him as he seeks to be the king of kings over all nations.

Matthew 4:9 And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."

2. Exodus 13:9-16 The sign of the Word of God on their hand and between their eyes. God delivered them out of slavery.
 3. Ezekiel 9:4-6 is a prophetic picture of what will happen in the End Times with the Mark of the Beast. The angel going through the city of Jerusalem during a time of judgment.
 4. When a priest is dedicated (worship and intercession), they take the blood of the lamb mark the ear, the hand and the ear and foot (Lev. 8:23).
 5. This was also similar to when a leper was restored. The priest put the mark of blood and oil on hand and on the ear and the foot (Lev. 14:14).
 6. Jesus went to the cross, hand pierced, and crown of thorns on His head. He bore the penalty of our sin in the very same places where the mark of God is in the OT: hand, feet, head/ear.
- C. The mark of the Beast is connected to worshipping the Beast and the mark of God is connected to loving God and worshipping Him alone.

VI. GET FREE FROM THE GRIP OF MAMMON

- A. Understand that God wants you to have financial freedom and liberation.

Matt. 6:24 No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

1. The only way to be set free from the grip of mammon is to be gripped by God.
2. People who live outside of God's system are bound in their finances.
 - a. The desire to be rich is a trap that keeps people in bondage to their finances. There is an endless cycle of greed. They do not have financial freedom (1 Tim. 6:9-10).

1 Timothy 6:9-10 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
3. Financial freedom is not having power of wealth, but it is living free from that. Both rich and poor can be sad and needy and both can be content in their situation.

4. The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. It can lead people to stray from God.

Luke 12:24 Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! 28 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!

- B. Do not put you hope in man or the things of this world.

Luke 12:49-53 “I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!⁵⁰ But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!⁵¹ Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division.⁵² For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three.⁵³ Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

1. Q: How much of what is ours does God claim as His? God is the owner. We are the stewards. Stewards are ones who manage something that doesn't belong to them.

Col. 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and FOR Him.

- C. Learn to give generously: One key to receiving freedom: Generosity

1. Giving generously frees us from the grips of mammon.
2. The way to be set free from worry and anxiety over money is to give it away! Stop loving it and falling into its trap.
3. This is completely in opposition to the world's system: you will not have enough. Self-preservation. The more money, the more problems.
4. Our capacity to receive is directly proportional to our capacity to give.

Luke 6:37-38 Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.

5. Get your heart free so that you can really begin to trust God. Give. It will begin to set your heart free. It will set you up to receive.
6. The time to learn to give is now, not later. Develop a history in God.
 - a. Learn to trust in God. How much more valuable are you than temporal things. You are an eternal being, created (think about that!) in God's very image. How much more will God clothe you.
 - b. Trust in God and learning to give are like muscles that you need to develop.

- D. Lay a foundation of true wealth.

Matt. 6:19-21 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

1. Don't live your life only for this age. Lay up your treasures in heaven. The things in this world are passing away. Are you living your life for things that are only temporary?

E. Develop Intimacy with God.

Matthew 25:1-13 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. ³ Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, ⁴ but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. ⁵ But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. ⁶ "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'

1. Five of the virgins were wise and had oil that they prepared ahead of time. Five were foolish and did not have oil and the appearance of the Bridegroom caught them off-guard and they were not allowed inside into the wedding.
2. Love God. Now, not later. The time to get oil is now, not when the trumpet blows. Too late then.
3. God will put a seal upon the heart. A seal of fire, the Holy Spirit.

Song of Solomon 8:6

***Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm;
For love is as strong as death,
Jealousy as cruel as the grave;
Its flames are flames of fire,
A most vehement flame.***