

Lesson 18 - The Image of the Beast

1. In generic terms, who encourages the setting up of the Image to the Beast? **Beginning of Revelation 13:11**

EGW: At this point another symbol is introduced. Says the prophet, "I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb." [Revelation 13:11.] Both the appearance of this beast and the manner of its rise indicate that the nation which it represents is unlike those presented under the preceding symbols. The great kingdoms that have ruled the world were presented to the prophet Daniel as beasts of prey, rising when the "four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea." [Daniel 7:2.] In Revelation 17, an angel explained that waters represent "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." [Revelation 17:15.] Winds are a symbol of strife. The four winds of heaven striving upon the great sea, represent the terrible scenes of conquest and revolution by which kingdoms have attained to power. {GC88 439.3}

[Comment: Since it is "another beast", most call this beast "the second beast", referring to the second beast mentioned in Revelation 13.]

2. Most beasts come up out of water, but where does this beast come up from? **Revelation 13:11**

EGW: But the beast with lamb-like horns was seen "coming up out of the earth." Instead of overthrowing other powers to establish itself, the nation thus represented must arise in territory previously unoccupied, and grow up gradually and peacefully. It could not, then, arise among the crowded and struggling nationalities of the Old World,—that turbulent sea of "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." It must be sought in the Western Continent. {GC88 440.1}

3. What is the initial appearance of this beast? **Revelation 13:11**

EGW: The lamb-like horns indicate youth, innocence, and gentleness... {GC88 441.1}

4. In addition to nations, what else do horns represent? **Daniel 8:6-7**

EGW: "And he had two horns like a lamb." The lamb-like horns indicate youth, innocence, and gentleness, fitly representing the character of the United States when presented to the prophet as

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“coming up” in 1798. The Christian exiles who first fled to America, sought an asylum from royal oppression and priestly intolerance, and they determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty. The Declaration of Independence sets forth the great truth that “all men are created equal,” and endowed with the inalienable right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” And the Constitution guarantees to the people the right of self-government, providing that representatives elected by the popular vote shall enact and administer the laws. Freedom of religious faith was also granted, every man being permitted to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity. The oppressed and down-trodden throughout Christendom have turned to this land with interest and hope. Millions have sought its shores, and the United States has risen to a place among the most powerful nations of the earth. {GC88 441.1}

5. In the end, what shall this country do? **End of Revelation 13:11**

EGW: "He had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." Though professing to be followers of the Lamb of God, men become imbued with the spirit of the dragon. They profess to be meek and humble but they speak and legislate with the spirit of Satan, showing by their actions that they are the opposite of what they profess to be. This lamb-like power unites with the dragon in making war upon those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. And Satan unites with Protestants and papists, acting in consort with them as the god of this world, dictating to men as if they were the subjects of his kingdom, to be handled and governed and controlled as he pleases. {14MR 162.1}

6. What kindness did this nation offer as she rose to prominence? **Revelation 12:16**

EGW: What nation of the New World was in 1798 rising into power, giving promise of strength and greatness, and attracting the attention of the world? The application of the symbol admits of no question. One nation, and only one, meets the specifications of this prophecy; it points unmistakably to the United States of America. Again and again the thought, almost the exact words, of the sacred writer have been unconsciously employed by the orator and the historian in describing the rise and growth of this nation. The beast was seen “coming up out of the earth;” and, according to the translators, the word here rendered “coming up” literally signifies to “grow or spring up as a plant.” And, as we have seen, the nation must arise in territory previously unoccupied. A prominent writer, describing the rise of the United States, speaks of “the mystery of her coming forth from vacancy,” and says, “Like a silent seed we grew into empire.” [TOWNSEND, IN “THE NEW WORLD COMPARED WITH THE OLD,” P. 462.] A European journal in 1850 spoke of the United States as a wonderful empire, which was “emerging,” and “amid the silence of the earth daily adding to its

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power and pride.” [THE DUBLIN NATION.] Edward Everett, in an oration on the Pilgrim founders of this nation, said: “Did they look for a retired spot, inoffensive from its obscurity, safe in its remoteness from the haunts of despots, where the little church of Leyden might enjoy freedom of conscience? Behold the mighty regions over which, in peaceful conquest, . . . they have borne the banners of the cross.” {GC88 440.2}

7. But who does the church (woman), now in the United States, eventually team up with to do harm to those that just want to be left alone to practice their faith? **Revelation 12:17**

EGW: "And 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." In the near future we shall see these words fulfilled as the Protestant churches unite with the world and with the papal power against commandment keepers. The same spirit which actuated papists in ages past will lead Protestants to pursue a similar course toward those who will maintain their loyalty to God. {5T 449.2}

8. How does the second beast get the world to erect an image? **Beginning of Revelation 13:12**

EGW: But the beast with lamb-like horns “spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed, . . . saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.” [Revelation 13:11-14.] {GC88 441.2}

The lamb-like horns and dragon voice of the symbol point to a striking contradiction between the professions and the practice of the nation thus represented. The “speaking” of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities. By such action it will give the lie to those liberal and peaceful principles which it has put forth as the foundation of its policy. The prediction that it will speak “as a dragon,” and exercise “all the power of the first beast,” plainly foretells a development of the spirit of intolerance and persecution that was manifested by the nations represented by the dragon and the leopard-like beast. {GC88 442.1}

9. What does the second beast cause? **Rest of Revelation 13:12**

EGW: And the statement that the beast with two horns “causeth the earth and them which dwell

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therein to worship the first beast," indicates that the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the papacy. {GC88 442.1}

10. What does the second beast do to aid in the deception? **Revelation 13:13**

EGW: And the apostle John, describing the miracle-working power that will be manifested in the last days, declares: "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do." [Revelation 13:13, 14.] No mere impostures are here foretold. Men are deceived by the miracles which Satan's agents have power to do, not which they pretend to do. {GC88 553.2}

11. Who approves of these miracles? **First half of Revelation 13:14**

EGW: But what is the "image to the beast"? and how is it to be formed? The image is made by the two-horned beast, and is an image to the first beast. It is also called an image of the beast. Then to learn what the image is like, and how it is to be formed, we must study the characteristics of the beast itself, —the papacy. 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}

Whenever the church has obtained secular power, she has employed it to punish dissent from her doctrines. Protestant churches that have followed in the steps of Rome by forming alliance with worldly powers, have manifested a similar desire to restrict liberty of conscience. An example of this is given in the long-continued persecution of dissenters by the Church of England. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, thousands of non-conformist ministers were forced to leave their churches, and many, both of pastors and people, were subjected to fine, imprisonment, torture, and martyrdom. {GC88 443.3}

12. What does the second beast encourage all to participate in? **Revelation 13:14**

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EGW: "Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast." Here is clearly presented a form of government in which the legislative power rests with the people; a most striking evidence that the United States is the nation denoted in the prophecy. {GC88 443.1}

John was now prepared to witness the thrilling scenes in the great conflict between those who keep the commandments of God and those who make void his law. He saw the wonder-working power arise that was to deceive all who should dwell upon the earth, who were not connected with God, "saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." Read Revelation 13:14-17. {HM, November 1, 1893 par. 9}

13. Keeping in mind that the world is not going to come to a location to worship a physical image, what is a spiritual application to the word "image"? **Genesis 1:26, Genesis 5:3**

EGW: In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. {GC88 644.3}

By beholding the character of Christ you will become changed into His likeness. {2MCP 578.3}

By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ. {RH, March 2, 1897 par. 1}

14. What is the character of the first beast? **Daniel 7:24, Daniel 7:20, 2 Thessalonians 2:4**

EGW: 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}

15. What action does the second beast take that is in character of the first beast? **End of Revelation 13:15, Revelation 17:6**

EGW: 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

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who conscientiously refuse to do what the rest of the Christian world are doing.... {GC88 592.2}

16. As the second beast speaks through its legislation, what object is demanded of the image?

Revelation 13:15

EGW: In the movements now in progress in the United States to secure for the institutions and usages of the church the support of the State, Protestants are following in the steps of papists. Nay, more, they are opening the door for popery to regain in Protestant America the supremacy which she has lost in the Old World. And that which gives greater significance to this movement is the fact that the principal object contemplated is the enforcement of Sunday observance,—a custom which originated with Rome, and which she claims as the sign of her authority. It is the spirit of the papacy,—the spirit of conformity to worldly customs, the veneration for human traditions above the commandments of God,—that is permeating the Protestant churches, and leading them on to do the same work of Sunday exaltation which the papacy has done before them. {GC88 573.1}

If the reader would understand the agencies to be employed in the soon-coming contest, he has but to trace the record of the means which Rome employed for the same object in ages past. If he would know how papists and Protestants united will deal with those who reject their dogmas, let him see the spirit which Rome manifested toward the Sabbath and its defenders. {GC88 573.2}

17. In going along with the false worship, what do the followers in thought and/or in action receive?

Revelation 13:16

EGW: "He had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." Though professing to be followers of the Lamb of God, men become imbued with the spirit of the dragon. They profess to be meek and humble but they speak and legislate with the spirit of Satan, showing by their actions that they are the opposite of what they profess to be. This lamb-like power unites with the dragon in making war upon those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. And Satan unites with Protestants and papists, acting in consort with them as the god of this world, dictating to men as if they were the subjects of his kingdom, to be handled and governed and controlled as he pleases. {14MR 162.1}

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

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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}

18. Without compliance to the Mark of the Beast, what will be made impossible to do? **Revelation 13:17**

EGW: 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}

19. What is the consequence of even pretending to go along with the legislation of the image, even the Mark? **Revelation 14:9-11, Revelation 16:2**

EGW: This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who prove their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin, and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast. What need will there be of the solemn warning not to receive the mark of the beast, when all the saints of God are sealed and ticketed for the New Jerusalem? "O consistency, thou art a jewel!" {15MR 15.3}

20. What is the final consequence of those that go along with the image of the beast? **Revelation 19:20**

EGW: (MARGIN.)] Fire comes down from God out of Heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. [Malachi 4:1; 2 Peter 3:10.] The earth's surface seems one molten mass,—a vast, seething lake of fire. It is the time of the judgment

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and perdition of ungodly men,— “the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.” [Isaiah 34:8; Proverbs 11:31.] {GC88 672.2}

The wicked receive their recompense in the earth. [Isaiah 34:8; Proverbs 11:31.] They “shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts.” [Malachi 4:1.] Some are destroyed as in a moment, while others suffer many days. All are punished “according to their deeds.” The sins of the righteous having been transferred to Satan, he is made to suffer not only for his own rebellion, but for all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit. His punishment is to be far greater than that of those whom he has deceived. After all have perished who fell by his deceptions, he is still to live and suffer on. In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch,—Satan the root, his followers the branches. The full penalty of the law has been visited; the demands of justice have been met; and Heaven and earth, beholding, declare the righteousness of Jehovah. {GC88 673.1}

21. What is the reward of enduring the trials, no matter how challenging they get? **Revelation 15:2**

EGW: The worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment--since this is the sign of His creative power and the witness to His claim upon man's reverence and homage. The wicked will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator's memorial, to exalt the institution of Rome. In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes--those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond" (Revelation 13:16), to receive the mark of the beast, yet the people of God will not receive it. The prophet of Patmos beholds "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God" (Revelation 15:2) and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. {2SM 55.1}

Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of trouble that is coming--a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation--God's chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his angels cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them.--Letter 119, 1904. {2SM 55.2}