

LESSON 6. – August 11, 1888.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BEAST.

I. WHAT power is represented by the first beast of Rev. 13?

Ans.-The Papacy.

2. From what was it developed?

Ans.-"A falling away." 2 Thess. 2 : 3.

3. In what was shown the first definite evidence of falling away from the truth of God?

Ans.-*The adoption of heathen rites and customs. "The bishops augmented the number of religious rites in the Christian worship, by way of accommodation to the infirmities and prejudices, both of Jews and heathens, in order to facilitate their conversion to Christianity." "For this purpose, they gave the name of *mysterics* to the institutions of the gospel, and decorated particularly the holy sacrament with that solemn title. They used in that sacred institution, as also in that of baptism, several of the terms employed in the heathen mysteries, and proceeded so far, at length, as even to adopt some of the ceremonies of which those renowned mysteries consisted."*-Mosheim's *Church History, century II, part II, chap. 4, par. 2, 5.*

4. How early was this manifested?

Ans.- "This imitation began in the Eastern provinces; but, after the time of Adrian [emperor A. D. 117-138] who first introduced the mysteries among the Latins, it was followed by the Christians who dwelt in the western parts of the *empire.*"-Mosheim, *Church History, century II, part II, chap. 4, par. 5.*

5. What worship was the most widely prevalent among all ancient nations?

Ans.-Sun worship-" the oldest, the most widespread, and the most enduring of all the forms of idolatry known to man, viz., *the worship of the sun.*"-Talbot W Chambers, *in Old Testament Student, January, 1886.*

6. When this worship was not directed to an image, how was it performed?

Ans.—" Before the coming of Christ, all the Eastern nations performed divine worship with their faces turned to that part of the heavens where the sun displays his rising beams. This custom was founded upon a general opinion that God, whose essence they looked upon to be light, and whom they considered as being circumscribed within certain- limits, dwelt in that part of the firmament, from which he sends forth the sun, the bright image of his benignity and *glory*."—*Mosheim, Church History, century II, part II, chap. 4, par. 7. Eze. 8 : 16.*

7. Was this custom adopted by some who called themselves Christian?

Ans.—" The Christian converts, indeed, rejected this gross error [of supposing that God dwelt in that part of the firmament]; but they retained the ancient and universal custom of worshiping toward the east, which sprang from it. Nor is that custom abolished even in our times, but still prevails in a great number of Christian churches."—*Mosheim, Id.*

8. What day was especially devoted to the sun?

9. Was that day adopted by these Christians also?

Ans.—" That very day was the Sunday of their heathen neighbors and respective countrymen ; and patriotism gladly united with expediency in making it at once their Lord's day and their Sabbath."—*North British Review as quoted in History of the Sabbath, chap. 16.*

10. Upon what is the Papacy built?

Ans. —Self-exaltation. 2 Thess. 2 :4.

11. In behalf of what was manifested the first arrogant claims of the Papacy?

Ans.— In behalf of Sunday.

12. By whom?

Ans.—By Victor, who was bishop of Rome, A. I/ 193-202.

13. What did he command?

*Ans.—" He wrote an imperious letter to the Asiatic prelates commanding them to imitate the example of the Western Christians with respect to the time of celebrating the festival of Easter [that is, commanding them to celebrate it on Sunday]. The Asiatics answered this lordly requisition . . . with great spirit and resolution, that they would by no means depart in this manner from the custom handed down to them by their ancestors. Upon this the thunder of excommunication began to roar. Victor, exasperated by this resolute answer of the Asiatic bishops, broke communion with them. pronounced them unworthy of the name of his brethren, and excluded them from all fellowship with the church of Rome."—Hosheim, *Id.*, chap. 4, par. 11.*

14. How early in the second century had this question been made an important one?

Ans.—" About the middle of this century, during the reign of Antoninus Pius [about 160], the venerable Polycarp went to Rome to confer with Anicet, bishop of that See, upon this matter."—Id., par. 10.

15. What is the great characteristic of the Papacy as a world power?

Ans.—The union of Church and State,—the religious power dominating the civil power and using it to further its own ends.

16. When was the union of Church and State formed, out of which grew the Papacy?

Ans.—In the reign of Constantine, A. D. 313-337.

17. What was the condition and work of most of the bishops at this time?

*Ans.— "Worldly-minded bishops, instead of caring for the salvation of their flocks, were often but too much inclined to travel about, and entangle themselves in worldly concerns."—Neander, *Vol. II.*, p. 26, *Torrey's Edition.**

18. What had these bishops determined to do?

Ans.—"This theocratical theory was already the prevailing one in the time of Constantine; and . . . the bishops voluntarily made themselves dependent on him by their disputes, and by their determination to make use of the power of the State for the furtherance of aims."—Id., p. 132.

19. What is the "theocratical theory"?

Ans.—The theory of government of a State by the immediate power or administration of God.

20. What then is the effect of a man-made theocracy?

Ans.—To put man in the place of God?

21. Was this the outcome of the theocratical theory of the bishops of the fourth century? 2 Thess. 2 : 3, 4.

Ellen White Notes Compiled:

#1 The prophecy of Revelation 13 declares that the power represented by the beast with lamb-like horns shall cause “the earth and them which dwell therein” to worship the papacy—there symbolized by the beast “like unto a leopard.” The beast with two horns is also to say “to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast;” and, furthermore, it is to command all, “both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,” to receive “the mark of the beast.” [Revelation 13:11-16.] It has been shown that the United States is the power represented by the beast with lamb-like horns, and that this prophecy will be fulfilled when the United States shall enforce Sunday observance, which Rome claims as the special acknowledgment of her supremacy. But in this homage to papacy the United States will not be alone. The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion, is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a restoration of her power. “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 13:3.] The infliction of the deadly wound points to the abolition of the papacy in 1798. After this, says the prophet, “His deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast.” Paul states plainly that the man of sin will continue until the second advent. [2 Thessalonians 2:8.] To the very close of time he will carry forward his work of deception. And the Revelator declares, also referring to the papacy, “All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life.” [Revelation 13:8.] In both the Old and the New World, papacy will receive homage in the honor paid to the Sunday institution, that rests solely upon the authority of the Romish Church. {GC88 578.3}

#2 The apostle Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, foretold the great apostasy which would result in the establishment of the papal power. He declared that the day of Christ should not come, “except there come a falling away first, 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 worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” [2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, 7.] And furthermore, the apostle warns his brethren that “the mystery of iniquity doth already work.” [2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, 7.] Even at that early date he saw, creeping into the church, errors that would prepare the way for the development of the papacy. {GC88 49.1}

#3 Constantine, while still a heathen, issued a decree enjoining the general observance of Sunday as a public festival throughout the Roman empire. After his conversion, he remained a staunch advocate of Sunday, and his pagan edict was then enforced by him in the interests of his new faith. But the honor shown this day was not as yet sufficient to prevent Christians from regarding the true Sabbath as the holy of the Lord. Another step must be taken; the false Sabbath must be exalted to an equality with the true. A few years after the issue of Constantine's decree, the bishop of Rome conferred on the Sunday the title of Lord's day. Thus the people were gradually led to regard it as possessing a degree of sacredness. Still the original Sabbath was kept. {The Spirit of Prophecy Volume Four, 55.2}

#4 Those who apostatize in time of trial will bear false witness and betray their brethren, to secure their own safety. They will tell where their brethren are concealed, putting the wolves on their track. Christ has warned us of this, that we may not be surprised at the cruel, unnatural course pursued by friends and relatives. “Little children, it is the last time,” John writes, “and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” {RH, December 20, 1898 par. 6}

#5 To prepare the way for the work which he designed to accomplish, Satan had led the Jews, before the advent of Christ, to load down the Sabbath with the most rigorous exactions, making its observance a burden. Now, taking advantage of the false light in which he had thus caused it to be regarded, he cast contempt upon it as a Jewish institution. While Christians continued to observe the Sunday as a joyous festival, he led them, in order to show their hatred of Judaism, to make the Sabbath a fast, a day of sadness and gloom. {GC88 52.2}

In the early part of the fourth century, the emperor Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. [SEE APPENDIX, NOTE 1.] The day of the sun was revered by his pagan subjects, and was honored by Christians; it was the emperor's policy to unite the conflicting interests of heathenism and Christianity. He was urged to do this by the bishops of the church, who, inspired by ambition, and thirst for power, perceived that if the same day was observed by both Christians and the heathen, it would promote the nominal acceptance of Christianity by pagans, and thus advance the power and glory of the church. But while Christians were gradually led to regard Sunday as possessing a degree of sacredness, they still held the true Sabbath as the holy of the Lord, and observed it in obedience to the fourth commandment. {GC88 53.1}

#6 There were still "greater abominations" for the prophet to behold. At a gate leading from the outer to the inner court he was shown "women weeping for Tammuz," and within "the inner court of the Lord's house, . . . at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east." Verses 13-16. {PK 448.4}

#7 (See #5 quotation)

#8 The Papacy, claiming to be the vicegerent of the Son of God, is in truth the vicegerent of another power. She points to the Sunday institution as the sign of her authority; but in the change of the law and time of God, she is only doing that which Satan tried to do in heaven,--prove the law of God faulty, and the Lawgiver fallible. In boasting of her power above the law of God, she is but echoing the sentiments of the great deceiver. God instituted the Sabbath as a sign of his authority and power, and the Papacy, acting for the prince of evil, points to the Sunday as a sign of her power and jurisdiction. The day of the sun, Sunday, was a day devoted to the most vile of the heathen worship, for it was celebrated in connection with sun-worship. This Sunday-sabbath has been accepted by many who know it to be the founding of heathenism, which has been cherished and nourished by the Church of Rome, and by her clothed in the garments of sanctity. But while many are now aware of its origin, there are true Christians in every church who do not know the origin of the Sunday-sabbath, and believe that they are keeping the day which God sanctified and blest. This is true of worshipers even in the Catholic Church; and while this ignorance and integrity remain, God accepts of their sincerity; but when light shall fall upon their pathway, God requires them to come into harmony with his law, and to observe the Sabbath of his appointing. The time has come when the glory of the Lord is to fill the earth, and when the whole earth shall be lightened with his glory. The cry is sounding to the honest in heart to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." {ST, November 19, 1894 par. 5}

#9 (See #3 quotation)

#10 Marvelous in her shrewdness and cunning is the Roman Church. She can read what is to be. She bides her time, seeing that the Protestant churches are paying her homage in their acceptance of the false sabbath and that they are preparing to enforce it by the very means which she herself employed in bygone days. Those who reject the light of truth will yet seek the aid of this self-styled infallible power to exalt an institution that originated with her. How readily she will come to the help of Protestants in this work it is not difficult to conjecture. Who understands better than the papal leaders how to deal with those who are disobedient to the church? {GC 580.1}

#11 It was in behalf of the Sunday, that popery first asserted its arrogant claims; [SEE APPENDIX, NOTE 9.] and its first resort to the power of the State was to compel the observance of Sunday as "the Lord's day." But the Bible points to the seventh day, and not to the first, as the Lord's day. Said Christ, "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." The fourth commandment declares, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord." And by the prophet Isaiah the Lord designates it, "My holy day." [Mark 2:28; Isaiah 58:13.] {GC88 446.3}

#12 (See #3 quotation)

#13 The spirit of concession to paganism opened the way for a still further disregard of Heaven's authority. Satan tampered with the fourth commandment also, and essayed to set aside the ancient Sabbath, the day which God had blessed and sanctified, [Genesis 2:2, 3.] and in its stead to exalt the festival observed by the heathen as "the venerable day of the sun." This change was not at first attempted openly. In the first centuries the true Sabbath had been kept by all Christians. They were jealous for the honor of God, and, believing that his law is immutable, they zealously guarded the sacredness of its precepts. But with great subtlety, Satan worked through his agents to bring about his object. That the attention of the people might be called to the Sunday, it was made a festival in honor of the resurrection of Christ. Religious services were held upon it; yet it was regarded as a day of recreation, the Sabbath being still sacredly observed. {GC88 52.1}

#14 (No comment)

#15 Satan well knew that the Holy Scriptures would enable men to discern his deceptions and withstand his power. It was by the Word that even the Saviour of the world had resisted his attacks. At every assault, Christ presented the shield of eternal truth, saying, "It is written." To every suggestion of the adversary, he opposed the wisdom and power of the Word. In order for Satan to maintain his sway over men, and establish the authority of the papal usurper, he must keep them in ignorance of the Scriptures. The Bible would exalt God, and place finite men in their true position; therefore its sacred truths must be concealed and suppressed. This logic was adopted by the Roman Church. For hundreds of years the circulation of the Bible was prohibited. The people were forbidden to read it or to have it in their houses, and unprincipled priests and prelates interpreted its teachings to sustain their pretensions. Thus the pope came to be almost universally acknowledged as the vicegerent of God on earth, endowed with authority over Church and State. {GC88 51.3}

#16 The regulation adopted by the early colonists, of permitting only members of the church to vote or to hold office in the civil government, led to most pernicious results. This measure had been accepted as a means of preserving the purity of the State, but it resulted in the corruption of the church. A profession of religion being the condition of suffrage and office-holding, many, actuated solely by motives of worldly policy, united with the church, without a change of heart. Thus the churches came to consist, to a considerable extent, of unconverted persons; and even in the ministry were those who not

only held errors of doctrine, but who were ignorant of the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. Thus again was demonstrated the evil results, so often witnessed in the history of the church from the days of Constantine to the present, of attempting to build up the church by the aid of the State, of appealing to the secular power in support of the gospel of Him who declared, "My kingdom is not of this world." [John 18:36.] The union of the church with the State, be the degree never so slight, while it may appear to bring the world nearer to the church, does in reality but bring the church nearer to the world. {GC88 296.4}

#17 From his rectory the reformer wrote to the pope a letter, which, while respectful in tone and Christian in spirit, was a keen rebuke to the pomp and pride of the papal see. "Verily I do rejoice," he said, "to open and declare unto every man the faith which I do hold, and specially unto the bishop of Rome; the which forasmuch as I do suppose to be sound and true, he will most willingly confirm my said faith, or if it be erroneous, amend the same. First, I believe that the gospel of Christ is the whole body of God's law. . . . I do give and hold the bishop of Rome, forasmuch as he be the vicar of Christ here on earth, to be bound most of all men unto that law of the gospel. For the greatness among Christ's disciples did not consist in worldly dignity or honors, but in the near and exact following of Christ in his life and manners. . . . Christ for the time of his pilgrimage here was a most poor man, abjecting and casting off all worldly rule and honor. {GC88 91.1}

#18 When the early church became corrupted by departing from the simplicity of the gospel, and accepting heathen rites and customs, she lost the Spirit and power of God; and in order to control the consciences of the people she sought the support of the secular power. The result was the papacy, a church that controlled the power of the State, and employed it to further her own ends, especially for the punishment of "heresy." In order for the United States to form an image of the beast, the religious power must so control the civil government that the authority of the State will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends. {GC88 443.2}

#19 (No comment)

#20, #21 The special characteristic of the beast, and therefore of his image, is the breaking of God's commandments. Says Daniel, of the little horn, the papacy, "He shall think to change the times and the law." [Daniel 7:25, Revised Version.] And Paul styled the same power the "man of sin," who was to exalt himself above God. One prophecy is a complement of the other. Only by changing God's law could the papacy exalt itself above God; whoever should understandingly keep the law as thus changed would be giving supreme honor to that power by which the change was made. Such an act of obedience to papal laws would be a mark of allegiance to the pope in the place of God. {GC88 446.1}