

LESSON 9. – September 1, 1888.

THE MAKING OF THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST – Concluded.

1. IF the influence of the Protestant churches, the Prohibition party, the W. C. T.U., the Workingmen, and the Catholic Church, were heartily united in favor of one measure, could not that measure be carried, whatever it might be?

2. Is there now any question upon which all these are united in sentiment, and upon which they are fast uniting in action?

Ans.— There is.

3. What is it?

Ans.—The enforcement of Sunday-keeping by the State.

4. Who are the sole leaders in this movement?

Ans.—The leaders in the churches.

5. To what extent are they working it?

Ans.—They are "working" and lobbying almost every State Legislature in the Union, and the National Legislature also.

6. What do they ask the State to do?

Ans.—To stop all Sunday trains, abolish all Sunday papers, and stop all manner of work on Sunday.

7. For what?

Ans.--So that their "devotion may not be hindered."

8. What is there about the Sunday train that hinders the devotion of the church-members?

Ans.—"They get a great many passengers, and so break up a great many congregations."— Elgin, Ill., Sunday-law Convention, November, 1887. (t) "This railroad [the Chicago and Rock Island] has been running excursion trains from Des Moines to Colfax Springs on the Sabbath for some time, and ministers complain that their members go on these excursions. . . . We need a Sabbath [Sunday] law that will bind the government and the corporation as well as the individual."— M. A. vault, in Christian Statesman, September 25, 1884.

9. What is there about the Sunday newspaper that hinders their devotion?

Ans.— "The laboring classes are apt to arise late on Sunday morning, read the Sunday papers, and allow the hour of worship to go by unheeded." —Elgin Convention.

10. What was it that hindered the devotion of the church-members in the fourth century?

Ans.—Sunday games and theaters.

11. How?

Ans.—They got a great many spectators "and so broke up a great many congregations;" the church-members would go to the games and theaters, and would "let the hour of worship go by unheeded," and so their devotion was "greatly hindered."

12. Who were they whose devotion was thus especially disturbed?

Ans —Those "whose Christianity was the least an affair of the life and of the heart."

13. What then did they do?

Ans.—As they had not enough conscience, nor love of right, to do what they considered to be right, they demanded that the State should take away from them all opportunity to do that which they deemed to be wrong.

14. How is the matter worked now?

Ans. —The same way precisely.

15. Was the Papacy content with State laws stopping games and closing theaters?

Ans.—No, all manner of work must be stopped.

16. Will the image of the Papacy be content with laws stopping Sunday trains, and abolishing Sunday newspapers?

Ans.— "Let a man be what he may—Jew, seventh-day observer of some other denomination, or those who do not believe in the Christian Sabbath— let the law apply to everyone, that there shall be no public desecration of the first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath, the day of rest for the nation. They may hold any other day of the week as sacred, and observe it; but that day which is the one day in seven for the-nation at large, let that not be publicly desecrated by anyone, by officer in the Government, or by private citizen, high or low, rich or poor."—Dr. McAllister, editor Christian, Statesman.

17. Why do they want to compel all people to keep Sunday?

Ans.—Because "he who does not keep the Sabbath [Sunday] does not worship God."—Elgin Convention.

18. Then what is the purpose of all their Sunday laws?

Ans.—To compel all men to worship.

19. What is it in reality that they will compel men, by this means, to worship? Rev. 13:12.

20. What grew out of the Sunday-law movement in the fourth century?

Ans. —The beast.

21. What will just as surely grow out of this Sunday-law movement in our day?

Ans.—The image of the beast.

22. What did the beast do?

Ans.—He made war with the saints. Rev. 13 : 7 ; Dan. 7 : 21 25.

23. What will the image of the beast do? Rev. 13: 16, 17.

"Resolved, That we give our patronage to such business men, manufacturers, and laborers as observe the Sabbath [Sunday]."—Elgin Sunday-law Convention.

24. What further will the image of the beast endeavor to do? Rev. 13 : 15.

25. Is it in the minds of these National Reformers to do. this?

At the Lakeside National Reform Convention, 1887, a certain. person said of the enforcement of Sunday-laws, " There is a law in the State of Arkansas enforcing Sunday observance upon the people, and the result has been that many good persons have not only been imprisoned, but have lost their property and even their lives."

And Dr. McAllister replied: "It is better that a few should suffer than that the whole nation should lose its Sabbath."

26. Under what plea did the chief priests and Pharisees justify themselves in killing the Saviour?

Ans.— "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." "Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death." John II : 50, 53.

27. Will these in our day accomplish their purpose upon those who refuse to worship the beast and his image? Rev. 15 : 2.

NOTE.

In the Christian Nation, December 14, 1887, Rev. W. T. McConnell, a representative National Reformer, published an "open letter" to the American Sentinel, in which he said:—

"You look for trouble in this land in the future, if these principles are applied. I think it will come to you if you maintain your present position. The foolhardy fellow who persists in standing on a railroad track may well anticipate trouble when he hears the rumble of the coming train. If he shall read the signs of the times in the screaming whistle and flaming head-light, he may change his position and avoid the danger, but if he won't be influenced by these, his most gloomy forebodings of trouble will be realized when the express strikes him. So you, neighbor, if, through prejudice or the enmity of unregenerate hearts, you have determined to oppose the progress of this nation in fulfilling its vocation as an instrument in the divine work of regenerating human society, may rightly expect trouble. It will be sure to come to you."

Ellen White Notes Compiled:

#1 (No comment)

#2 (No comment)

#3, #4 I have been much burdened in regard to movements that are now in progress for the enforcement of Sunday observance. It has been shown to me that Satan has been working earnestly to carry out his designs to restrict religious liberty. Plans of serious import to the people of God are advancing in an underhand manner among the clergymen of various denominations, and the object of this secret maneuvering is to win popular favor for the enforcement of Sunday sacredness. If the people can be led to favor a Sunday law, then the clergy intend to exert their united influence to obtain a religious amendment to the Constitution, and compel the nation to keep Sunday. {RH, December 24, 1889 par. 1}

#5, #6 The dignitaries of church and State will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected. In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." [Revelation 12:17.] {GC88 592.3}

#7 As the Protestant churches reject the clear, scriptural arguments in defense of God's law, they will long to silence those whose faith they cannot overthrow by the Bible. Though they blind their own eyes to the fact, they are now adopting a course which will lead to the persecution of those who conscientiously refuse to do what the rest of the Christian world are doing, and acknowledge the claims of the papal Sabbath. {GC88 592.2}

#8 On Sunday Elder J. H. Waggoner spoke with great freedom in the forenoon to a good congregation, on the subject of the Sabbath. Three excursion trains poured their living freight upon the grounds. The people here were very enthusiastic on the temperance question. At 2:30 P.M. I spoke to about eight thousand people on the subject of temperance viewed from a moral and Christian standpoint. I was blessed with remarkable clearness and liberty, and was heard with the best of attention from the large audience present. {LS 222.2}

#9 (No comment)

#10 (No comment)

#11 (No comment)

#12 There are many today who are following the same course. Though church members, they are unconverted. They may take part in the church service, they may chant the psalm, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God" (Psalm 42:1); but they testify to a falsehood. They are no more righteous in God's sight than is the veriest sinner. The soul that longs after the excitement of worldly pleasure, the mind that is full of love for display, cannot serve God. Like the rich man in the parable, such a one has no inclination to war against the lust of the flesh. He longs to

indulge appetite. He chooses the atmosphere of sin. He is suddenly snatched away by death, and he goes down to the grave with the character formed during his lifetime in copartnership with Satanic agencies. In the grave he has no power to choose anything, be it good or evil; for in the day when a man dies, his thoughts perish. (Psalm 146:4; Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.) {COL 269.3}

#13 When Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power in sustaining a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution, then will the papal Sabbath be enforced by the combined authority of church and State. There will be a national apostasy, which will end only in national ruin. {ST, November 8, 1899 par. 3}

With rapid steps we are approaching this period. When the Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution: when the state shall use its power to enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church,—then will Protestant America have formed an image to the Papacy, and there will be a national apostasy which will end only in national ruin. {ST, March 22, 1910 par. 9}

#14 Church and state are now making preparations for the future conflict. Protestants are working in disguise to bring Sunday to the front, as did the Romanists. Throughout the land the papacy is piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions are to be repeated. And the way is preparing for the manifestation, on a grand scale, of those lying wonders by which, if it were possible, Satan would deceive even the elect. {5T 449.3}

#15 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. {GC 574.3}

#16 "He causeth all, both small and great, . . . to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads" (Revelation 13:16). Not only are men not to work with their hands on Sunday, but with their minds are they to acknowledge Sunday as the Sabbath.—Special Testimony to Battle Creek Church (Ph 86) 6, 7 (1897).

#17 Those who honor the Bible Sabbath will be denounced as enemies of law and order, as breaking down the moral restraints of society, causing anarchy and corruption, and calling down the judgments of God upon the earth. Their conscientious scruples will be pronounced obstinacy, stubbornness, and contempt of authority. They will be accused of disaffection toward the government. Ministers who deny the obligation of the divine law will present from the pulpit the duty of yielding obedience to the civil authorities as ordained of God. In legislative halls and courts of justice, commandment-keepers will be misrepresented and condemned. A false coloring will be given to their words; the worst construction will be put upon their motives. {GC88 592.1}

#18 The dignitaries of church and State will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected. In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and

went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” [Revelation 12:17.] {GC88 592.3}

#19 In both the Old and the New World, the papacy will receive homage in the honor paid to the Sunday institution, that rests solely upon the authority of the Roman Church. {GC 578.3}

#20 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}

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}

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}

#21 The image to the beast represents another religious body clothed with similar power. The formation of this image is the work of that beast whose peaceful rise and mild professions render it so striking a symbol of the United States. Here is to be found an image of the papacy. When the churches of our land, uniting upon such points of faith as are held by them in common, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy. Then the true church will be assailed by persecution, as were God's ancient people. {The Spirit of Prophecy Volume Four, 277.2}

#22 In chapter 13 [VERSES 1-10.] is described another beast, “like unto a leopard,” to which the dragon gave “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” This symbol, as most Protestants have believed, represents the papacy, which succeeded to the power and seat and authority once possessed by the ancient Roman Empire. Of the leopard-like beast it is declared: “There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. . . . And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” This prophecy, which is nearly identical with the description of the little horn of Daniel 7, unquestionably points to the papacy. {GC88 439.1}

#23 The beast with two horns "causeth [commands] all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; 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." [Revelation 13:16, 17] The third angel's warning is, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God." "The beast" mentioned in this message, whose worship is enforced by the two-horned beast, is the first, or leopard-like beast of Revelation 13,—the papacy. The "image to the beast" represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas. The "mark of the beast" still remains to be defined. {GC88 445.2}

#24 If men will not agree to trample under foot the commandments of God, the spirit of the dragon is revealed. They are imprisoned, brought before councils, and fined. "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" [Revelation 13:16]. "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" [verse 15]. Thus Satan usurps the prerogatives of Jehovah. The man of sin sits in the seat of God, proclaiming himself to be God, and acting above God. {14MR 162.2}

#25 (No comment)

#26 While the council was at the height of its perplexity, Caiaphas the high priest arose. Caiaphas was a proud and cruel man, overbearing and intolerant. Among his family connections were Sadducees, proud, bold, reckless, full of ambition and cruelty, which they hid under a cloak of pretended righteousness. Caiaphas had studied the prophecies, and although ignorant of their true meaning, he spoke with great authority and assurance: "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." Even if Jesus were innocent, urged the high priest, He must be put out of the way. He was troublesome, drawing the people to Himself, and lessening the authority of the rulers. He was only one; it was better that He should die than that the authority of the rulers should be weakened. If the people were to lose confidence in their rulers, the national power would be destroyed. Caiaphas urged that after this miracle the followers of Jesus would likely rise in revolt. The Romans will then come, he said, and will close our temple, and abolish our laws, destroying us as a nation. What is the life of this Galilean worth in comparison with the life of the nation? If He stands in the way of Israel's well-being, is it not doing God a service to remove Him? Better that one man perish than that the whole nation be destroyed. {DA 539.3}

#27 As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand, will make them objects of universal execration. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the State, ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness. The same argument eighteen hundred years ago was brought against Christ by the "rulers of the people." "It is expedient for us," said the wily Caiaphas, "that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." [John 11:50.] This argument will appear conclusive; and a decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment, and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death. Romanism in the Old World, and apostate Protestantism in the New, will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts. {GC88 615.1}

