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Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8

Several years ago, on a quarterly basis, I had written a teaching letter that was translated into Farsi and Urdu. We received many testimonies regarding these articles that were written. Since there are questions to so many subjects and topics as well as a great desire to learn and grow, I have felt the burden and the inspiration to start it up again. Our purpose and desire is to stay with the teachings of brother Branham and show them forth clearly from the Bible. This is my burden and my calling.

The March issue will cover three important subjects:

1. Fasting and Prayer
2. Mark of the Beast

Fasting and Prayer

Fasting and prayer has always been a way for the people of God to draw near to Him. Ultimately fasting should be used as a means for believers to show forth that their greatest joy and delight is in God. Above all human cravings, is our craving for God. And within this, we are stating that His wisdom is above ours, His power is above ours, and that He is able to meet our needs above anything on this earth. It is not as though our fasting wins the favor of God, but fasting brings us to the place of desperation and humility to where we can indeed hear the voice of God. Notice what brother Branham says here.

“But God's gift is the Spirit of God that came down in the form of an Angel. Now, He didn't have wings. He looked like a man. I heard Him when He walked [Brother Branham illustrates - Ed.], just as that, and walked on the floor. Walked right over, just as normal as any man, and talks just like any man. He comes, time after time, through the room and different places when I'm fasting and praying.”¹

Often the Angel of the Lord would come to him when he was fasting and praying. He was in the condition to hear. This is further bolstered when we consider the following statement...

“If your—if you keep your stomach empty, the blood is at your brain, and you must be ready. And if you're all full when you're... That's the power of fasting. When you're—when

¹ 50-0713 - Obey The Voice Of The Angel - William Marrion Branham

*you're full, the blood goes into your stomach to digest your food. You see? And then when you're empty, it's in your—
in your brain. So you can be just... 'Cause them two spirits is so close it could deceive the very elect, if possible.”²*

So when you are in fasting the blood remains distributed evenly in your body and therefore you can remain clear and focused, ready to hear from God. It is not as though fasting earns God's favor or brings an answer, but it is bringing us under submission and into that condition to hear and follow God's order.

Let's review a few Scriptures regarding fasting.

“Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:” Joel 2:12

“And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.” Joel 2:13

The fasting, along with weeping and mourning, was to signify that they were turning to God with their whole heart. He did not want merely an outward turning, but a genuine turning of the heart to God, as in rend your heart not your garments. True fasting is signifying that your heart is turning to God in repentance and reliance upon Him.

² 50-0813A - The Resurrection Of Lazarus - William Marrion Branham

“And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” Matthew 17:20

*“Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.”
Matthew 17:21*

In order for the disciples to cast out this demon they needed greater faith and along with it, prayer and fasting. Faith was lacking on the part of the disciples, but prayer and fasting were lacking as well. Prayer and fasting brings the condition of the heart and of power in your life in order to cast out demons.

“The nights grow on. Of course, I tire, and tire more. It is a truth that I believe, as a physical man tears down, the spiritual man has a chance. That’s what fasting and things are for. He can have a chance to work upon these five senses of ours, to bring us to believe and have faith in Him.”³

As the physical man wears down, the spiritual man - the inner man - can rise up and make contact with God. As our physical being wears down, God begins to work upon our five senses so that they can be out of the way and we can make contact with God through faith.

Fasting does not save or heal you, faith does. But fasting brings us into a condition where our bodies come in subjection

³ 50-0815 - Who is God? - William Marrion Branham

to the Lord and we can be more sensitive to His leading and direction in our lives. It also shows forth that our greatest joy is in God.

Since we are living in the hour of the coming of the Lord in Bride form, some people misunderstand the word of God. They teach that we should no longer take communion.

1 Corinthians 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

The Lord's supper continues until redemption is complete, even though we are living in the hour that the Lord has descended in Spirit form with a shout-message to his Bride. Brother Branham himself has continued this and in fact, Communion at Tucson Tabernacle was his last message to the Bride. Then, people think we should stop fasting as well.

“¹⁴ Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? ¹⁵ And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.” Matthew 9:14-15

The carnal reasoning these believers take is, “We now have the Bridegroom with us, in Spirit form, so it is no longer necessary to fast. Just as the 12 disciples did not fast because Jesus was there, now, the disciples of the last days should not fast.” However, a fundamental error is made here. Jesus encouraged his disciples to fast (as we read above) when they were unable to cast out a demon. Secondly, Jesus was not laying forth an absolute statement here, as evidence by our

first point. He was stating that it was a time of rejoicing for the true believers when the Messiah was there. They had a temporary space of time when the kingdom was so near. The kingdom is not now, but it will be soon. When the King and Queen take their place on the throne there will be no need to fast. But until then, we must fast and pray to get closer to God and to put our flesh in a position that it can hear and act upon what God is personally speaking to us.

Mark of the Beast

“¹⁵ And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. ¹⁶ 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: ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.” Revelation 13:15-18

The Book of Revelation is a book of symbols and it takes the Spirit of Revelation to come and make known these symbols to us. In order to properly understand the mark of the beast, we need to understand the first beast, the second beast and the image of the beast.

As much as scholars have tried to come and show forth something different, we understand that the first beast that is

spoken of is the Roman Empire. There is not one verse in Scripture that shows there will be a different empire upon the earth at the end time than the one that was the last form, which was Rome. It certainly takes a different form than the previous incarnation of the Roman Empire, but it is the Restored Roman Empire. Let's notice the prophecy of Daniel to support this revelation.

“³⁸ And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. ³⁹ And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. ⁴¹ And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. ⁴³ And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. ⁴⁴ And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” Daniel 2:38-44

As we see in the image above, the first kingdom of gold is Babylon, then silver which was Persia, then bronze which was Greece and then iron which was Pagan/Papal Rome. However, the iron continues into the feet, but is mixed with clay. The iron mixed with clay is the Catholic and Protestant nations, the divided nations that we have seen since the time of the Protestant Reformation until now. There will be no more kingdoms.



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. ² And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and

his seat, and great authority. ³ And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” Revelation 13:1-3

The beast of Revelation 13 is the Roman Empire at the end-time. This beast has a deadly wound which was healed. The deadly wound was created when the empire went from Pagan Rome to Papal Rome. Pagan Rome was killed and it came up revived as Papal Rome. The mixture of iron and clay we see manifested in that the beast has ten horns.

¹² And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. ¹³ These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.” Revelation 17:12-13

The ten horns on the beast are ten kings which have no kingdom as yet. They are presidents or prime ministers who make a confederation and put the beast (Antichrist) as the power over their nations. The divided nations of iron and clay, who are all under Satan, give their power and strength to the control of Satan incarnate, the Antichrist.

Next we have the beast which rises up out of the earth. This second beast is the American Empire which rose out of the earth, an unpopulated area, as opposed to the sea which is a populated area. ⁴

⁴ “And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Revelation 17:15

“¹¹ And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. ¹² And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³ And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,” Revelation 13:11-13

We can all read of the way the American Empire began to form, first like a lamb coming out of the earth with two horns. It was like a lamb, but it was not a lamb. It was the American bison. It rose up with freedom of religion, freedom of speech, but it turned and began to speak like a dragon, the dragon is Satan. He did wonders bringing his atomic and other bombs of fire out of heaven deceiving the whole world with its military and entertainment power.

“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.” Revelation 13:14

The American Empire begins to create an image to the Papal Roman Empire. They do this by forming an ecumenical movement to bring all Catholics and Protestants under the same ruling authority. And this same beast that forms the ecumenical movement as an image to the first beast then causes all, both great and small, to receive the mark of the beast in the forehead or the hand.

Let's look at the big picture. Satan is working through nations in order to create and set up a false worship. He wants

this worship to be as deceptive as possible so that it is very close to the real worship. Notice what Jesus says,

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matthew 24:24

He did not say there would arise false Jesuses - people running around claiming to be Jesus. This would not be deceptive at all. The word Christ comes from the Greek christos and it means “anointed”. So there will be false anointed ones and false prophets. They will look so much like the genuinely anointed prophets that it would deceive the elect, if that were possible. The false will be so very close to the real. This is the deceptive spiritual system that Satan is setting up using the American Empire. Using the charismatic and ecumenical movements, Satan is setting up a false worship outside of the word of God - one that is so close to the real, that only the elect will recognize the true from the false.

Today we see this spiritual movement taking place. Very few people care about the truth anymore. Instead they just want to know if you are a mainstream Christian and if you love Jesus. If you believe in tongues as the evidence of the Holy Spirit, truth does not matter; if you believe in three gods, truth is not important; if you are Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal, Church of Christ, Charismatic, truth makes no difference, as long as you believe in Jesus. Islam is not deceiving to a Bible believer, Buddhism is not deceiving to a Bible believer, but this movement sweeping across the globe of ecumenism is the real deceiver to take people away from the word of the Lord and the power of the truth!

The mark of the beast is a symbol, just as the image of the beast and the beasts are symbols. All of them have a specific spirit behind them. The image of the beast is the ecumenical spirit to set up a false worship. The first beast is the Papal Roman Empire and the second beast is the American Empire. But what then is the mark of the beast? To answer this question, let's first look at the opposite of the mark of the beast. All those that worship God in spirit and in truth receive the seal of God. All those that worship the beast (Rome) and his image (ecumenism) receive the mark of the beast.

² 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, ³ Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. ⁴ And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.” Revelation 7:2-4

Is God concerned with putting a seal upon the foreheads of believers? Here the Lord is putting a seal upon their foreheads. The seal signifies ownership in this instance because it is a signet stamp or signet seal that is placed upon their foreheads. Let's look even closer at this seal in Revelation 14.

“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.” Revelation 14:1

These believers had the Father's name written in their foreheads. This speaks of the fact that they understand what

here and add the numbers, and you got exactly what God said the mark of the beast was: six hundred and sixty-six. See, Vicarivs Filii... Now, I've been in Rome and been in the Vatican.”⁵

The Bible says that the mark will be on the hand or on the forehead. Many mistake this to mean some kind of biometric chip, but that is wrong. Just as the seal of God in the forehead is a spiritual thing so is the mark. Notice in Deuteronomy what Moses tells the people regarding the word of God.

“Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.” Deuteronomy 11:18

Putting the word in our heart and soul becomes like a sign on our hand and forehead. We remember it and our works manifest it.

“Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.” Jeremiah 3:3

A whore's forehead simply speaks of the rejection of the word and continuing on in stubborn and unrepentant disobedience.

If you just put “hand” into any Bible search tool you will see the hundreds of references that speak of the hand as the work, will, or control of God or men. Here are two examples.

⁵ 60-1209 - The Sardisean Church Age - William Marrion Branham

“And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me.” Ezekiel 8:1

“We have given the hand to the Egyptians, and to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.” Lamentations 5:6

To receive the mark in the hand or forehead shows that you are under the dominion, understanding, and work of the beast. This deceptive worship is so close to the real thing that it will deceive the very elect if possible. It is to a spirit that people are sealed.

“This is so because in Revelation 17:3-6 it states that the whore, Mystery Babylon, is seated on the beast. She is controlling the last, or fourth empire. This Roman Church is doing that. With the world church system under her, Rome will be controlling, and this image (church system) will be obedient to Rome because Rome controls the gold of the world. Thus all the people have to belong to the world church system or be at the mercy of the elements for they cannot buy or sell without the mark of the beast in the hand or head. This mark in the head means that they will have to take the doctrine of the world church system which is Trinitarianism, etc., and the mark in the hand which means to do the will of the world church. With this great power, the church systems will persecute the true bride. This image will try to keep the bride from preaching and teaching, etc. Her ministers will be forbidden to give comfort and truth to the people who need it. But before the antichrist (in person) takes over this complete world system of churches, the true church will be taken away from this world to

be with the Lord. God will catch away His bride for the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb.”⁶

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⁶ An Exposition Of The Seven Church Ages - Chapter Ten - A Resume Of The Ages - Brother William Marrion Branham