

2017 - 500 years after Luther (500YAL) – a Catholic Response

What has gone wrong since the time of Luther?

Part 003

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Point 38 Pg. 35 says : ‘...mark of the beast...’

Answer

After having read Point 37 of this Commentary, where Luther is recorded as saying,

“I never approved of a schism, nor will I approve of it for all eternity... The Roman Church is more honoured by God than all others is not to be doubted... Though nowadays everything is in a wretched state, it is no ground for separating from the Church. On the contrary, the worse things are going, the more should we hold close to her, for it is not by separating from the Church that we can make her better... There is no sin, no amount of evil, which should be permitted to dissolve the bond of charity or break the bond of unity of the body” (Patrick O’Hare in *The Facts about Luther*, 356. Ref in *Crossing the Tiber* by Stephen K Ray)

It is then quite odd that Luther should then have attacked the Church in calling her the ‘Harlot of Babylon’ and that for SDAs to claim her members to have the ‘Mark of the Beast’. George Sipe, a Protestant convert to Catholicism, on his website entitled: *Convert Journal*, says of Luther:

It was Luther who first made the association of the Catholic Church to harlot of Babylon and the Pope as the Antichrist in his angry attack ***On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church***. Luther declares, “I now know of a certainty that the papacy is the kingdom of Babylon. (See also the Lutheran Book of Concord which continues this theme).

The irony of this is that when Martin Luther removed (by first demoting) Tobit, Judith, Baruch, Wisdom, Sirach, and 1 & 2 Maccabees from the Bible, he wanted to go further but his political support base objected. On the chopping block were parts of Daniel, Ester, and all of James, Jude and Revelation. Yes – Revelation, the same book he drew on to attack the one true Church. Of Revelation he said that he could “in no way detect that the Holy Spirit produced it.” The complete Bible, unlike Martin Luther’s subset, remains unchanged from St Jerome’s Latin Vulgate translation in 397AD. <https://www.convertjournal.com/2011/08/myth-whore-of-babylon/>

What SDAs and other Protestants need to realise is that this shows Luther's lack of trust in the Holy Spirit, who wrote the Scriptures, using the pen of men. It shows Luther's fight against God. Luther ended up re-writing and editing out the Word of God. How can Protestants' interpretation of scripture be trusted, especially with their competing interpretations, when they reject whole swathes of the Bible as the Word of God, and refuse to have these Books in their bible version, with Martin Luther refusing to accept that Revelation was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Millennialism

Another problem Protestants have is that they take figurative Biblical language, such as the '1000 years' from Revelation 20, and say that it is to be understood literally, and Biblical doctrines which should be taken literally, such as the Words of Christ at the Last Supper, "This is My Body, This is My Blood", they take figuratively.

This is why, when Protestants come to identify such things as, "The Mark of the Beast", "The Whore of Babylon" and "End Time Prophecies" such as "Millennialism", which are common themes among Protestants including SDAs, they clearly misinterpret scripture. For example, the website CUF explains the problems with Millennialism in their article entitled: *The Church, The Millennium and the Rapture*, which states:

Issue:

Revelation 20 speaks of Satan being bound and Christ reigning with His saints for a thousand years (a millennium). Many Protestants understand this 1,000-year reign literally and believe that it will occur on earth in the future. They also cite 1 Thessalonians 4: 17 and try to make an historical connection between something called "the rapture"—when Christians are "taken up"—and this millennium. What does the Church teach regarding millennialism and the rapture?

Response:

There are three basic interpretations regarding Revelation 20 and "the millennium." The Church has traditionally taught one commonly known as "amillennialism," which means that the reign of God began with Christ's death and resurrection and the "thousand years" is a figurative number to describe the reign of His Church (2 Pt. 3:8-10; Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 664, 668-682).

In the past two centuries, two other interpretations have become popular among Protestants. One is called "postmillennialism," which was big in the 19th century. It teaches that the world is being Christianized over time and that Christ's return will follow a long period of peace on the earth called "the millennium." The second is "premillennialism," which is the most popular among Protestants of this century and

is also called “millenarianism” and “chiliasm.” Premillennialists believe that Christ is going to establish a literal reign of 1,000 years on earth between the Second Coming and the Last Judgment. Properly understood, the “rapture” refers to Christ’s gathering His followers at the end of time. Catholics believe that this event will happen at the general resurrection and Last Judgment, but they do not refer to the event as “the rapture.”

Discussion:

Postmillennialists, as noted, believe that the world is being Christianized over time and that Christ’s return will follow a long period of righteousness and peace on the earth called “the millennium.” This was a very popular view in the 19th century when people had an optimistic view of world history, believing that everything was getting better and better. This view, however, lost favor among its proponents this century, after two world wars and many atrocities provided substantial evidence of a moral decline, not an advance. Though postmillennialists do not necessarily interpret the number 1,000 literally, they do interpret the “reign of Christ” to mean that the earth will have a “paradise-like” period before Christ’s Second Coming and the Last Judgment.

This position is problematic for many reasons. The chief reason is that Scripture does not depict a period of worldwide Christianization before the Second Coming and the Last Judgment. Many scriptural passages portray the time between the two comings of Christ, i.e., the age we live in, as a time of trial and tribulation for Christians. For example, the Gospel of Matthew portrays both wheat (righteous men) and weeds (evildoers) living together in a field (the world) until the final harvest of the Last Judgment (Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43).

Premillennialism

This interpretation is currently the most popular one among Evangelical and Fundamentalist Protestants. Like the postmillennialists, they believe in an earthly paradise of Christianization before the end of the world. Unlike the postmillennialists, though, they believe that this paradise will take place between the Second Coming and the Last Judgment, two events which actually occur on the same day, as will be shown. But for premillennialists, Jesus will literally be a worldwide King on earth in the future. Many also believe that this “reign of Christ” will last, literally, one thousand years.

This position is also scripturally problematic because the Bible does not depict a 1,000-year period between Christ’s Second Coming and the Final Judgment. [1] Scripture speaks of “this age” (in which men marry, etc.) and “the age to come” (in which Christians receive eternal life, etc.), but not of a third period between those

ages.[2] If Jesus refers to only two “ages,” and the Last Judgment occurs at the end of this age (Mt. 13:39), where is the premillennialists’ millennium? The Last Judgment happens on the “last day” at the end of this age (Jn. 12:48; Mt. 13:39); the resurrection of the righteous—which some call “the rapture”—occurs on the “last day” at the end of this age (Jn. 6:54; Mk. 10:30); and these both happen on the day of Jesus’ return, i.e., “the day of the Lord.”[3]

In the 1940s, the Vatican declared that “millenarianism,” another term for “premillennialism,” cannot be safely taught (see Catechism, no. 676).

Premillennialists have spent countless hours and pages debating when the rapture will occur, such as before, during, or after “the tribulation.” The problem with most of the views—with the exception of the one called “post-tribulation”—is that Jesus will only return once, not two or three times. The Church teaches that Jesus will return once, and that the general resurrection and Last Judgment, in which Christ gathers His faithful, will follow—just as the Bible indicates.

An important thing to remember when dealing with “dispensationalist” premillennialists, is that they do not recognize the New Testament Church as the fulfillment of Old Testament Israel. They consider the “Church Age” as one period in a string of otherwise unconnected dispensations in history, and not the continuous unfolding of a single divine plan for salvation. Unfortunately, such are the theories conceived to compensate for a lack of continuous Christian history from Christ’s day to the present.

In contrast, Catholics believe that the Church is the new Israel,[4] the Body of Christ,[5] and the seed of the Kingdom[6] to which the faithful of all covenants with God belong. In Romans 11, Paul uses the analogy of an olive tree. A single olive tree is the Israel of God, from which natural and wild branches (Jews and Gentiles) may be cut and to which natural and wild branches (Jews and Gentiles) may be grafted. There are not two separate trees. As Christ is the fulfillment of all previous covenants (Mt. 5:17), the Church (His Body) is the fulfillment of Israel.[7]

Amillennialism

“The Church of today, of the present, is the Kingdom of Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven” —St. Augustine

Amillennialism, which corresponds to the Catholic understanding, interprets the 1000-year reign of Christ in Revelation 20 more symbolically. (After all, when John refers to binding a spirit like Satan with “chains,” the language can only be figurative.) According to this view, the millennium is not an earthly golden age of

total Christianization, but rather the present period of Christ's rule through His Church: "Behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you" (Lk. 17:21). Christ reigns right now with His saints in Heaven,[8] and the Church on earth participates in that reign in a way that will be fulfilled—fully realized or completed—at the Second Coming. The Church, the Kingdom, the Israel of God, and the millennium all refer to the same thing. Until the fulfillment of the Kingdom already planted (Lk. 13:18-19), the righteous and the evildoers will remain on earth.

It has clearly been more than a thousand years since Jesus' reign through the Church began. The number "1,000" is often used figuratively in scriptural writings to show a vast number conveying completeness. For example, Psalm 50:10 tells us God owns "the cattle on a thousand hills," but we know that in reality God owns all cattle everywhere, which would be a number much bigger than a thousand hills. Remember also the words of St. Peter: "[W]ith the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (cf. 2 Pt. 3:8-10). To God in eternity all time is present, and we must understand "1,000" figuratively, remembering the popular phrase "God works in His Own time."

But what of Satan being "bound" during this period? Amillennialists believe that Satan is already "bound" in a sense because he cannot prevent the spread of the Gospel—which liberates people from his control—throughout the world. Although Satan can tempt us as individuals, he is unable to force anyone's will away from God (Rom 8:38-39), which means he is already hindered in "deceiving the nations." Jesus says that the "strong man" (Satan) must be bound before his house can be plundered, i.e., before Jesus can rescue souls from Satan's grip. He further says, "If it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you" (Mt. 12:28-29, Lk. 11:20). So the binding of Satan and the coming of God's Kingdom must have already taken place in some sense. The Kingdom's full inauguration came through Christ's death and resurrection, and that reality became more manifest to the world on Pentecost through the Church (Catechism, no. 1076).

Although Catholics do not generally call their eschatological view "amillennialism," which is somewhat of a misnomer, this is the Church's teaching regarding Revelation 20, a teaching, as always, in harmony with the scriptural data (Catechism, nos. 668-682).

[1] Mt. 16:27, 25:31-46.

[2] See Mk. 10:29-30 and Lk. 20:34-35.

[3] 2 Pet. 3:10; Mt. 16:27, 25:31-46.

[4] Gal. 6:16, Eph. 2:11-13, Rom. 9:6-8.

[5] Col. 1:18, 1 Cor. 12:12-13.

[6] Lk. 13:18-21.

[7] See CUF Faith Fact “Rock Solid: The Salvation History of the Church.” This Faith Fact explains clearly and in detail how the Church is the new Israel, the prophesied restoration of the House of David.

[8] Revelation 20 does not say Christ will reign as an earthly King.

<http://www.cuf.org/2004/03/apocalypse-not-now-the-church-the-millennium-and-the-rapture/>

So, in Psalm 50, verse: 10, God says, “I own the cattle on a 1000 hills”. Does this mean that God owns all the cattle only on a thousand hills or is God really saying that He is Creator and he owns all of creation, all cattle on all hills are His, and not just on all hills, but all mountains and valleys and barns too? In other words, the biblical language of ‘1000’ means God owns ‘everything’, a huge number, a countless number, as numerous as the grains of sand on the sea shore. So too is the 1000 year reign of Revelation 20 a countless long period of time. A thousand, or a millennium, is a biblically undefined large number. This long reign of Christ has already begun. It began at the Resurrection and the Final Judgement will be only a day because it is the Day of Judgement.

Since the Incarnation of Christ, that is, God the Son taking on human form, being fully God and fully man, conceived in the womb of Mary His Mother, the New Testament tells us, that since the First Coming of Christ in the womb of Mary, we are already in the ‘last days’, as said by St Paul in Hebrews 1: 1 – 2, and as the CERC website shows.

<http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/religion-and-philosophy/apologetics/are-we-living-in-the-last-days.html>

And as St. Peter says in Acts:

Acts 2: 15 – 17

“For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: And it shall be in the last days, ‘God says, then I will pour forth my spirit on all mankind...”

So, we are in the period of the ‘last days’, right now, since the Incarnation of Jesus Christ over 2000 years ago. The ‘1000 years reign’ or the millennium, is from the Incarnation through to now, the present day, and will continue until the Day of Judgement. The Magi brought Christ gold, because He is King, and he conquered death by His Resurrection and he Reigns Victorious over death right now. The Church of Jesus Christ is the New Jerusalem ‘come down from heaven’, founded on the Apostles by Christ and confirmed at Pentecost, through the Holy Spirit, the New Jerusalem which John saw, recorded in Revelation 20, not a prophesy for the future but a present day reality, because the Old Jerusalem with its Temple and its Old Sacrifice has been destroyed and has passed away. The New Jerusalem and the

New Temple, the Church of Jesus Christ, is not separate from but is the fulfilment of the People of Israel founded by God, with the Gentiles 'grafted in', the New Israel. The New Jerusalem and the New Temple, the Church of Jesus Christ, has been established with its New and Permanent Sacrifice, once for all by Christ, of Himself as Victim, both Victim and Priest, on the Altar of the Cross, which we have access to through Baptism, because Baptism forgives sins, and through the Mass, where that Sacrifice once for all is made present, here and now, so we too can share in the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass, a share in heaven here on earth. Catholics believe we begin our heavenly life here on earth through Baptism and share in the heavenly banquet here and now in the Eucharist at Mass. This is why Mass is Everything.

As Carl E Olson says in his article entitled, *The End of the World As We Know it*:

The Eucharist is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb

All of the sacraments have an eschatological character and purpose—that is, they are oriented to our eternal communion with God. This is especially true of the Eucharist, for it is the “pledge of glory” and “an anticipation of the heavenly glory” (CCC, 1419, 1402). It is the true body and blood of the Risen Lord who transforms humanity through the most holy sacrament, preparing man for the beatific life and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9).

<http://www.catholicworldreport.com/2012/12/20/the-end-of-the-world-as-we-know-it/>

The New Jerusalem is the Bride of Christ, the Church. Catholics believe that the Church is present both on earth and in heaven at the same time as all Christians who are in Christ Jesus are part of His Body the Church.

Here at Mass, every tear IS WIPED AWAY, because it is Him we encounter.

Millennialism was roundly condemned at the First Council of Constantinople in 381.

The Whore of Babylon

An anti-Catholic writer, David Hunt, is a big promoter of the idea of the Roman Catholic Church being the Whore of Babylon, but James Akin demolished this theory completely as Carl Olson says in his article *The Time is Near*:

<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-time-is-near>

Fundamentalists such as Hunt claim that since Rome is built on seven hills the Catholic Church is therefore the woman-who is a city-who sits on "seven mountains" (Rev. 17:9)-in other words, Vatican City. Yet Vatican City doesn't sit on any of the famed seven hills of Rome, as James Akin has pointed out: "Vatican City is not built on seven hills, but only one: Vatican Hill, which is *not* one of the seven upon which ancient Rome was built. Those hills are on the east side of the Tiber river; Vatican

Hill is on the west" ("Hunt-ing the Whore of Babylon," *This Rock*, September-October 1994).

James Akin demolishes all nine of Hunt's 'Whore of Babylon' augments listed in in his article: 'HUNT'-ING THE WHORE OF BABYLON – Part 1 and Part 2, and says:

<http://jimmyakin.com/hunt-ing-the-whore-of-babylon>

When we bring in the distinction between Vatican City — the city where the Catholic Church is headquartered — and the city of Rome, Hunt's postulate is even more unlikely, since Vatican City is not built on seven hills, but on only one: Vatican Hill. This hill is *not* one of the seven Rome was constructed upon. Those seven (the Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, Caelian, Aventine, Palatine, and Capitoline hills) are located on the east side of the Tiber River. Vatican Hill is located on the west side.

Elsewhere in the article James Akin also states that: "there was no Vatican City. The Vatican became a separate state only in 1929, when the Holy See and Italy signed the Lateran Treaty."

So the Vatican City is on only one hill not seven and is on the wrong side of the Tiber to be the Biblical Whore of Babylon. James Akin goes on to tell us that the Bible shows that Babylon the Great of Revelation 11 is Jerusalem, where Christ was crucified, and that pagan Rome martyred Christians not Christian Rome; that the colour of vestments used by Christians are not of pagan Rome but are found in the Old Testament Leviticus, Numbers and Exodus, to be the colours used in the Temple and worn by the Priests of Israel, founded by God Himself.

James Akin goes on to conclude:

'Soon after making Christianity a tolerated religion in the early fourth century, Constantine moved the capital of the empire to his new city, Constantinople. It, not Rome, ruled over the Christian empire. In the seventh century large amounts of territory were lost to the Muslims, removing from Rome any prospect of its ruling them. The eleventh-century schism by the Eastern Orthodox churches removed still more territory from Rome's potential rule. The Protestant movement took away northern Europe and the British Isles. Emerging nationalism in France and other countries removed lands over which popes enjoyed some temporal authority. Only the tiny Papal States, located in central Italy, were left, and they vanished in 1870. Today Vatican City rules nothing but itself.'

Isaiah 1: 10 calls Jerusalem Sodom, and it is where Christ is crucified, so Old Apostate Jerusalem which has rejected Jesus and crucified Him is the Whore of Babylon. In Isaiah 1: 21 God Himself calls Jerusalem the Harlot.

Note: Speaking of Babylon, Protestant churches or individuals who rejected the SDAs Second Coming of Christ prediction of 1844 were right to do so and the SDAs were wrong about this event and date, as they had been on the previous dates. However, that did not stop Ellen White claiming that any Protestant church or individual who rejected the SDA prediction of the Second Coming of Christ, were condemned by her, and she said they were also condemned by God, as being: **'Babylon', and that these churches and individuals were untied to Satan.** She claimed them to be Babylon and unconverted. Ellen White also said it was God's fault that He failed come when the SDAs predicted He would, and she said that God used this 'deception of God' to accomplish His work. In reality, God does not make false predictions or false messages, Satan does. Ellen White and the SDAs were the ones duped. See *Early Writings* 23. Also see webpage <http://www.nonegw.org/egw11.shtml> statements 12, 9 and 16.

Regarding Revelation 14 and the Second Angel message which says that 'Babylon has fallen', Ex SDA member, Dirk Anderson, identifies who or what 'Babylon' is, and he puts it very succinctly on his website: under the section on the Three Angles Message, he says:

The second [Angle]message tells us that Babylon is fallen. The Bible very clearly identifies who Babylon is. In Revelation 18, Babylon is described as a female who commits fornication with the kings of the earth (Rev. 18:3). This could only refer to the "whore" of Revelation 17. Rev. 17:18 says the "whore" is "that great city."¹⁷ The "great city" is identified in Rev. 11:8 as the city where "our Lord was crucified." All Christians agree that Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem. To review more evidence proving this point, [click here](#).

Mark of the Beast

Having exposed Protestants Millennialism and the Whore of Babylon theories as unfounded, SDAs 'Mark of the Beast theory' as Sunday Worship, is also shown to be unfounded.

The NIV Bible Introduction to Revelation says that we know that from as early as Justin the Martyr in the second century AD that the author of Revelation was St John the Apostle of the New Testament and was the son of Zebedee as in Matt 10: 2. If Justin the Martyr is used to authenticate the author of Revelation then his writings can be used to help us understand that the Early Church of Christ met on the First Day of the Week for the Eucharist, as Justin the Martyr says, and that the Early Church believed as do Catholics today, in the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist, and that the Eucharist is the Real Presence of Christ, and that Sunday worship is not the sign or Mark of the Beast of Revelation, as SDAs would have us believe, but that Sunday Eucharist is a sign of the True Church of Jesus Christ.

How can the Beast of Revelation be truly identified? Revelation says the name of the Beast has a number which adds up to 666. In Jim Akin's article entitled: *666*, he shows how Nero's name in Hebrew adds up to 666. <http://jimmyakin.com/2005/01/666-2.html>

In another article by Jim Akin entitled: *The Beast of Revelation*, he lists a number of problems in trying to claim that the Catholic Church is the Beast and he shows that the Beast is unlike that of Daniel 7: <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-beast-in-revelation>

'One problem with this reasoning is that it focuses only on part of the symbolism in Revelation 13. Not only does the beast John sees have ten horns, like Daniel's fourth beast, it also has a body like a leopard (13:2a), like Daniel's third beast (7:6), feet like a bear's (13:2b), like Daniel's second beast (7:5), and a mouth like a lion, like Daniel's first beast (7:4). The beast John sees thus incorporates symbolism from *all* of Daniel's four beasts, making it impossible to simply identify it with the fourth of the series.'

Akin's article about Nero and the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in AD 70 show that the Beast of the Book of Revelation refers to this occasion and time, that is, the first century. There is in Revelation a reference to the Mark of the Beast and commerce which is covered by Akin in another comprehensive article entitled: *Hunting the whore of Babylon*. <https://www.ewtn.com/library/ANSWERS/HUNTWHOR.HTM>

A comment on both the Beast and the Whore of Revelation, the Beast being Pagan Rome of the first century and the Whore being Apostate Jerusalem, brings some clarity to the study of Revelation. In an article by CA entitled: *The Whore of Babylon*, it says:

Continuing in Revelation, the angel begins to explain to John the woman's symbolism: "This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he comes he must remain only a little while" (Rev. 17:9–10).

Fundamentalists argue that these seven mountains must be the seven hills of ancient Rome. However the Greek word here, *horos*, is almost always translated "mountain" in Scripture. Mountains are often symbols of kingdoms in Scripture (cf. Ps. 68:15; Dan. 2:35; Obad. 8–21; Amos 4:1, 6:1), which might be why the seven heads also symbolize seven kings. The mountains could stand for a series of seven kings, five of whom have already fallen.

This passage gives us a key rule of Bible interpretation which is often denied by Fundamentalists: A symbol does not have to refer to one and only one thing. Here Scripture itself tells us that the heads refer *both* to seven mountains *and* seven kings, meaning the symbol has multiple fulfillments. Thus there is not a one-to-one correspondence in the Bible between symbols and their referents.

Also, the mountains could be a reference to pagan Rome, yet the Whore could still

be a reference to apostate Jerusalem. In this case, her sitting on the Beast would not indicate a geographical location but an alliance between the two powers. The Whore (Jerusalem) would be allied with the Beast (Rome) in persecuting "the saints and . . . martyrs of Jesus." (Note that the Whore also sits on many waters, which we are told are many peoples, [cf. 17:15]. The context makes it clear that here her "sitting" on something does not refer to a geographical location.)

This passage gives us one reason why the Catholic Church cannot be the Whore. We are told that the heads "are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come." If five of these kings had fallen in John's day and one of them was still in existence, then the Whore must have existed in John's day. Yet Christian Rome and Vatican City did not. However, pagan Rome *did* have a line of emperors, and the majority of commentators see this as the line of kings to which 17:10 refers. Five of these emperors are referred to as having already fallen, one as still reigning in John's time, and another yet to come. Since Jerusalem had no such line of kings in the first century, this gives us evidence that the Beast (though not the Whore) is Rome. <https://www.catholic.com/tract/the-whore-of-babylon>

After having written these 38 points regarding the SDA pamphlet which celebrates the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's Reformation I came upon a website which shows that Sunday worship is the True Christian Sabbath.

Scripture itself, Bible prophecy, actually shows that the Saturday Sabbath would be done away with as the following website entitled: *Is Saturday the True Sabbath?*
[:http://catholicism.org/dies-domini-is-saturday-the-true-sabbath.html](http://catholicism.org/dies-domini-is-saturday-the-true-sabbath.html)

We will see later, in our survey of the Church Fathers on the subject, that Scriptural support for the abrogation of the Seventh-Day-Sabbath was hardly lacking; it was foretold generations before Christ in the holy prophets, so it can hardly be said that the change was made solely on the authority of the Church. But even if it were so, even if our only support for the change rested on the Church alone, this too would be Scriptural, if we would only recall the words of Our Lord to the "Magisterium" of the infant Church: "Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matt. 18:18, emphasis added). If any authority on earth has the jurisdiction to make these changes, to "loose" us from the requirements of circumcision and the Seventh-Day-Sabbath, it is the Church.

Thus we can establish at least the basic principle to support our case: 1) the fact that the Seventh-Day-Sabbath is called "perpetual" need not necessarily mean that it could never be abrogated, because the covenant of circumcision also was called a "perpetual sign," and it *was* abrogated; 2) Our Lord bequeathed to the Church the authority to make precisely these kinds of disciplinary and juridical decisions, which authority we can see being exercised at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15.

And it continues:

Still later in this chapter we read, "And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in

the midst, and said: Peace be to you” (John 20:26, emphasis added). This is an exact literary repetition of verse 19, with the exception that it is not now “the first of the week,” but “after eight days.” That is to say, this event (the story goes on to relate how Our Lord revealed Himself to St. Thomas for the first time) took place — to use Catholic terminology — *on the octave* of Easter Sunday. The Resurrection, the commissioning of the Apostles, and the revelation to St. Thomas all took place on Sunday. If we may be granted a bit of liberty in interpreting the texts of St. John’s Gospel with a hint of “mysticism,” we may certainly say that St. John wishes us to understand that Sunday is the day upon which we meet the Risen Christ; Mary Magdalen met Him on that day; the Apostles met Him on that day; St. Thomas met Him in a special way on that day; we too will meet Him on this day (or so St. John seems to be relating to us by implication).

The SDAs are quick to point out that the Apostles continued to give honor to the Seventh-Day Sabbath by going up to the temple every Sabbath day. But there is no reason the Apostles should not have done this. They were still Jews, after all, and the radical break with Judaism did not happen until God Himself radically broke the Jewish religion by sending the Romans to destroy the Jerusalem Temple in 70 AD. Until that time, there was a necessary period of overlap, during which these born-and-bred Jews (who also happened to be Apostles of the New Covenant) did what was natural to them: they went up to the temple to pray at the appointed times. (The temple was still a holy place, the Old Covenant ritual observances — as the Church explains it — were dead but not deadly.) What they most assuredly did *not* do, as we may infer from St. Paul’s blistering rebuke of the Galatians, is treat these Jewish customs as binding and necessary for salvation. As the Church moved on into history, many Jewish converts continued to practice certain Jewish customs, and the Church tolerated this (though, significantly, treating it as a weakness) so long as no one said that these customs were binding or salvific.

And it continues:

While some Jewish converts continued to observe the Seventh-Day-Sabbath, it also is true that the new Christians met together to worship their Risen Lord on Sunday, the day of His Resurrection. Thus, we read in Acts 20 that “on the first day of the week, when we were assembled to break bread, Paul discoursed with [the believers in Troas] ... And he continued his speech until midnight ... And a certain young man named Eutychus, sitting on the window, being oppressed with a deep sleep . . . by occasion of his sleep fell from the third loft down and was taken up dead. To whom, when Paul had gone down, he laid himself upon him and, embracing him, said: Be not troubled, for his soul is in him. Then going up and breaking bread and tasting, and having talked a long time to them, until daylight, so he departed” (Acts 20:7-11, emphasis added).

I have taken the time to quote a good portion of this story, because there is something mystical in the whole thing. Not only do we have the mention of “the first day of the week” combined with the practice of meeting together *as an*

assembly “to break bread” (the early Church’s term for the Mass), we also see several interesting motifs. One scholar of St. Luke’s writings says that “this gesture [of breaking bread] is closely related to the ‘death’ and the ‘resurrection’ of Eutychus. . . . We note also the imagery of the night and the dawn, related to the negative moment and the positive moment, respectively.”[21] Thus in this single narrative, we have the Eucharist, coupled with a kind of “death” and “resurrection,” which takes place in the context of a transition from the night to the dawn, all on the “first day of the week” (not to mention the seemingly-superfluous detail that the young man fell “from the third loft”)! This may not be an explicit text that plainly says “the seventh day Sabbath was abrogated in favor of a Sunday Sabbath,” but it is more than enough proof for those who have eyes to see.

And it continues:

At this point, we will examine claims of the SDAs that it was a pope or a Church council which, in the mid-fourth century at the earliest, imposed the exchange of the Seventh-Day-Sabbath for the Sunday Sabbath, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Daniel concerning the anti-Christ who would “think to change” the holy law. We may begin with the witness of St. Ignatius of Antioch, writing around 110 AD (within living memory of the Apostles, and within a mere ten years of the death of St. John):

If then those who had walked in ancient practices attained unto newness of hope, no longer observing Sabbaths but fashioning their lives after the Lord’s day, on which our life also arose through Him and through His death . . . if this be so, how shall we be able to live apart from Him?[22] (emphasis added)

What is most noteworthy in this passage is that St. Ignatius specifically contrasts the Old Covenant “Sabbaths” with “the Lord’s day,” which is then identified with the day of His Resurrection. This is to the point because the SDAs often claim that every reference to “the Lord’s day” in the New Testament must be *assumed* to be referring to the Seventh-Day-Sabbath, since that *was* the Lord’s day in the Old Covenant and there is no Scriptural warrant for calling Sunday “the Lord’s day.” Preble, for example, says “Rev. i. 10, is the only other place that can be construed to favor the first day — John says ‘I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.’ — Now, who knows whether he meant the first or the seventh day? I think the latter, because it is called ‘the Sabbath of the Lord thy God,’ but the first, is nowhere called so!!”[23] Here, however, we have the witness of a New Testament Christian who lived during the episcopal reign of St. John (whose words in Apoc. 1:10 are here under dispute), who no doubt studied under St. John before the Apostle’s exile, and who afterwards became himself the bishop of St. John’s churches in Asia Minor.[24] St. Ignatius gives us explicit testimony that in this age of the Church “the Lord’s day” referred to Sunday, and *not* to the old “Sabbaths.”

So where is the Old Testament prophecy of the eighth day being the new Sabbath?

In his epistle, St. Barnabas, companion of St. Paul (and one of the seventy-two disciples of Our Lord), quotes from Isaiah 1:13, “Your new moons and your Sabbath I cannot endure,” and comments, “Ye perceive how He speaks: *Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to Me, but . . . I shall make a beginning of the eighth day . . . Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead.*”

Amazing as it may seem I quote only a small portion of this tract entitled: *Dies Domini: Is Saturday the True Sabbath?* so SDAs need to read the whole thing.

Further comment from the CNA website provides a passage which shows the teaching of the Ellen White, Founder of the SDAs, in a booklet with a collection of excerpts from her book, *The Great Controversy*, is based on inaccurate information when she claims Sunday worship is the Mark of the Beast.

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/apologetics/catholic-doctrines-and-practices/the-sabbath-or-the-lords-day/>

The CNA website says:

The early Christian writers also bear witness to the observance of the Lord's Day (Sunday) over the Hebrew Sabbath (Saturday). The (*SDA*) booklet attempts to discredit the historical writings of Eusebius in the fourth century by claiming collusion with Emperor Constantine; however, we have no need to rely on Eusebius. We can directly cite the writings of Christians who lived in the first century - centuries before Eusebius or Constantine. Even though these writings do not have the same authority as the Bible, they are still reliable historical sources - preserving the thoughts, beliefs and lifestyle of Christians during the first century. These writings include the Didache (a church manual written by the Apostles during the 1st century), the Epistle of Barnabas (c. 100 A.D.) and the letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch who was martyred in Rome before 110 A.D. Translations of these classic Christian writings can be found at the local public or university library. The following quotes were cited from *Early Christian Writings* (Penguin Classics, 1987).

Conclusion

So, as stated above, the writings of First Century Christians are a witness and are evidence to help us understand that the Early Church of Christ met on the First Day of the Week for the Eucharist, as Justin the Martyr says, and that the Early Church believed as do Catholics today, in the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist, and that the Eucharist is the Real Presence of Christ, and that Sunday worship is not the sign or Mark of the Beast of Revelation, as SDAs would have us believe, but that Sunday Eucharist is a sign of the True Church of Jesus Christ.

And, as mentioned in point 36 above about Deuteronomy 5: 15 and that this may well be one of the most pivotal subjects to point out to SDAs. SDAs main focus is on their keeping the Jewish Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week, Saturday, based on Ex 20: 8-11. They fail to see what the Sabbath is really all about because they have not taken the Bible as a whole. Deuteronomy 5: 13 – 14, tells us that the Sabbath is for resting and worshiping God but then Deuteronomy 5: 15 goes on to tell us what the real purpose of the Sabbath rest is.

Deut. 5:15

Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

So the real purpose of the Saturday Sabbath is to remember that the Israelis were slaves in Egypt and that they had been freed by God Himself. Sabbath is about the Chosen People remembering that they have been freed from slavery in Egypt, in other words, every Sabbath is a Passover for them. The Sabbath of the Old Testament and the Passover in the Old Testament in truth is a prefiguring of Christ, the True Saviour of the World, who saved us from slavery to sin and death, accomplished by Christ at His Resurrection on the First day of the Week, Sunday. So, for the Christian, the True Sabbath of Christ is Sunday, the day of Resurrection, the day when we remember our salvation from slavery to sin and death.

SDAs say that Christ kept only the Saturday Sabbath, therefore so should we all, however, Christ could not keep the Sunday Sabbath until he had accomplished His mission and then Christ kept the true Christian Sabbath, Sunday, as he promised He would, by rising from the dead, when he brought us out of slavery with 'outreached arms', by His Cross and Resurrection we have been freed from sin and death. So too are we, as Deuteronomy calls us to, to keep and remember our being freed from slavery by Christ on the Day Christ freed us, Sunday.

The True Christian Sabbath is the Sabbath of Jesus Christ, Sunday, the First Day of the Week. In the Mass the Catholic Church celebrates the Passover of Jesus Christ and keeps the True Sabbath of Christ, Sunday.

Catholics celebrate the Passover Mass every day of the week including Saturday.

Re-Cap

1. There is no millennium after the Second Coming of Christ. The wheat will grow with the weeds until Christ's return. Christ said he would return and then Judge, and separate the sheep from the goats, on the Last Day, which is His Second Coming.
2. The millennium is already here as of Christ Jesus's First Coming, His Incarnation, and 1000 years of Revelation 20 means a long period of time, from His Incarnation until his Second Coming.
3. Jesus Christ already reigns as King, born a king to die, and reigns victorious over sin and death as of his death and resurrection. John 16 : 33 Jesus say, '.. I have overcome the world,' so He is already victorious.
4. Jesus's Second Coming is the Last Day, there are no more time after this. His Second Coming is the End of Time. The bodies of those who have already died and are in either heaven or hell will have their bodied join them. Those who have not yet died will be judged. Those who have already died have already been judged by God. Heaven and hell

are outside of time already. The End of Time is the End of the World as the beginning of the World is the Beginning of Time.

5. The Church of Jesus Christ is the New Jerusalem come down from heaven already, definitively established on earth by Jesus Christ.
6. There is a New Heaven and a New Earth, here and now, as of Christ's Resurrection, heaven has been opened to us as of the Resurrection and Christ' kingdom is on earth already established when Christ established His Church. Jesus Christ says the Kingdom of God is within you.
7. We live in the Kingdom of God, right here right now, when we become members of the Church of Jesus Christ, through Baptism, and we share in the union of God and have a taste of heaven when we participate in the Eucharist. The Eucharis is a taste of the Marriage supper of the Lamb.
8. The Vatican City is the site of St Peter's death and is not the site of the Whore of Babylon. The Vatican City is not build on the Seven Hills of Rome and is the wrong side of the Tiber. Nero, and others who came after him, was the one who persecuted Christians and was based on the Seven Hills of Rome. Nero's name in Hebrew has the numerical value of 666. Both Nero's Rome and the Old Jerusalem which refused Christ and even crucified Him. Isaiah 1: 10 calls Jerusalem Sodom, and is where Christ is crucified, so Old Apostate Jerusalem which has rejected Jesus and crucified Him is the Whore of Babylon. In Isaiah 1: 21 God Himself calls Jerusalem the Harlot.
9. The Anti-Christ is anyone who rejects Christ as Lord and anyone who tries to predict His Second Coming as not being the end of time.

Further Reading

1. Who is the Whore of Babylon?
<http://www.ncregister.com/blog/jimmy-akin/who-is-the-beast-of-revelation>
2. The Mark of the Beast
<https://www.catholic.com/qa/the-mark-of-the-beast>
3. Are We Living in the Last days?
<http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/religion-and-philosophy/apologetics/are-we-living-in-the-last-days.html>
4. Youtube – Who is the Beast of Revelation?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Naznbw0-6E>
5. 666
<http://jimmyakin.com/2005/01/666-2.html>

6. Common Misinterpretations Of The Book Of Revelation,
<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=4738>
7. The Hunt-ing of the Whore
<https://www.ewtn.com/library/ANSWERS/HUNTWHOR.HTM>
8. Best Info on Catholic Faith Explained with Biblical References.
<http://www.catholicapologetics.org/> and example of this is
<http://www.catholicapologetics.org/ap090000.htm>
9. CNA commentary of SDA Founder, Ellen White's book: *The Great Controversy*.
<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/apologetics/catholic-doctrines-and-practices/the-sabbath-or-the-lords-day/>

How Ellen White's 'Investigative Judgement' doctrine is unbiblical and how Ellen White contradicts herself on this. <http://www.nonegw.org/egw36.shtml>

How Ellen White kept changing her message down the ages each time it was show to be wrong.
<http://www.nonegw.org/egw21.shtml>

What the SDAs do not want you to know about 1844
<http://www.nonegw.org/egw11.shtml>

SDAs Fifteen different (false) ways to calculate the Second Coming of Christ
http://www.truthorfables.com/Miller's_Time%20_Proved_15_Ways.htm