

Preparing for the Mark

Worship the Creator

The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship above the gods of the heathen is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. "All the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens." *Psalm 96:5*. "To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it . . . I am the Lord; and there is none else." *Isaiah 40:25-26; 45:18*. Says the psalmist: "Know ye that the Lord, He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." *Psalms 100:3; 95:6*. And the holy beings who worship God in Heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things" (Rev. 4:11).

In Revelation 14, men are called upon to worship the Creator; and the prophecy brings to view a class that, as the result of the threefold message, are keeping the commandments of God. One of these commandments points directly to God as the Creator. The fourth precept declares: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God . . . For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." *Exodus 20:10-11*. Concerning the Sabbath, the Lord says further: that it is "a sign . . . that ye may know that I am the Lord your God" (*Eze. 20:20*). And the reason given is:

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed" (*Ex. 31:17*).

Sabbath - Worship - Creator

"The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God,"—because He is the Creator and we His creatures. "The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship; for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten."

It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. **Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel.** The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, "Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment.

If Any Man Worship the Beast

In contrast to those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus, the third angel points to another class, against whose errors a solemn and fearful warning is uttered: "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." *Revelation 14:9-10*. A correct interpretation of the symbols employed is necessary to an understanding of this message. What is represented by the beast, the image, the mark?

The line of prophecy in which these symbols are found begins with Revelation 12, with the dragon that sought to destroy Christ at His birth. The dragon is said to be Satan (*Rev. 12:9*); he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian era was the Roman Empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. **Thus, while the dragon primarily represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome.**

The Beast of Revelation 13

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." *Revelation 13:5-7*. This prophecy, which is nearly identical with the description of the little horn of Daniel 7, unquestionably points to the papacy.

Forty and Two Months

"Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."

And, says the prophet, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death." And again. "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." **The forty and two months are the same as the "time and times and the dividing of time," three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7,—the time during which the papal power was to oppress God's people.** This period, as stated in preceding chapters, began with the establishment of the papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time, when the papacy was abolished and the pope made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity."

Lamb-like Beast

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" (Rev. 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" (Dan. 7:2).** In Revelation 17, an angel explained that waters represent "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Rev. 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.

Out of the Earth

But the beast with the 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.

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 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."

Like a Lamb

"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 "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.

Spake as a Dragon

But the beast with 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. And the statement that the beast with two horns "causeth the earth and them which dwell 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.**

Such action would be directly contrary to the principles of this government, to the genius of its free institutions, to the direct and solemn avowals of the *Declaration of Independence*, and to the *Constitution*. The

founders of the nation wisely sought to guard against the employment of the secular power on the part of the church, with its inevitable result—in tolerance and persecution. The *Constitution* provides that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,” and that “no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office of public trust under the United States.” **Only in flagrant violation of these safeguards to the nation’s liberty can any religious observance be enforced by civil authority.** But the inconsistency of such action is no greater than is represented in the symbol. It is the beast with lamb-like horns—in profession pure, gentle, and harmless—that speaks as a dragon.

Make an Image

“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.

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. 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 to 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.

Whenever the church has obtained secular power, she has employed it to punish dissent from her doctrines.

Apostasy in the church will prepare the way for the image to the beast.

When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.

The Third Angel’s Warning

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” (Rev. 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.**

After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image, the prophecy declares, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” **Since those who keep God’s commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God’s law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast.**

Think to Change

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” (*Dan. 7:25, R.V.*). 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.

The papacy has attempted to change the law of God. The second commandment, forbidding image worship, has been dropped from the law, and the fourth commandment has been so changed as to authorize the observance of the first instead of the seventh day as the Sabbath. But papists urge, as a reason for omitting the second commandment, that it is unnecessary, being included in the first, and that they are giving the law exactly as God designed it to be understood. This cannot be the change foretold by the prophet. An intentional, deliberate change is presented: “He shall *think* to change the times and the law.” **The change in the fourth commandment exactly fulfills the prophecy. For this, the only authority claimed is that of the church.** Here the papal power openly sets itself above God.

The Bible or the Papacy

While 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 worshipers of the beast will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator’s memorial, to exalt the institution of Rome.** It was in behalf of the Sunday that popery first asserted its arrogant claims; 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; Isa. 58:13*).

The claim so often put forth, that Christ changed the Sabbath, is disproved by His own words. **It is a fact generally admitted by Protestants, that the Scriptures give no authority for the change of the Sabbath.** Roman Catholics acknowledge that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church, and declare that Protestants, by observing the Sunday, are recognizing her power.

The Mark of Papal Authority

As the sign of the authority of the Catholic Church, papist writers cite "the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of . . . because by keeping Sunday strictly they acknowledge the church's power to ordain feasts and to command them under sin" (*Abridgement of Christian Doctrine, p. 58, H. Tuberville*). **What then is the change of the Sabbath, but the sign or mark of the authority of the Romish Church—"the mark of the beast?"**

The Roman Church has not relinquished her claim to supremacy; and when the world and the Protestant churches accept a sabbath of her creating—while they reject the Bible Sabbath—they virtually admit this assumption. **They may claim the authority of tradition and of the Fathers for the change; but in so doing they ignore the very principle which separates them from Rome,—that "the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants."** The papists can see that they are deceiving themselves, willingly closing their eyes to the facts in the case. As the movement for Sunday enforcement gains favor, he rejoices, feeling assured that it will eventually bring the whole Protestant world under the banner of Rome.

Worshipping the Beast

Romanists declare that "the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church" ("*Plain Talk About Protestantism, p. 213*). **The enforcement**

of Sundaykeeping on the part of Protestant churches is an enforcement of the worship of the papacy—of the beast. Those who, understanding the claims of the fourth commandment, choose to observe the false instead of the true Sabbath, are thereby paying homage to that power by which alone it is commanded. But in the very act of enforcing a religious duty by secular power, the churches would themselves form an image to the beast; hence the enforcement of Sundaykeeping in the United States would be an enforcement of the worship of the beast and his image.

But Christians of past generations observed the Sunday, supposing that in so doing they were keeping the Bible Sabbath; and there are now true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. **God accepts their sincerity of purpose and their integrity before Him.** But when Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshipping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome—"the mark of the beast." **And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people—and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men—that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast."**

The Warning against the Mark
The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel's message. That must

be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God's judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them. Prophecy declares that the first angel would make his announcement to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The warning of the third angel, which forms a part of the same threefold message, is to be no less widespread. It is represented in the prophecy as proclaimed with a loud voice, by an angel flying in the midst of heaven; and it will command the attention of the world!

Two Great Classes

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, to receive the mark" of the beast (*Rev. 13:16*), 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," and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb (*Rev. 15:2-3*).

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