

Entering the Final Crisis

Satan's power to deceive can be very great—when men choose to remain ignorant. **In every age there has been a decided struggle of truth against error. But the greatest one is just ahead. One of the most massive crises of the ages is just before mankind.** Of Babylon at this time, it is declared in Scripture, "Her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."

Revelation 13 predicts that a time is just before us when those who honor fundamental Bible truths will be denounced as enemies of law and order. We must individually know the Word of God for ourselves, that we may stand on the right side in that day —

From the very beginning of the great controversy in Heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator; and though he was cast out of Heaven, he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God's law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued. Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether or by rejecting one of its precepts, the result will be ultimately the same. He that offends "in one point" manifests contempt for the whole law; his influence and example are on the side of transgression; he becomes "guilty of all" (*James 2:10*).

In seeking to cast contempt upon the divine statutes, Satan has perverted the doctrines of the Bible, and errors have thus become incorporated into the faith of thousands who profess to believe the Scriptures. **The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering,**—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of God, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition.

No Error More Bold

No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine so rapidly gaining ground that God's law is no longer binding upon men. Every nation has its laws, which command respect and obedience; no government could exist without them; and can it be conceived that the Creator of the heavens and the earth has no law to govern the beings He has made?

Suppose that prominent ministers were publicly to teach that the statutes which govern their land and protect the rights of its citizens were not obligatory,—that they restricted the liberties of the people, and therefore ought not to be obeyed; how long would such men be tolerated in the pulpit? But is it a graver offense to disregard the laws of States and nations than to trample upon those divine precepts which are the foundation of all government?

It would be far more consistent for nations to abolish their statutes, and permit the people to do as they please, than for the Ruler of the universe to annul His law and leave the world without a standard to condemn the guilty or justify the obedient. Would we know the result of making void the law of God? The experiment has been tried. Terrible were the scenes enacted in France when atheism became the controlling power. It was then demonstrated to the world that to throw off the restraints which God has imposed is to accept the rule of the cruelest of tyrants. **When the standard of righteousness is set aside, the way is open for the prince of evil to establish his power in the earth.**

What Lawlessness Will Bring

Wherever the divine precepts are rejected, sin ceases to appear sinful, or righteousness desirable. Those who refuse to submit to the government

of God are wholly unfitted to govern themselves. Through their pernicious teachings, the spirit of insubordination is implanted in the hearts of children and youth, who are naturally impatient of control; and a lawless, licentious state of society results. **While scoffing at the credulity of those who obey the requirements of God, the multitudes eagerly accept the delusions of Satan.** They give the rein to lust, and practice the sins which have called down judgments upon the heathen.

Those who teach the people to lightly regard the commandments of God sow disobedience, to reap disobedience. **Let the restraint imposed by the divine law be wholly cast aside, and human laws would soon be disregarded.** Because God forbids dishonest practices—coveting, lying, and defrauding—men are ready to trample upon His statutes as a hindrance to their worldly prosperity; but the results of banishing these precepts would be such as they do not anticipate. **If the law were not binding, why should any fear to transgress?** Property would no longer be safe. Men would obtain their neighbor's possessions by violence; and the strongest would become richest. **Life itself would not be respected.** The marriage vow would no longer stand as a sacred bulwark to protect the family. He who had the power would, if he desired, take his neighbor's wife by violence. The fifth commandment would be set aside with the fourth. Children would not shrink from taking the life of their parents, if by so doing they could obtain the desire of their corrupt hearts. The civilized world would become a horde of robbers and assassins; and peace, rest, and happiness would be banished from the earth.

And it is Already Happening

Already the doctrine that men are released from obedience to God's requirements has weakened the force of moral obligation and opened the floodgates of iniquity upon the world. **Lawlessness, dissipation, and corruption are sweeping in upon us like an over-**

whelming tide. In the family Satan is at work. His banner waves, even in professedly Christian households. There is envy, evil surmising, hypocrisy, estrangement, emulation, strife, betrayal of sacred trusts, indulgence of lust. The whole system of religious principles and doctrines which should form the foundation and framework of social life seems to be a tottering mass, ready to fall to ruin.

The Last Great Delusion

“To the law and to the testimony: If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.” *Isaiah 8:20.* The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safe-guard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness. Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions. At every revival of God’s work, the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. **The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true, that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures.** By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.

Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His Word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. **None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.** To every soul will come the searching test, Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable Word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?

Counterfeit before the Genuine

Before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth,

there will be, among the people of the Lord, such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His Word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time, to prepare a people for the Lord’s second coming. **The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit.** In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power, he will make it appear that God’s special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. **Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world.**

In many of the revivals which have occurred during the last half century, the same influences have been at work, to a greater or less degree, that will be manifest in the more extensive movements of the future. There is an emotional excitement, a mingling of the true with the false, that is well adapted to mislead. Yet none need be deceived. In the light of God’s Word it is not difficult to determine the nature of these movements. **Wherever men neglect the testimony of the Bible, turning away from those plain, soul-testing truths which require self-denial and renunciation of the world, there we may be sure that God’s blessing is not bestowed.** And by the rule which Christ Himself has given, **“Ye shall know them by their fruits”** (*Matt. 7:16*), it is evidence that these movements are not the work of the Spirit of God.

False Revivals and the True

In the truths of His Word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. It is a neglect of these truths that has opened the door to the evils

which are now becoming so widespread in the religious world. The nature and the importance of the law of God have been, to a great extent, lost sight of. **A wrong conception of the character, the perpetuity, and obligation of the divine law has led to errors in relation to conversion and sanctification,** and has resulted in lowering the standard of piety in the church. Here is to be found the secret of the lack of the Spirit and power of God in the revivals of our time.

And then **the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God’s commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday-sabbath,** that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced, and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment—thus destroying reverence for Sunday—are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity.

Double Deception

Satan’s policy in this final conflict with God’s people is the same that he employed in the opening of the great controversy in Heaven. He professed to be seeking to promote the stability of the divine government while secretly bending every effort to secure its overthrow. And the very work which he was thus endeavoring to accomplish he charged upon the loyal angels. The same policy of deception has marked the history of the Roman Church. It has professed to act as the vicegerent of Heaven while seeking to exalt itself above God and to change His law. **While Satan seeks to destroy those who honor God’s law, he will cause them to be accused as law-breakers,** as men who are dishonoring God and bringing judgments upon the world.

Religious Law, the Key

God never forces the will or the conscience; but Satan’s constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the con-

science and to secure homage to himself. To accomplish this, he works through both religious and secular authorities, moving them to the enforcement of human laws in defiance of the law of God.

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.

Enacting a Law

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. **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"

(*Rev. 12:17*).

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?**

Preparing for the End

The Roman Church, with all its ramifications throughout the world, forms one vast organization under the control, and designed to serve the interests, of the papal see. Its millions of communicants, in every country on the globe, are instructed to hold themselves as bound in allegiance to the pope. Whatever their nationality or their government, they are to regard the authority of the church as above all other. Though they may take the oath pledging their loyalty to the state, yet back of this lies the vow of obedience to Rome, absolving them from every pledge inimical to her interests.

The Warning Has Been Given

God's Word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated. Stealthily and unsuspectingly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the Word of God will thereby incur reproach and

persecution.

To Destroy Faith in the Bible

The iniquity and spiritual darkness that prevailed under the supremacy of Rome were the inevitable result of her suppression of the Scriptures; but where is to be found the cause of the widespread infidelity, the rejection of the law of God, and the consequent corruption, under the full blaze of gospel light in an age of religious freedom? Now that Satan can no longer keep the world under his control by withholding the Scriptures, he resorts to other means to accomplish the same object. **To destroy faith in the Bible serves his purpose as well as to destroy the Bible itself. By introducing the belief that God's law is not binding, he as effectually leads men to transgress as if they were wholly ignorant of its precepts.** And now, as in former ages, he has worked through the church to further his designs.

The religious organizations of the day have refused to listen to unpopular truths plainly brought to view in the Scriptures; and, in combating them, they have adopted interpretations and taken positions which have sown broadcast the seeds of skepticism. **Clinging to the papal error of natural immortality and man's consciousness in death, they have rejected the only defense against the delusions of spiritualism.**

The doctrine of eternal torment has led many to disbelieve the Bible. And as the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the people, it is found that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is enjoined; and **as the only way to free themselves from a duty which they are unwilling to perform, popular teachers declare that the law of God is no longer binding. Thus they cast away the law and the Sabbath together.** As the work of Sabbath reform extends, this rejection of the divine law to avoid the claims of the fourth commandment will become almost universal. **The teachings of religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God's holy law; and upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility** for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world.

Two Great Errors

Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. **The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power;** and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.

The Basis of Genuine Revival

Many religious teachers assert that Christ by His death abolished the law, and men are henceforth free from its requirements. There are some who represent it as a grievous yoke; and, in contrast to the bondage of the law, they present the liberty to be enjoyed under the gospel.

But not so did prophets and apostles regard the holy law of God. Said David, "I will walk at liberty; for I seek Thy precepts" (*Ps. 119:45*). The apostle James, who wrote after the death of Christ, refers to the decalogue as the "royal law," and the "perfect law of liberty" (*James 2:8; 1:25*). And the Revelator, half a century after the crucifixion, pronounces a blessing upon those "that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (*Rev. 22:14*).

The claim that Christ, by His death, abolished His Father's law is without foundation. Had it been possible for the law to be changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died to save man from the penalty of sin. The death of Christ, so far from abolishing the law, proves that it is immutable. The Son of God came to "magnify the law and make it honorable" (*Isa. 42:21*). He said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law"; "till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law" (*Matt. 5:17-18*). And concerning Himself He declares, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart" (*Ps. 40:8*).

The First Step in Reconciliation

The first step in reconciliation to God is the conviction of sin. "Sin is

the transgression of the law." "By the law is the knowledge of sin." *1 John 3:4; Romans 3:20*. **In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God's great standard of righteousness.** It is a mirror which shows the perfection of a righteous character and enables him to discern the defects in his own.

The law reveals to man his sins, but it provides no remedy. While it promises life to the obedient, it declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. **The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. He must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice.**

Thus he obtains "remission of sins that are past," and becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is a child of God, having received the spirit of adoption, whereby he cries, "Abba, Father!"

Free to Obey

Is he now free to transgress God's law? Says Paul: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." "How shall we, that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" And John declares, "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous" (*Rom. 3:31; 6:2; 1 John 5:3*). **In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law.**

Satanic Delusions

As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. **And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.**

How Satan Will Appear

Through spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people, and professing to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith; **but at**

the same time he works as a destroyer. His temptations are leading multitudes to ruin. Intemperance dethrones reason; sensual indulgence, strife, and bloodshed follow.

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" (*Rev. 13:12, 2, 14, 16-17*).

A Restoration of Her Power

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 Thess. 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" (*Rev. 13:8*). **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.**

Rapidly Being Fulfilled

In the events now taking place is seen a rapid advance toward the fulfillment of the prediction. **With Protestant teachers there is the same claim of divine authority for Sundaykeeping, and the same lack of scriptural evidence,** as with the papist leaders who fabricated miracles to supply the place of a command from God. The assertion that God's judgments are visited upon men for their violation of the Sunday-sabbath will be repeated; already it is beginning to be urged. And a movement to enforce Sunday observance is fast gaining ground.

Come Out of Her, My People

"I saw another angel come down from Heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." **"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."** *Revelation 18:1, 2, 4.*

This Scripture points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of Revelation 14:8, is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844. A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. **With every rejection of truth, the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn,** until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, **they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred.**

Christ is set at naught in the contempt placed upon His Word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed and the profession

of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. **A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches.**

The Final Warning

Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared, "Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (*Rev. 18:5*). She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But **God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments, these faithful ones must be called out,** that they "partake not of her sins, and receive not of her plagues." Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from Heaven, lightening the earth with his glory, and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. **In connection with his message the call is heard, "Come out of her, My people." These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth.**

A Clear-cut Issue

Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. **The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that all, "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond" (*Rev. 13:16*), shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath.** All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it

will finally be declared that they are deserving of death. **On the other hand, the law of God enjoining the Creator's rest day demands obedience, and threatens wrath against all who transgress its precepts.**

With the issue thus clearly brought before him, whoever shall trample upon God's law to obey a human enactment, receives the mark of the beast; he accepts the sign of allegiance to the power which he chooses to obey instead of God. The warning from Heaven 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, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation" (*Rev. 14:9-10*).

A Clear-cut Test

The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the State, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God; the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. **While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers receive the mark of the beast, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.**

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