

Revelation's HOPE

Lesson 14: The Land Beast of Revelation 13

I. Introduction

In 1980 the United States Supreme Court ruled that the posting of the Ten Commandments in public school rooms is unconstitutional.ⁱ Another defeat occurred when Chief Justice of AL Supreme Court lost his battle over the Ten Commandments in the courtroom. In 2005, we find the Ten Commandments lost yet again – this time in Kentucky.ⁱⁱ However even more troubling is the attempt to abolish the Law of God from Christian pulpits. Have you heard that: the law was for the Jews, not the church? That the law was for OT times, not NT times? Or, the Law has been abolished and nailed to the cross? Maybe you have heard that since we are not under the law but under grace the ten commandments do not matter anymore?

A. This is not new

“Be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position” (**2 Peter 2:17**, NIV).

- Paul called the antichrist “the man of lawlessness” in **2 Thessalonians 2**.
- And Daniel saw that the “Little Horn,” or the antichrist, would try to change the times and the laws (**Daniel 7:25**).
- I believe that these passages make it abundantly clear that the great object of the antichrist’s attack is the law of God represented by His Ten Commandments this is further seen in Revelation→

B. Revelation Calls Us Back to Total Allegiance

- **Revelation 14:7** – Fear God and give glory to Him.
- **Ecclesiastes 12:7** – Keeping the commandments is part of fearing / revering God.
- **Proverbs 3:1** – Let us keep His commandments.
- **Revelation 14:12** – We are told that God’s people will keep ALL of His commandments.

II. Satan’s planned attack

“And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus” (**Rev 12:17** ASV).

- If Satan could convince everyone to be obedient to him instead of God, then he would be taking God’s place. The Bible says that we are servants of the one that we choose to obey (**Roman 6:16**). OBEY?

A. Commandments in Bible

“And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: (**Gen 2:16** ASV)

“and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments”(Exo 20:6 ASV).

- *Mitzvah* in Hebrew or *Prostasso* in Greek OT (LXX or Septuagint).

- **Revelation 12:17** – *entolas* which is linked to the Sabbath one of the 10 Commandments (**Luke 23:56**). *Entolas* is a Greek work that can refer to specific sections of the Torah or to a specific command.

B. What Satan Is Undermining

- John says in **1 John 4:8**, that “*God is Love.*” Then in **2 John 6** he says, “This is love that we live in obedience to His commands.”
- Since God is Love, and love is obedience to His commands, then we can see that the commands of God, more specifically, the Ten Commandments, are actually a kind of written transcript of the very character of God Himself.
- WHAT: LOVE, but WHO→
- When Satan challenged the law, he actually challenged God’s own character. Therefore, any attempt to change the law is an attempt to change God, whom the Bible says, is the same yesterday, today and forever (**Hebrews 13:8**).
- Satan is tearing down love, and undermining the God of love – Jesus.
- What about the Law being nailed to the cross? Doesn’t that prove that love is all that matters?

C. Love = Law

- The truth is that when Jesus said that the new law was to love God and our fellow man, He was actually quoting the Old Testament (**Duet. 6:5, Lev.19:18**).
- John said in **2 John, verse 5**, “*I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another.*” How can Jesus say, “I give you a new command,” and then quote the Old Testament?
- Why did Jesus say that the new command was to love one another, and John said that the command that we love one another was not a new command at all, but one that “we have had from the beginning?”
- We can only conclude from this that Christ did not really give a new command that had not existed before, it was just new to them. The people had simply lost sight of the fact that God’s law is a law of love.
- The leaders of Israel were trying to make themselves acceptable to God by obeying the law. The inevitable result was that they became more critical of others. Thus the real principles of love were lost. Christ was trying to teach them the true beauty of the law. In this sense Christ gave them a new command.
- The command: LOVE, not FORCE!
- “*And this is love, that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.*” The law of God, then, actually teaches us how to love.
- In **Romans 13:8-10**, Paul wrote, “*Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law.*”
- Love fulfills the law, that much is clear, but this does not mean that it replaces the law.

- It doesn't mean that as Christians we need not be concerned with the law, because he said in verse 9:
- *"The laws, 'Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not covet,' and whatever other law there may be, are summed up in this rule: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."*

D. Nailed to the Cross?

- Jesus said in **Matthew 5:17**: *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets."*
- Sabbath kept AFTER the cross by disciples (**Luke 23 & Acts**):

⁵⁶ And they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment" (**Luk 23:1** NAS).

- What about Colossians 2?
- Let's look at Colossians 2

⁸ Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: ⁹ for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, ¹⁰ and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power: ¹¹ in whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ. . . (**Col 2:8-11** ASV).

E. The point of Colossians 2 – Spiritual Circumcision

¹² having been buried with him in baptism [spiritual sign of faith], wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses; ¹⁴ having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out that way, nailing it to the cross;

F. Ordinance were nailed to the cross

¹⁵ having despoiled the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. ¹⁶ Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: ¹⁷ which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's" (**Col 2:12-17**, ASV).

- Ordinances pointed out need of Savior = our sin was made clear.
- Ones that were no longer necessary have. . .

G. Main Elements that were "nailed to the cross"

- Religious observance involving meat, drink, Festivals / Feast Days, New Moons, shadow (something pointing forward to a greater reality that correlates with the cross: sacrifices).
- We find all of these elements in Leviticus

H. Leviticus 23

"And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, ² Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The set feasts of Jehovah, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my set feasts. ³ Six days shall work be done: but on the seventh day is a

sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of work: it is a sabbath unto Jehovah in all your dwellings” (Lev 23:1-3, ASV).

- The Seventh-day Points back to Creation and forward to Cross & Coming. Not involving Meat, Drink, etc
- This is the weekly Sabbath. However, there are yearly ones as well.
- Notice where feasts come in

“⁴ These are the set feasts [religious festivals] of Jehovah, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their appointed season. ⁵ In the first month [Moon], on the fourteenth day of the month at even, is Jehovah's passover” (Lev 23:4-5 ASV).

- New moon = a way of measuring a month.
- We find that “meat”/ food and drink are linked to the feasts not the weekly Sabbath.
- What about the idea of a sabbath day?

I. sabbath days

³⁸ “besides the sabbaths of Jehovah, and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill-offerings, which ye give unto Jehovah. ³⁹ Howbeit on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruits of the land, ye shall keep the feast of Jehovah seven days: on the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest. ³⁸ besides the sabbaths of Jehovah, and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill-offerings, which ye give unto Jehovah. ³⁹ Howbeit on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruits of the land, ye shall keep the feast of Jehovah seven days: on the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest” (Lev 23:38-39, ASV).

- Feasts referred to as sabbaths.
- They involved meat, drink, festivals and new moons.
- They were a “shadow” pointing to a greater reality: the Sacrifice of Christ.
- Colossians 2 is therefore referring to the festivals that often involved animal sacrifices that pre-figured or were a shadow of the greater reality: the death of Christ!

J. “That was against us”

- Inscriptions of criminals were nailed to the cross above the head of the guilty.
- Ex: Jesus the King of the Jews
- The sacrifices pointed forward to the One who be the Ultimate Sacrifice to take away the guilt from our sins.
- The finite sacrifices could not accomplish this.
- In this way, our willful breaking of God’s law was against us not the law.
Function of law→

III. Function of Law: Mirror

⁸ Howbeit if ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: ⁹ but if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all. ¹¹ For he that said, Do not commit

adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou dost not commit adultery, but killest, thou art become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak ye, and so do, as men that are to be judged by a law of liberty. . .” (**Jam 2:8-12**)

A. Royal Law acts as a Mirror

²³ “For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: ²⁴ for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. ²⁵ But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing” (**Jam 1:23-25**, ASV).

- Wipe, smash or look? -----Why important?

B. Warning from Greek Scriptures

- “Be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position” (**2 Peter 3:15-17**).
- ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way” (**2Th 2:1** ASV)
- Lawlessness was at work in Paul’s day and Revelation reveals it will happen again. What is the Mark of Lawlessness in Revelation?

C. The Beast of **Revelation 13** = a kingdom

- Medieval Church period 538-1798
- Apostate Christianity which later became known as the Roman Catholic Church
- The pope / Bishop of Rome was the head of this organization when many terrible episodes in Church history occurred.
- Blasphemous teachings infiltrated the Church.
- This power persecuted God’s people and will do so again with a large Confederacy of evil.
- Salvation for ALL but warnings are in order→

D. What Counteracts Deception? The Creator Worship message of Revelation 14.

E. What to be aware of at the end of time

- The Medieval type of worship will be re-established as Catholicism becomes a major world player again.
- This is what **Revelation 13:3** refers to when saying the deadly wound was “healed”. Since 1929 we have seen the wound healing.
- The “seal” or decisive teaching of God is to show total allegiance to Him through worshipping Him on Sabbath (**Rev. 7:2-3; Rev. 14:6-7; Exodus 20:8-11; Romans 4:11; Exodus 13:7-9; Isaiah 8:16; Ezekiel 20:12**).
- The Mark of Rome also has to do with “worship” (**Rev. 14:9-10**).ⁱⁱⁱ
- This same kind of religion existed in Jesus’ day:

“And he continued, ‘You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! ¹⁰ For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ ¹¹ But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God)-- ¹² then you no longer let them do anything for their

father or mother. ¹³ Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that' " (**Mar 7:9-13** NIV).

- We have done the same thing in the Christian Church. In fact it happened to the 4th Commandment.
- Does anybody have the "mark" now for observing Sunday instead of the Lord's Day (Sabbath)? NO! This will happen outwardly in a certain context at the end of time. Right now decisions are being made that will determine what our choices will be in the future.^{iv}
- What has been happening in the United States is no surprise because it also happened in Jesus' day.

IV. The United States in Prophecy

A. The Land Beast of Revelation (**Revelation 13:11**). **Daniel 7** says a beast is a power.

1. Arises around 1798
2. Arises in a relatively unpopulated area
3. No Crowns = democratic
4. It would be a young nation in 1798
5. It would arise to world power and domination (forces all to worship)
6. Began lamblike and then speaks as a dragon (speaking = legislating)

B. What the land beast does (**Revelation 13:11-14**)

1. Erodes freedom by speaking like a dragon
2. Gives honor and forces all to worship the Beast

C. This s underway in America

- Enforced Sunday worship that begins in the United States and then goes worldwide.
- Evolution has already eroded belief in a Creator
- James Robertson said, "The immorality and corruption have made God angry; and now He is beginning to punish America for her sins."
- In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, endorsed by Pope John Paul II, we read, "Respecting Christian liberty and the common good of all, Christians should seek recognition of *Sundays* and the church's holy days as *legal holidays*" (article 2188).
- *In 1961, after years of debate the Supreme Court ruled that Sunday blue laws [laws enforcing the closure of businesses in order to observe Sunday] are constitutional!*
- Peter Eldersveld said, both in a radio broadcast on the *Back to God Hour*, and in the printed pamphlet, *Save Our Sunday*. He said, "Business can easily be put in there - if you would just boycott them, not only on Sunday but also during the week, they would have to quit their desecration of the Lord's Day or go out of business. It is up to you to put the stigma of public censure on Sunday business."
- Dr. Bascom Robbins in a lecture "The Decalogue," in Burlington, Kansas said, "There is a class of people in this country who will not keep the Christian Sabbath [Sunday] unless they are forced to do so. But that can

easily be done. We have twenty million of men, besides women and children, in this country who keep the Christian Sabbath. If we would say we will not sell anything to them, we will not buy anything from them, we will not work for them or hire them to work for us - the thing could be wiped out and all the world would keep the Christian Sabbath.”

- When Edward Rowe, director of the Religious Roundtable, was asked that if it is time for the Moral Majority to let their influence be felt in government, could this also include influencing legislation to make Sunday a day of worship in our country? He responded, “Legislation to urge it? Yes!”
- **GOD DOES NOT USE FORCE, but LOVE! To LEAD US, GUIDE US AND HELP US SEE THE WAY WE SHOULD GO. THAT IS THE ESSENCE OF THE CROSS AND CHRIST!**

V. Counteracting Deception: A message of the Creator (JESUS)

Isaiah 2	Revelation 14
Time: Last Days (after time of Jesus)	Time: Last Days (just before Harvest)
Audience: All nations	Audience: All nations
Message: Worship / Learn ways of Creator	Message: Worship / Learn ways of Creator
Special focus: Judgment	Special focus: Judgment
Zion = Church	Zion = Church
Visible evidence of allegiance	Visible evidence of allegiance

- WHO will you follow? God is doing everything He can to let us know about what is coming. He is giving us opportunities now to decide to follow Jesus.
- Why not decide to surrender your life to Him in TOTAL OBEDIENCE to all of His commandments?
- Why not start taking a public stand for Him now by keeping the Sabbath and spending that time with Him?
- Why not follow the Lamb?

ⁱ http://articles.cnn.com/2005-06-27/justice/scotus.ten.commandments_1_kentucky-decision-displays-current-public-life?_s=PM:LAW (accessed 1/19/2013).

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Catholic Record, September 1 of 1923 says: “Sunday is our mark of authority. . .The Church is above the Bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact”. Also see the book “Rome’s Challenge: Why Do Protestants Keep Sunday?”.

^{iv} See James 4:17 and Acts 17:30. God will not hold us accountable for something we did not know, but once we do we need to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit.