

LESSON 7. – August 18, 1888.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BEAST - Concluded.

1. WHAT did we find in the preceding lesson was the determination of the bishops of the fourth century?

Ans.—To make use of the power of the State for the furtherance of their own aims.

2. What was one of the principal aims of the Western bishops, especially the bishop of Rome?

Ans.—The exaltation of Sunday.

3. What did they secure from Constantine?

Ans.—An edict, in A. D. 321, in favor of Sunday—the first Sunday law that ever was.

4. What was this law?

Ans.—"Let all the judges and town people, and the occupation of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun; but let those who are situated in the country, freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture; because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines; lest, the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted by Heaven. Given the seventh day of March ; Crispus and Constantine being consuls, each of them for the second time." History of the Sabbath, chap. 19.

5. Who convened the Council of Nice?

Ans.—Constantine, A. D. 325.

6. What was one of the two principal decisions rendered by that council?

Ans.— That Easter should always and everywhere be celebrated on Sunday.

7. Under what authority were its decrees published?

Ans.—"The decrees of these synods were published under the imperial authority, and thus obtained a political importance."— Neander, Vol. II, p. 133.

8. Who was bishop of Rome during twenty- one years and eleven months of Constantine's reign?

Ans.—Sylvester, January 31, 314, to December 31, 335.

9. What did he do with his "apostolic authority" shortly after the Council of Nice?

Ans.—He decreed that Sunday should be called the Lord's day.—History of the Sabbath, p. 350.

10. What was commanded by the council of Laodicea, A. D. 363 or 364?

Ans.—That if Christians should rest on the Sabbath, "let them be accursed from Christ;" and that they should rest on Sunday.

11. Did Constantine's Sunday law-apply to all classes?

12. Were other laws demanded by the bishops, which should be more general?

Ans.— "By a law of the year 386, those older changes effected by the Emperor Constantine were more rigorously enforced, and, in general, civil transactions of every kind on Sunday were strictly forbidden. Whoever transgressed was to be considered, in fact, as guilty of sacrilege."—Neander, Vol. II., p. 300.

13. What petition was made to the emperor by a church convention in A. D. 401?

Ans.—"That the public shows might be transferred from the Christian Sunday and from feast days, to some other days of the week." —Id.

14. What was the object of all these State laws?

Ans.—"That the day might be devoted with less interruption to the purposes of devotion." "That the devotion of the faithful might be free from all disturbance." —Id., pt. 297, 301.

15. What was it that so much hindered the devotion of the "faithful" of those times?

Ans.—"Owing to the prevailing passion at that time, especially in the large cities, to run after the various public shows, it so happened that when these spectacles fell on the same days which had been consecrated by the church to some religious festival, they proved a great hindrance to the devotion of Christians, though chiefly, it must be allowed, to those whose Christianity was the least an affair of the life and of the heart."—Id., p. 300.

16. How was their "devotion" disturbed?

Ans.—"Church teachers . . . were, in truth, often forced to complain, that in such competitions the theater was vastly more frequented than the church."—Id.

17. What does Neander say of all this?

Ans.—"In this way, the church received help from the State for the furtherance of her ends. . . . But had it not been for that confusion of spiritual and secular interests, had it not been for the vast number of mere outward conversions thus brought about, she would have needed no such help."—Id., ft. 301.

18. When the church had received the help of the State to this extent did she stop there?

Ans.—No, she demanded that the civil power should be exerted to compel men to serve God as the church should dictate.

19. Which of the fathers of the church was father to this theory?

Ans.—Augustine, who lived from A. D. 354 to 430.

20. What did he teach?

Ans.--"It is indeed better that men should be brought to serve God by instruction than by fear of punishment or by pain. But because the former means are better, the latter must not therefore be neglected. . . . Many must often be brought back to their Lord, like wicked servants, by the rod of temporal suffering, before they attain to the highest grade of religious development."—Schaff's Church History, sec. 27; Augustine Epistle 185 ad Bonifacium, sec. 21, 24.

21. What does Neander say of this?

Ans. —"It was by Augustine, then, that a theory was proposed and founded, which . . . contained the germ of that whole system of spiritual' despotism, of intolerance and persecution, which ended in the tribunals of the inquisition."—Church History, Vol. H, p. 217.

Thus was formed the union of Church and State out of which grew the Papacy. Thus was developed "the beast," which made war with the saints of God, and wore out the saints of the Most High.

Ellen White Notes Compiled:

#1 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}

#2 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}

#3 Royal edicts, general councils, and church ordinances sustained by secular power, were the steps by which the pagan festival attained its position of honor in the Christian world. The first public measure enforcing Sunday observance was the law enacted by Constantine. [A. D. 321.] This edict required townspeople to rest on "the venerable day of the sun," but permitted countrymen to continue their agricultural pursuits. Though virtually a heathen statute, it was enforced by the emperor after his nominal acceptance of Christianity. {GC88 574.1}

#4 As the papacy became firmly established, the work of Sunday exaltation was continued. For a time the people engaged in agricultural labor when not attending church, and the seventh day was still regarded as the Sabbath. But steadily a change was effected. Those in holy office were forbidden to pass judgment in any civil controversy on the Sunday. Soon after, all persons, of whatever rank, were commanded to refrain from common labor, on pain of a fine for freemen, and stripes in the case of servants. Later it was decreed, that rich men should be punished with the loss of half of their estates; and finally, that if still obstinate they should be made slaves. The lower classes were to suffer perpetual banishment. {GC88 574.3}

Miracles also were called into requisition. Among other wonders it was reported that as a husbandman who was about to plow his field on Sunday, cleaned his plow with an iron, the iron stuck fast in his hand, and for two years he carried it about with him, "to his exceeding great pain and shame." {GC88 575.1}

#5 (No comment)

#6 (No comment)

#7 (No comment)

#8 (No comment)

#9 The royal mandate not proving a sufficient substitute for divine authority, Eusebius, a bishop who sought the favor of princes, and who was the special friend and flatterer of Constantine, advanced the claim that Christ had transferred the Sabbath to Sunday. Not a single testimony of the Scriptures was produced in proof of the new doctrine. Eusebius himself unwittingly acknowledges its falsity, and points

to the real authors of the change. "All things," he says, "whatsoever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day." But the Sunday argument, groundless as it was, served to embolden men in trampling upon the Sabbath of the Lord. All who desired to be honored by the world accepted the popular festival. {GC88 574.2}

#10 (No comment)

#11 (See #9 quote)

#12 The Sunday sabbath, the child of the Papacy, has been accepted by the Protestant church, who have fostered and cradled it as if of heavenly birth. But their human sanction can never give it acceptance with God. It is a rival, spurious Sabbath, usurping the place of the holy day upon which God rested, which he blessed and sanctified, and gave to man as an everlasting memorial of the Creator's work. When the facts are brought before them, will Protestants, by their deference to the Sunday, consent to recognize the sacrilegious claims of the man of sin? Will they choose to worship him instead of God? {ST, June 12, 1893 par. 9}

#13 (No comment)

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