

## Chapter 17 - The Seal and the Mark: the Correct Version

When Adventists talk about the subject of the seal and the mark, most will state that they know that the seal of God is the Sabbath and the mark of the beast is Satan's counterfeit sabbath, which is Sunday. Unfortunately, the way these terms are currently taught has produced a dangerous condition among Adventists. We feel safe and secure in our knowledge of what prophecy has told us is soon to happen concerning Sunday exaltation and enforcement. Surely, *we* would not transgress by honoring the false sabbath.

However, we may be under a false understanding as to what the seal and the mark really are, which is what Satan would want for us. It's time to re-examine what we do believe, in case there is something we may have missed that might be causing us to fall short of the knowledge and will of God our Father.

I must emphatically state right now that the issue is a lot greater than on what day we worship. In this chapter, I will explain, point by point.

Revelation 7:2-3 says this: "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

Now back to verse 2: "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, *having the seal of the living God...*" The seal belongs to someone. Who is the owner of this seal? The living God. A lot of people pass right over this, but it is important.

Who is the living God? Matthew 16:15-16 records Jesus speaking to the disciples: "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the *living God.*" From this verse we learn that God the Father would be the *owner of the seal*, and Christ is His Son.

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10: "For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the *living and true God*; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." So, in summary, the Father is the owner of the seal. He is the living and true God, and He has a Son. In the illustration, the Son is named in parentheses with the Father, because "no man cometh unto the Father, except by [Him]." (John 14:6)

### The Seal of the Living God



Now get this next point: The seal does not belong to a group or a committee. It belongs to only one person, and that person is God the Father. This biblical fact is very important and often overlooked. Understanding this point will help us better understand the mark; on the other hand, if we *misunderstand* something about the seal, then we will likely miss something about the mark.

Revelation 14:1: "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his *Father's name* written in their foreheads." The 144,000 have the *seal* of the living

God in their foreheads, which is the *Father's name*. The forehead represents the mind, where individual decisions are made; the Father's name there represents God's character, developed in the transformed believer by the "renewing of [his or her] mind" (Rom 12:2), and thus God claims them as His, sealing them with His own sacred name.

Matthew 22:37: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with *all thy mind*." The biblical term "heart" is equivalent to today's word "mind." The verse speaks of a total, intelligent commitment to God. What happens in the heart/mind? That's where the motive for an act of worship originates; it's where the Father's name is written. We are His, body and mind, and He claims us as His own. Thus, to love God involves every aspect of our being, including our understanding.

When Jesus was talking to the woman at the well, He told her, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." (John 4:23) In these last days true worshippers are worshipping whom? The Father. And they are sealed with the seal of the living God, who is the Father. They have the Father's name in their foreheads/hearts/minds; they are His. They have come to think as He does.

So, what about the Sabbath? In talking about the seal of God, I am not minimizing the importance of the Sabbath. We read in Ezekiel 20:12, "Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, *to be a sign* between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them." Now, who is "the LORD" spoken of here? When you see "LORD" spelled in all capitals, it is Jehovah, in English, or *Yahweh*, in Hebrew. It is God the Father alone. He alone sanctifies us—something we can never do for ourselves. Now the **sign**, which is the Sabbath, has never been our destination; it's not even the primary focus for our obedience. "Remembering to keep holy the Sabbath day" was to be an outward or visible sign that the true and living God the Father was dwelling in His people by His Spirit, but it is His presence that makes us holy and sanctifies us. That is a critical distinction to be made here. The shocking fact is, it is possible to keep the outward, visible sign but *not have the Father's presence* within us. How can that be? As we will learn in this chapter, in the beliefs of so many, the promised presence of the Father is set aside in favor of some other being.

### **More than the 4th commandment**

Too many Adventists think they are safe from risk of eternal loss. Because they choose to honor God's Sabbath at present and intend to do so in the future, they believe they have God's seal in their frontal lobes, which belief leads them to think they will never get the mark of the beast. But are they really safe? Not necessarily. Keeping the Sabbath (sign) does not mean you have the promised reality (the Father's presence). It would be one of the greatest tragedies to go into the time of trouble, committed to obedience to the desecrated fourth commandment, and then end up on the wrong side.

This is all about worship. As our sure guide, God's fourth commandment tells us WHEN and WHY and HOW we are to worship. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ...but the seventh day ... In it thou shalt do no work...." Why? Because the Sabbath is the day of rest God initiated for man after His work of Creation, that each week we may acknowledge and honor our Creator by obediently resting then. But notice that the fourth commandment comes after three others that also deal with worship. The first tells us unmistakably WHO we are to worship—the sovereign Ruler of the universe, the source of all things: "I am the LORD thy God.... Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The second tells us WHAT we worship. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image...." God is a living Being that cannot be represented by inanimate things. Further, man has no ability to represent the holiness and perfection of God, and in his weakness may be tempted to worship a physical image rather than the infinitely-superior, invisible reality. The third tells us HOW we are to worship: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain...." We are not to take the privileged name of "Christian" lightly;

nor bring dishonor upon that name by our words and actions. Nor are we ever to speak the name of Jehovah without due reverence. The first four commandments contain even more instruction than is noted here. The point is, God has not left it to us fallen beings to figure out who, how, when, why, and what to worship. He has given us divine guidance, so that our worship is redemptive, and not “in vain.”



All four of these commandments will be involved in the final conflict, but Adventists have isolated the fourth commandment as the all-important one for the last days, to the exclusion of the other three. That is simplistic and shallow biblical exegesis, but that is what we have done in our time. Doing so is not unprecedented, as the Jews did a similar thing in the time of Christ. Look at John 8:42: “Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.” You see, the Jews claimed that God was their Father, but they rejected His Son, in spite of all the evidence in Scripture and what they had witnessed of Jesus’ works and teachings. They were stringent Sabbath-keepers, but could not bring themselves to accept that Jesus was the Son of God.

A little while later, in John 12:44, “Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on *him that sent me.*” Now the Jews, in rejecting Christ, were really rejecting whom? The Father. But the Jews believed that they *had* the Father and to prove that, they were excellent Sabbath-keepers. They were keeping the law, at least outwardly—the “letter” of it, though not the “spirit” of it. Doing so gave them a sense of safety and security, a belief that they had the approval of God, even while they were rejecting the Lord of the Sabbath! So, what did Sabbath-keeping do for them? Absolutely nothing—because they failed to acknowledge the Son of the God of the first commandment. In rejecting the Son, they rejected the Father who sent Him.

In AD 70, over one million Jews were destroyed in Jerusalem ... while they were keeping the Sabbath. This example has a parallel with another group of people in the last days who also keep the Sabbath.

Jesus taught in John 5:23 “that all men should *honour the Son*, even as they *honour the Father*. He that honoureth *not the Son* honoureth *not the Father* which hath *sent* him.” And this is what the Jews did when they rejected Him, failing to recognize Him *as the Son of God*. This is so important! We do not want to fail to recognize Jesus as the *literal* Son of God and the wonderful fact that the Father sent His Son to redeem us. We are in trouble if we miss that point. Today, unfortunately, we as a denominated people fail to give the “Lord of the Sabbath day”—the Son, as well as the Father—the honor due them on the Sabbath. We think more about the “how” and “when” of Sabbath than we do the “who” and “why” of the Sabbath. We have idolized the Sabbath and magnified Sabbath-keeping to the point where we have made it our Savior. In other words, our trust and our confidence is in the fact that we keep the Sabbath. We have a sense of pride in our understanding of Bible prophecy; we know what God’s Word says about final events on earth not long before Jesus’ return. We reason, “Those poor Christians that go to church on Sunday. They don’t want to hear about the true Sabbath.” But the fact is, most SDAs do not understand all the issues, either. If things do not change, we will find ourselves totally unprepared for the

time of trouble. This is serious. And it's difficult to remedy. You know the pious Sabbath-keeping Jews condemned Jesus, the Son of God and Lord of the Sabbath, for Sabbath-breaking. There is a similar problem today, because when a person tries to highlight Jesus as the *literal* begotten Son of God, he or she is told that that topic is an irrelevant side issue—that the upcoming test of loyalty *is* all about the Sabbath. But we know what happened to the Jews who kept the Sabbath but rejected the Lord of the Sabbath. Therefore, we need to wake up, because the Jews at that time are a picture of us today, and God wants us to see that.

The wise man said, “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 1:9) Accordingly, God's prophet wrote this: “Satan is working that the history of the Jewish nation may be *repeated* in the experience of those who claim to believe present truth. The Jews had the Old Testament Scriptures, and supposed themselves conversant with them. But they made a woeful mistake. The prophecies that refer to the glorious second appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven they regarded as referring to His first coming. Because He did not come according to their expectations, they turned away from Him. Satan knew just how to take these men in his net, and deceive and destroy them.” (17MR 13)

The Jews had believed they understood the Scriptures; they had a certain expectation of what was going to happen. When it didn't happen according to their understanding, they rejected what did happen and ended up being lost. “...Because of unbelief they were broken off.... For if God spared not the natural branches....” (Rom 11:20-21)

### **Right day, yes, but right God?**

We believe we have all we need to know about the seal and the mark; we have all our charts and studies. But what if we have missed something *very* significant? There could be something very important in the Scriptures that we've overlooked or forgotten, but by the time it is realized and accepted by the majority, it could be too late of a wake-up call for a lot of people. There are people whose salvation will depend on how they respond to *present truth*. Let's consider that thought more deeply:

“Those who would have the seal of God in their foreheads must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.” (7BC 970; LDE 220) Now this makes it clear that God's last-day people must keep the Sabbath, which is an outward sign, in order to have the inward seal in their foreheads.

“True observance of the Sabbath is the sign of loyalty to God.” (7BC 981) But! Here is present truth: If you have the right sign, but you don't have the right god, you will be in a state of fatal deception. You will be practicing loyalty to another god—as if there really were another. The biblical truth is that there is “no God beside” the “only true God,” the “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Isa 45:5; John 17:3; Eph 1:3) Any other god is a false god, which invites idolatry.

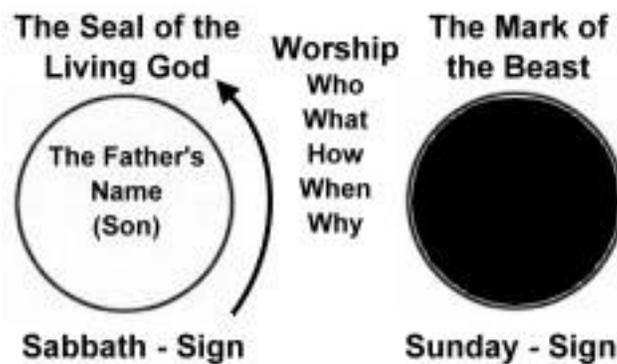
“Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads--it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved--just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already.” (4BC 1161; LDE 219) So the sealing is a settling into the what? The truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so God's people cannot be moved from that truth.

Question: What is the first thing we think of when we hear “the seal”? Most people would answer “the Sabbath.” But it is the owner of the Sabbath that should be the first answer from our mouths, because it is the seal of the “living God.” The truth of the living God, and the settling into that truth, is part of the seal. The seal is not settling into error, especially when that error has to do with the living God. Most SDAs, in their acceptance of a different god, have settled into error. The seal of God is given to whom only? “The servants of our God.” It is

put “upon the foreheads [only] of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.” (Rev 7:3; Ezek 9:4) Now let me ask you a question. What is more important: *When* you worship, or *whom* you worship? *Whom*, of course! And God stated that as His very first commandment.

Jesus said in John 12:26, “If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.” The servants of God will be following Jesus and will be sealed, because they will have settled into what is called *present truth*.

Switching topics somewhat, what is the first thing we think of when we say the “mark of the beast”? We say, “Sunday.” It’s what we have been taught. But please note, the seal and the mark have parallel characteristics. Worshipping on Sunday, according to the beast’s decree, is an outward “sign of allegiance to Rome,—‘the mark of the beast.’” (GC 449) “The change of the Sabbath is a sign or mark of the authority of the Romish Church. [It is] the papal sabbath, which has been accepted by the world in the place of the day of God’s appointment.” (ST Nov. 8, 1899) But Sunday worship, by itself, is not the main issue, for there is something additional regarding that day, as there is with the seventh-day Sabbath—something more important than the choice of days. The whole matter of the day of worship is about whether we will worship the God of the Sabbath or the god of Sunday. One can do many outward Sabbath- or Sunday-related actions, but it is the heart that God sees. Who has our heart? What is our conception of the God we claim to love and serve?



Revelation 13:16, 17 “And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the *mark*, or the *name* of the beast, or the number of his name.” What does this tell us about the beast? Simply that he has a *mark*, he has a *name*, and there is a number of his name. Read carefully: If you have any one of these three things, you’re on the wrong side.

What is his name? Revelation 13:1 “And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.” The *name of blasphemy*. What is “blasphemy”? Blasphemy is to make a mortal person God, which he is not, or for a man to claim the prerogatives of God, which do not belong to any mortal. That is blasphemy. And, of course, the Pharisees accused Jesus of blasphemy on two occasions. One time was when they said that He was a man claiming to be God, and another time was when He, being a man, claimed to forgive sins. We know that, as the Son of God, He committed no blasphemy. Think about this for a moment: the name the beast carries on its heads is blasphemy against God. God’s true people have the name of the God they worship in their foreheads: the true and living God. When people obey the beast, knowing from God’s Word that it carries the name of blasphemy on its historical heads—or when they could have known that, had they cared to read God’s Word to learn His will—then they accept as their spiritual leader a heaven-despising, God-defying earthly power that does not transform them, nor can it save them from their sins. They will have chosen death.

There's more to this satanic deception of substituting Sunday for the true Sabbath of God's fourth commandment. This is from the Vatican archives, from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #234: "The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the *source of all the other mysteries* of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is *the most fundamental and essential teaching* in the 'hierarchy of the truths of faith.'" ([http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc\\_css/archive/catechism/p1s2c1p2.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p1s2c1p2.htm))

Look at this quotation from the *Handbook for Today's Catholic*, page 16: "The mystery of the *Trinity* is the *central doctrine* of the Catholic Faith. It is the mystery of God in himself. Upon it are based *all the other teachings* of the Church."

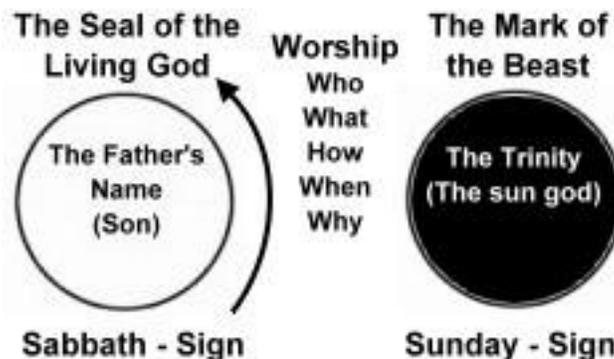
That statement indicates even Sunday worship is based on the Trinity. And as a matter of fact, that is precisely what Rome declares is the reason for keeping Sunday. "Because it is a day dedicated by the apostles to the honor of the Most Holy Trinity." (*The Douay Catechism*, (An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine) of 1649, pgs. 57-58, (recommended by the bishop of Boston in April 1833 for his diocese, and sourced in Dec. 2017 at <http://biblelight.net/sunday.htm>)

However, the witness is untrustworthy. The Trinity is no longer the reason set forth in another Catholic catechism entitled *The Catholic Christian Instructed*, in chapter XXIII, question 6, nor are the apostles credited for the change. You'll note that instead of giving a biblical reason for a biblically-enjoined duty, only Rome's reason for Rome's custom is provided. And thus does the man of sin "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." (2 Thes. 2:4)

"Q.—Why was the weekly Sabbath changed from Saturday to Sunday?"

"Ans.—Because our Lord fully accomplished the work of redemption by rising from the dead on a Sunday, and by sending down the Holy Ghost on a Sunday; as therefore the work of redemption was greater than that of creation, so the primitive church thought the day on which this work was completely finished was more worthy her religious observation than that on which God rested from creation, and should be properly called the Lord's day." (A. T. Jones, *Signs of the Times*, Dec. 2, 1886, 727)

Setting aside the variableness found in Rome's justification for her change to Sunday worship, I can assure you the apostles did *not* "dedicate the day to the honor of the Most Holy Trinity." The Bible verifies that they continued to worship on the seventh day. However, as early as AD 325 at the Council of Nicaea, discussions began on topics that gradually, during a series of contentious church councils and doctrinal compromises, developed into the official "central doctrine" of the Catholic Church, which we know as the concept of a triune god—a radical departure from the apostolic belief in the primacy of the sovereign "one God, the Father, of whom are all things." (1 Cor 8:6)

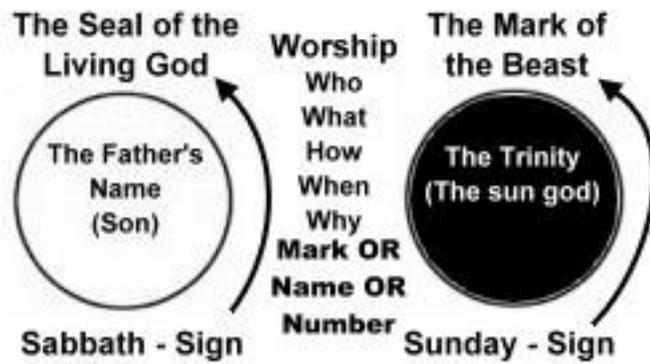


Reasoning from the basis of her “central doctrine,” the Catholic Church evidently considers that it is more important *whom* you worship than *when* you worship. Her “most fundamental” teaching is not worship on the sun god’s day, but, rather, worship of “the Trinity,” which is the name of the triune god they worship on that day. Adventists worship on God’s appointed day, but that is less of a matter to the Roman church than is their approval of our worship of a variation of her conception of God. It is that which brings us into unity with her. It is a fact, though, that the Trinity doctrine has its origin in paganism; it dates back to ancient Babylon. It is one of the many pagan customs and teachings that the early Roman church adopted in its effort to unite pagans and Christians; it has proved a deadly compromise.

The whole Roman Catholic system is corrupted by pagan concepts and practices and teachings that are unknown in God’s Word, or else forthrightly revealed as offensive to God. Paul warned the early Christian church of the coming apostasy in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4: “. . . And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that *he is God*.” Paul wrote that “the mystery of iniquity doth already work” in his day (verse 7), and the fourth century saw major steps taken by the apostate church toward the fulfillment of Paul’s prophecy regarding this man of sin, who declares himself to be God on earth, and who accepts worship due only to God. Emperor Constantine in AD 321 intervened in religious matters for political reasons by decreeing a change from the seventh-day Sabbath to the pagan day of sun worship, but the papacy eventually took over the caesars’ title and powerful role of “pontifex maximus” (“pontiff,” or pope). The ensuing centuries saw an increase in the papal power’s blasphemous boasts and cruel decrees, and in the extent of this now-global religious power. Then, also, did the trinity doctrine evolve into the central doctrine of the fully compromised church.

Worship of the Trinity doctrine’s triune god is not limited to the Roman Catholic Church and modern Seventh-day Adventists. Unfortunately, the Protestants that separated themselves from the church at Rome in the Dark Ages because of her unbiblical traditions and oppressive policies never dispensed with some of her errors, namely, the Trinity, along with the counterfeit Sabbath. Our own Seventh-day Adventist Protestant denomination, raised up by God’s amazing providences after Rome lost her power in 1798, began free of those two errors, but unfortunately has now officially embraced the triune god of the harlot of Revelation 17—not in the same concept of one god with three different manifestations, but in the tritheistic concept of three separate and distinct co-eternal, co-equal gods comprising one god. Either view is disturbing, because of the eternal consequences of believing in a false god in the presence of plain Scriptural testimony of one true God and His only begotten Son. What is the point of worship on the day named in the fourth commandment, if the God who chose and sanctified that day is not the one worshipped then? What is the point of worship on *any* day if the God being worshipped is a false god? The seal of the living God is given to those who love and obey *Him*. He says of Himself, “I am the LORD, and there is none else” (Isa 45:6), but those honor a false concept of God after being made aware of the true God tragically receive the “mark of the beast.”

There is good news, though. The truth about the Godhead is spreading rapidly as God’s shaking of the church intensifies.



## Whom will you worship?

Now let's look again at Satan's parallel to the seal of God, which is the mark of the beast. Sunday is the popular, but corrupt, parallel for the true Sabbath of the fourth commandment. The Trinity is Satan's insulting parallel for our holy, majestic God. Now the question is, have men been diligent to avoid the spurious for the true? Sadly, no, and they are in danger because of it. "Men have honored Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. Each sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each.... It is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God's kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion, for they acknowledge themselves subjects of the kingdom whose mark they bear...."

"Those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue...." (CCh 334-5)

Indeed, the issue is worship. Those who fear God will choose according to His expressed will, because love for the "one true God" leads to worship on His day. But what if knowledge of who that God is has been kept from those who would obey, if only they knew? Revealing that true God is one of the purposes of this book. Reader, whom you will worship, and when you will worship? Your choice is either the Father, the true and living God, on His Sabbath, or the beast "full of names of blasphemy" (Rev. 17:3) on the day it has dedicated to the Trinity god.

Revelation 17:3: "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." In verse five the Bible says the harlot woman/church has this written on her forehead: "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." All of her daughters have the same character; they are all harlots. That is the testimony of God's Word. If, knowing of the true God and His holy day, you choose to obey the blasphemous beast that requires worship of a triune god, then whichever version of that god you choose, you're in the group that has the mark of the beast. Remember that in Ezekiel 8 and 9, there is a list of abominations that exist among God's professed people. All the abominations listed in chapter 8 have to do with whom they worship. Chapter 8 ends with the leadership worshipping the sun. Sister White told us that these Scriptures apply to God's church of the last days, and she encouraged us to study them. Truth is progressive, and God is unfolding new truth concerning false worship for us today.

Look what Mrs. White wrote for our understanding: "The light we have received upon the third angel's message is the true light. The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. *Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll*; but a most solemn work

is to be accomplished in our world. The Lord's command to His servants is: 'Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' Isaiah 58:1." (6T 17)

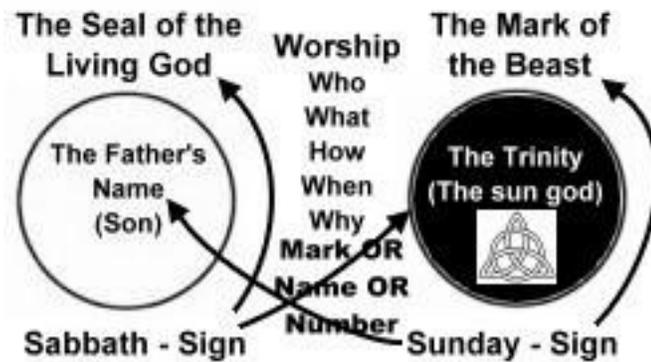
In Mrs. White's statement above, regarding the mark of the beast, she said, "Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll." She wrote this over 100 years ago, and truth has been unfolding since then. What more was there to be known, concerning the mark of the beast? It needs to be understood that the "mark of the beast" (Sunday-keeping) is not the only thing to avoid. Revelation 13:17 warns us of three things: "And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the *mark*, or the *name* of the beast, or the *number* of his name." Some disloyal to God accept the "name" of the beast, or the "number of his name." Earlier in this chapter, we discussed what that name is. It comes from Revelation 13:1; the name on the beast's heads is "blasphemy." It has to do with assumed power over souls of men, as well as the development of the idolatrous omega, which is the outgrowth of the satanic, mystical, unbiblical conception of God Kellogg introduced into the Adventist church. The other so-called Christian churches had already adopted Rome's triune substitute for God, but for over 100 years, Adventism resisted it; its members alone stood for Jehovah. But then the same apostasy entered the Adventist church, and the dumb dogs did not bark. (Isa 56:10) The spiritualistic deception of the omega is more subtle, more sophisticated than the deception at Baal-peor, but the failure to resist idol worship is the same. These are strong words, but they are true. This is a most serious matter. The issue with the beast has as much to do with *who* is worshipped as *when* worship is given. It is death to receive either the mark or the name of the beast. When a false god is worshipped when knowledge of the true God is readily available, there is a consequence from heaven. God offers salvation to "His people" who "come out of her," but no such promise is made to His people who go into her, to worship her god instead of Him. Satan knows that those who worship that idol of man's perverse conception, after they have heard of the true God, are lost, just as the Jews were lost—by rejecting God and His begotten Son. That is the deceptiveness of Satan's Trinity god. There is no neutral ground in this battle for souls.

### **Three summary questions for you**

Let me ask you this question: Is it possible that a Sunday worshipper could be worshipping the true and living God? In Revelation 18:4, God says to such people, "Come out of her, *My people*." So, the answer would be Yes. However, notice that God's command to them is to "come out"—out of the groups and organizations that worship the false God, and out of worshipping on the beast's day. His reason is strong motivation: "That ye partake not of her sins, nor receive not of her plagues."

Now let me ask you another question: Is it possible that a Sabbath-keeper can be ignorantly worshipping the god of Rome while dutifully keeping the Sabbath? Yes, he can be doing so, and most are. But God is shaking His church and bringing this matter to the forefront, in order to make manifest where each individual's loyalty lies. It is not too late to change your allegiance when you realize you have been deceived. God loves you and wants to save you. He gives you enough evidence on which to base your faith in Him as your God. In His first commandment, He has given no doubt as to His commitment to us: "*I am the Lord thy God*."

Here's a third question—perhaps the most serious question anyone's ever asked you: If you're keeping the right day but have the wrong God, do you think you will receive the seal of the right God—the "living God" of the Scriptures? Said another way, do you think He will give you His seal if you're not even worshipping Him?



This quotation comes from the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*: “The third angel’s message has been sent forth to the world, warning men against receiving the mark of the beast or of his image in their foreheads or in their hands. *To receive this mark means to come to the same decision as the beast has done, and to advocate the same ideas*, in direct opposition to the Word of God.” (7BC 979)

Now think about that. Those who receive the mark will be advocating the same unbiblical ideas as the blasphemous beast. That beast has told us in official statements what its most important truth is; the Trinity concept of God is the basis of all their teachings. It pertains to worship, and they strongly advocate it “in direct opposition to the Word of God.” So, if we advocate the same God as the Roman Catholic Church does, what are we promoting, according to that inspired statement in the previous paragraph? The mark of the beast.

### Who will receive the seal of the living God?

There was a lady by the name of Mrs. Hastings who was dearly loved by everyone who knew her. Shortly after Mrs. Hastings’ untimely death, Sister White had a vision and wrote these words of comfort to her grieving husband and children: “I saw that she [Mrs. Hastings] was sealed and would come up at the voice of God and stand upon the earth, and would be with the 144,000. I saw we need not mourn for her; she would rest in the time of trouble, and all that we could mourn for was our loss in being deprived of her company. I saw her death would result in good.” (Ltr 10, 1850; 1SM 263)

That was written in 1850, when almost every Adventist was a non-trinitarian. It is obvious from this statement that there were those among our pioneers that went to their graves *sealed*. That means that they were not only Sabbath-keepers, but that they were *not* “advocating the same ideas” as the beast. Thus, they had, at that time, a true concept of the Lord of the Sabbath *and* His chosen day for worship. Had they been “coming to the same decision as the beast has done” about the Godhead, meaning had they accepted the Trinity doctrine, they would not have received the seal of God, even if they worshipped on the seventh day. They would have been worshipping a false god that has no seal, no Son, and no power to offer eternal life.

### A Somber Thought

Is it possible our denomination has been misled? We are forced to consider that possibility, or else we have to believe that the very ones with whom God worked to establish this denomination in the mid-1800s had the wrong conception of the very God Ellen White said was directing them! Yet you’ve read earlier in this book the prophetess’ statements of absolute confidence in the biblical understandings settled upon then. Thus there is a somber point to consider in the observation included in the book *The Trinity*, written by three Andrews University professors: Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon and John W. Reeve. We find this quotation on page 190: “That most of the leading pioneers were *non-Trinitarian* in their theology has become *accepted Adventist history*.... More recently, a further question has arisen with increasing urgency: was the pioneers’ belief about the Godhead

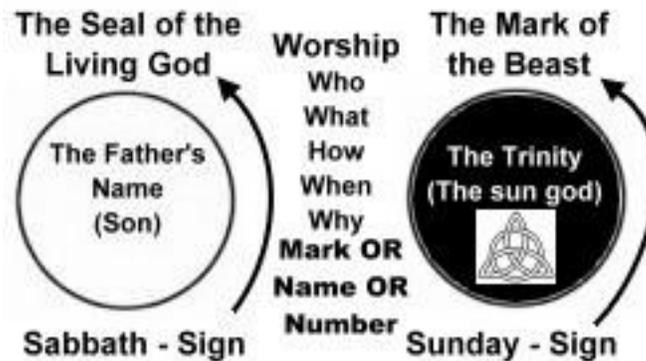
right or wrong? As one line of reasoning goes, either the pioneers were wrong, and the present church is right, or the pioneers were right and the present Seventh-day Adventist church has apostatized from biblical truth.”

James White was a very vocal non-trinitarian, remaining so till his death at age sixty. Sister White never said he was wrong. The pioneer position was that there were two divine Beings in the Godhead; that their shared omnipresent Holy Spirit, called in Scripture the “Spirit of God” or the “Spirit of Christ,” is the third person of the Godhead; that God the Father is the eternal Father; and that His literal Son was somehow “begotten” at some point in eternity. That’s what Mrs. Hastings believed, and Sister White says she was sealed.

For our salvation's sake, we had better not miss what God has been revealing to His people in these last days. How can we today expect to be sealed like Mrs. Hastings, if we have a different god than the pioneers had, a god with the name of “Trinity”? Among the 144,000 there will not be different groups with different views on what or who composes the Godhead. The correct understanding was given to our early pioneers by unquestionable divine authority. All who are sealed worship the true and living God and have the Father’s name in their foreheads.

It is a correct understanding of the Godhead—a settling into biblical truth about Father, Son and Holy Spirit—that will constitute the Father’s name in the foreheads of those with the seal of the living God. Jesus Himself taught, “He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.” (John 5:23) True worshippers will know Jesus Christ to be the only begotten Son of God; they will know the true identity of the Holy Spirit and the Father. In contrast, the beast’s blasphemous Trinity will be accepted by those who receive the mark of the beast. They will exalt a concept of god that denies both Father and Son—that makes them “non-entities,” as Sister White phrased it. By accepting the “same ideas” of the beast, in this case the Trinitarian conception of divinity, a seventh-day Sabbath-keeper can end up with the mark of the beast, just as the Jews in Christ’s time were dutiful Sabbath-keepers and rejected the Son of God then. In rejecting the Son, they rejected the Father who sent Him.

This is the correct view of the seal and the mark.



My prayer is that this has made you more aware of the deeper issues pertaining to the seal and the mark, and in particular, the issue of whom we worship. Remember that Satan is at war with God’s remnant people. His greatest all-time deception has been embraced by the very people who think they know how to survive the coming test of the Sunday law. His strategy from Sister White’s death through the following six and one-half decades was to deceive Adventists into changing gods, which they officially did in 1980. And yet, we may be found in the “very small remnant” loyal to God (Isa 1:9)—a remnant that is growing as the deception is revealed for what it is.

“Do not think that if you take your position for the Bible truth you will lose your position [or man’s good opinion of you]. You had better lose your position [and man’s approval] than lose Jesus. You had better be

partakers of the self-denial and self-sacrifice of the Lord than to go in your own way, seeking to gather to yourself the treasures of this life [or the approval of men]. You cannot carry any of it into the grave. You will come up from the grave without anything, but if you have Jesus, you will have everything. He is all that you will require to stand the test of the day of God, and is not this enough for you?" Ms 20, 1894.

Note: The website [www.revelation1412.org](http://www.revelation1412.org) has a video by Nader Mansour titled *The Seal and the Mark*, from which much of the information for this chapter was derived, with his permission.