

Study for the Month of December 2014

## ***The Image of the Beast-Part IV***

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# ***Nebuchadnezzar Made an Image of Gold*** **(Based on Daniel Chapter 3 and Revelation 13)**

### ***Introduction:***

“The dream was given to the king of Babylon, the events of the future, reaching down to the end of time, were opened before him, that he might have light on this important subject. It was also given for the benefit of all future generations. The record was traced by the prophetic pen that the light might be shared by those kingdoms which would succeed the kingdom of Babylon.

“Though this wonderful dream caused a marked change to take place in the ideas and opinions of King Nebuchadnezzar, *his soul was not cleansed from its pride, its worldly ambition, his desire for self-exaltation, by the converting power of God.* The rise and fall of the kingdoms which were to succeed Babylon, were minutely described to him by the prophet [Daniel]; but instead of treasuring the conviction which had been made on his mind in regard to the fall of all earthly kingdoms, and the greatness and power of Jehovah’s kingdom, the king, after the immediate impression wore away, thought only of his greatness, and studied how he might make the dream turn to his own exaltation and honor.

“He said much regarding the interpretation given by Daniel, but the words, ‘Thou art this head of gold,’ produced the greatest effect upon his mind. These impressed him so much that his wise men, who had not been able to tell the dream, proposed that he make such an image as the one seen in his dream, and that he set it up, that all might see the head of gold, which was a representation of his kingdom.

“This pleased the king. His pride and vanity found full scope in the thought that he could thus represent his importance; and he resolved that instead of merely copying the image he had seen, he would make an image that should excel the original. It was his design that the whole image should represent the greatness of Babylon. Therefore that which had been said regarding the kingdoms that were to follow, should be blotted from his mind, and from the minds of those who had heard the dream, by the splendor of the image he was about to make. This image should not deteriorate in value from the head to the feet, as had the one he had been shown, but should be composed throughout of the most precious gold.” - *Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, Apr. 29, 1897, An Exhaustive Ellen G. White Comments on Daniel, vol. 1, pp. 102, 103.*

“The dream of the great image, opening before Nebuchadnezzar events reaching to the close of time, had been given that he might understand *the part he was to act in the world’s history, and the relation that his kingdom should sustain to the kingdom of heaven.* In the interpretation of the dream, he had been plainly instructed regarding the

establishment of God's everlasting kingdom. 'In the days of these kings [kingdoms] Daniel had declared, 'shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. . . . The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.' Daniel 2: 44, 45.

"The king had acknowledged the power of God, saying to Daniel, 'Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods . . . a revealer of secrets.' Daniel 2: 47. For a time afterward, Nebuchadnezzar was influenced by the fear of God; but his heart was not yet cleansed from worldly ambition and a desire for self-exaltation. The prosperity attending his reign filled him with pride. In time he ceased to honor God, and resumed his idol worship with increased zeal and bigotry." – *Ibid, Prophets & Kings, pp. 503-504.*

### **Footnotes on Nebuchadnezzar and the events of Daniel chapter 3**

**"Nebuchadnezzar.** No date is given for the events of this chapter. The name of the king is the only indication as to when these events occurred. The LXX [Septuagint] and Theodotion's Greek translation date the events in Nebuchadnezzar's 18<sup>th</sup> year. Some scholars regard this as an interpolation ["to alter or corrupt, as a text, by inserting new or foreign matter."- *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., 1948*]. The reason that the translators believed that the colossal statue was erected to mark the final capture of Jerusalem. However, that city was not destroyed in Nebuchadnezzar's 18<sup>th</sup> year, but rather in his 19<sup>th</sup> (2 Kings 25: 8-10). The date 580 B.C., long given in the margin of the KJV, is derived from Ussher's chronology (see Vol. 1, pp. 179, 195) and has no adequate historical basis. Some commentators have even placed the narrative in the period following Nebuchadnezzar's madness described in chapter 4, but the position is untenable, as will be shown.

"This much is certain, the events narrated in this chapter *occurred later* than those of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, because chapter 3: 12, 30 refers to chapter 2: 49. Further, a comparison of Nebuchadnezzar's addresses of praise in chapter 3: 28, 29 and chapter 4: 34-37 indicates that the king's madness was a later event. Secular history is of no help in dating this event, since extra-Biblical records of that time nowhere mention the incident. However, a court almanac written in the year 570/569 B.C. excludes that year from consideration as a possible date and makes it highly improbable that the event had taken place recently. This almanac gives a list of all the highest state officials in office during that year. Neither Daniel nor his 3 friends are mentioned. Since the event described in chapter 3 resulted in the promotion of the three Hebrews, and since it is unlikely that they were removed from their office soon after their promotion---at least all three of them---a considerable time may have elapsed between the experience narrated in chapter 3 and the date of the court almanac.

"The influence of the dream of chapter 2 on the events of chapter 3 (see *Prophets & Kings, pp. 504, 505*) strongly suggests that the events of chapter 3 cannot be dated in the latter part of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Some have suggested that the date 594/593, for the following reasons: This date coincides with the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah, who in that year made a journey to Babylon (Jer. 51: 59). It is possible that the journey was undertaken in reply to the summons of Nebuchadnezzar that all his governors and vassal 'rulers of the provinces' (Dan. 3: 2) appear in Babylon to give homage to the image the king had erected. Zedekiah, a weak and vacillating character, would hardly be expected to have religious scruples such as made it impossible for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to obey the king's command. However, the dating of this event in the time of Zedekiah is no more than a possibility. See further Sanctified Life, p 27 [by E.G. White].

“Why Daniel is not mentioned in the narrative is a question that cannot be answered. Whether he was ill or absent on an important mission cannot be known. Some have conjectured that because of embarrassment of having rejected the message of the dream, the king arranged to have Daniel away on an important business for the crown. However, of one thing that we may be certain: had the test come to him, Daniel would have stood as loyal as his three companions.” *Footnote on Daniel Chapter, An Exhaustive Ellen G. White Commentary on Daniel, Volume 1, p. 100.*

### **All false religion has its origin in a corruption of the true**

“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.’ Dan. 3: 1. *As an idol, an object of worship, the image was placed in the most favorable position and a proclamation was issued that all should worship it.*

“Those who are willing to be taught, may learn a lesson from the conduct of the king of Babylon. As the enemy sought to make God-given light to serve to his own purposes, by leading the king to work for his own glory instead of working for the glory of God, so he works *today* to pervert truth in order to hinder God’s purposes. All false religion has its origin in a corruption of the true. When *unmixed* with evil the truth is a mighty power to save; but if we allow the enemy to work through us, if by the light given us we seek to exalt self, even this truth may become a power for evil.” – *Ibid, ST April 29, 1897.* It is the mingling a little error with mostly truth that renders it perverted truth and is Satan’s way to hinder God’s purpose. Its result is false religion that appears true.

They acknowledge God at the beginning

“The king had acknowledged the power of God, saying, ‘Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets.’ Daniel 2: 47; but notwithstanding this acknowledgement, he now united with the men he had once sentenced to death, to dishonor God. He had [previously] purposed to destroy these men, because he had discerned their deceptions, and because he was convinced that their learning did not possess the power he had supposed; and they had been saved from a cruel death by the intercession of Daniel [see Daniel chapter 2]. Now he joins with them to frame a design for his image, and to make the light from heaven serve his pride, and forward his exaltation. *The kingdom of Babylon was interpreted to be the kingdom that was to break in pieces all other kingdoms, and to stand forever;* and they endeavored to make an image which would fitly represent Babylon as eternal, indestructible, and all-powerful,---a kingdom that would last forever.” – *Ibid*

Error and false doctrine appear more magnificent, attractive, and powerful than truth

“The grand lesson given by God to the heathen, and to all people, was misconstrued and misplaced. That which was designed by God to teach lessons of truth, and to give the world clear, distinct rays of light, Nebuchadnezzar turned from its purpose, making it minister to his pride and vanity. The prophetic illustration was made to serve for the glorification of humanity. The symbol designed to unfold important events was turned into a symbol which would hinder the spread of that knowledge which God designed the kingdoms of the earth should receive. By the height and beauty of his image, by the material of which it was formed, the king sought to make error and false doctrine magnificent and attractive, more powerful, seemingly, than anything God had given.” – *Ibid.*

## History will be repeated, antitype following type

### Individually:

“The enemy would lead us all to the use, *as did Nebuchadnezzar*, the light and knowledge of God *for our own exaltation*. But self-exaltation can find no place in the work of God. ‘Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty men glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.’ Jeremiah 9: 23, 24.

### Globally:

“History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan’s plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation.

“The decree enforcing the worship of this day is *to go forth to all the world. In a limited degree, it has already gone forth*. In several places the civil power is speaking with the voice of a dragon, just as the heathen king spoke to the Hebrew captives.”- E. G. White Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 976/Book of Daniel, p. 102

“Is it true that the end of all things is at hand? What mean the awful calamities by sea—vessels shipwrecked and lives hurled into eternity without a moment’s warning? What mean the awful accidents by land—fire consuming the riches men have hoarded, much of which has been accumulated by oppression of the poor? [sweat shops, modern slavery and human trafficking, etc.]. *The Lord will not interfere to protect the property of those who transgress His law, break His covenant, and trample upon His Sabbath, accepting in its place a spurious rest day*. As Nebuchadnezzar set up an image on the plains of Dura, and commanded all to bow before it, so this *false sabbath* has been exalted before the world, and men are commanded to keep it holy. But it has not a vestige of sanctity. Nowhere in God’s Word are we commanded to reverence the first day of the week.” - *Ibid, Manuscript Releases, No. 11, p. 354*.

NOTE: The Christian mainstream made up of the Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Fundamental, etc., and the Roman Catholic Church calls this false sabbath, Sunday, “The Christian Sabbath,” “The Lord’s Day,” which, by the very facts of creation, natural, and civil laws, is the first day of the week. Nobody doubts that Sunday is the first day of the week of seven days. If Sunday is the first day of the week, Saturday, of course, is the seventh day of the week. The Christian Bible, particularly the fourth commandment of the Decalogue clearly states “*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.*”

“*When the fiery trial came upon those who would not bow the knee to the idolatrous image, Christ Himself walked in the fiery furnace with His three faithful servants. Nebuchadnezzar’s heart was so moved upon this wonderful miracle that he acknowledged God, and His superior power.* The king was instructed by David that all men, whether king or subjects, were not to read the Scriptures and God’s providences in the light of their dreams, and fancies but were to read their dreams in the light of the living oracles.

**NOTE:**

God's people should not consider it mysterious if they are experiencing increasing trials and afflictions now. God has a purpose in all these, first, to (1) purify and cleanse them from all sinful defilement, particularly secret and unknown sins, during this antitypical Day of Atonement and cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary that they may receive the seal of approval of the living God in their foreheads in the event they die before the long-expected Sunday law is passed, and (2) in case they live long enough to see it finally passed, to prepare them for the fiery but necessary ordeal of the final sifting and trial of their faith in the enforcement of Sunday worship, which is the mark of the beast revealed in Revelation 13. The primary mover, shaker, and enforcer of this abomination of desolation will be the once-Protestant churches of the United States, the beast with lamb-like horns but changes into one speaking like a dragon. Revelation 13. At that time, they become the *image of the beast*—the beast being the revived papacy. Watch its rapid ascent to the world's attention and its rapid movements among the beleaguered nations of the world seeking for answers to their national woes. They are seeking a world leader—not in Christ, but in men, and they will fulfill the prophecy, "And the whole world wondered after the beast." Rev. 13: 3.

"Nebuchadnezzar's dream had been interpreted by Daniel in the light of the Scriptures, but Nebuchadnezzar had so brought it into harmony with his own understanding and ambitions that he made this wonderful display *with the hope of converting all nations to the worship of his image*, which represented the excellency of Babylon. *But the fall of Babylon came in an hour of feasting and revelry. 'So will be the end of the world.'*" – *Ibid, MS 47 a 1898/ Book of Daniel, p. 103*

**NOTE:**

All who profess to read and study God's Word are warned not to interpret the Bible, prophecies in particular, in the light of one's own ideas, prejudices, and opinions but to compare Scripture to Scripture, prayerfully and humbly seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the holy angels. The apostles warn yet encourages all to do it the right way: Peter says: "We also have the prophetic word made sure, which you do well to heed, as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scriptures is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed." 2 Peter. 1: 19-21; 2: 1, 2, N.K.J.V. Paul says: "Study to show yourselves approved unto God, as workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 1 Timothy 2: 15, K.J.V.

As someone said, "Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow; he who would search for pearls, must dive below."

"Ignorance of God's word is sin, when every provision has been made that we might become wise [in God's word]. We should day by day study the Bible diligently, weighing every thought, and comparing Scripture with Scripture. With divine help [through the Holy Spirit and the holy angels], we are to form our opinion for ourselves, as we are to answer for ourselves before God."- *E. G. White, Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, 1884 ed., p. 147.*

*“God works through those who hear and obey His voice, those who will, if need be, speak unpalatable truths, those who do not fear to reprove popular sins. The reason why He does not oftener choose men of learning and high position is, that they trust to their creeds, theories, and theological systems, and feel no need to be taught of God. Only those who have a personal connection with the Source of wisdom are able to understand or explain the Scriptures. Men who have little learning of the schools [such as most of the prophets of the Old Testament, the first disciples and the humble Reformers after them, etc.] are called to declare the truth, not because they are unlearned, but because they are not too self-sufficient to be taught of God. They learn in the school of Christ, and their humility and obedience makes them great. In committing to them the knowledge of His truth, God confers upon them honor, a comparison with which earthly honor and human greatness sink into insignificance.”* - E.G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, 1884 edition, pp. 289-290.

*“Only those who read the Scriptures as the voice of God speaking to them are learners. They tremble at the Word of God, for to them it is a living reality. They study, they search for the hidden treasure. They open their understanding and heart to receive, and they pray for heavenly grace, that they may obtain a preparation for the future, immortal life.”* – *Ibid*, Manuscript 67, June 9, 1898/ *This Day with God*, p. 169. Disciple is from the Greek *mathetes*, “a learner, i.e., pupil.” *Strong’s Greek Dictionary*.

Jesus said, “If any man will do *His will*, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.” John 7: 17. This is so clear. Only those who are sincerely and diligently seeking to know the truth and eager to do and obey God’s will by His grace as fast as they learn the truth, are those who will advance in acquiring the knowledge that God so eagerly wants to reveal to those who seek “the truth as it is in Jesus.” Eph. 4: 21.

On the other hand, those who do not really love the truth, particularly the unpalatable truths that condemn the popular sins of the day, their careless indulgence of fleshly desires and love of the world and things of this world--- while professing to be Christians and church-goers---will exposed: they will believe a lie. Notice:

*“For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken away [that’s what the man of sin, the antichrist, thinks he can do]. And when the lawless one will be revealed [he has already been revealed—the papacy], whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth [together with dragon, and false prophet, Rev. 16: 13, 14; 20: 19-21] and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”* 2 Thessalonians. 2: 8-12, N.K.J.V.

The fall of ancient Babylon came in an hour of feasting and revelry. Moral fall precedes the literal fall. National apostasy brings on national ruin. And so will be the fall of antitypical spiritual “Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth” (Revelation 17), and all the churches/religions of the world together with the secular and civil world who form a confederacy with them, and finally, the end of this sinful world as we know it and suffered therein—which shouldn’t take another thousand years, as some claim!

## Force is the last resort of every false religion

*Then a herald cried aloud: 'To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that Nebuchadnezzar has set up; and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of burning, fiery furnace.' So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute . . . with all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages, fell down and worshipped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up." Daniel 3: 4-7, N.K.J.V.*

"As Nebuchadnezzar tried to force his subjects to obey his mandates, so men will try to force us to disregard the Word of God. They will endeavor to compel us to render homage to man-made *statutes*; but in God's strength we are to refuse to dishonor Him. *The laws of earthly kingdoms are to be obeyed only when they do not conflict with the laws of God.* When governments are tyrannical and overbearing, when trample upon God's law, their laws are contemptible in His sight. And when they try to control the minds and consciences of whom Christ died to make free, God's children are to show their loyalty to Him, by refusing to disobey His commandments."- *Ibid, Signs of the Times, May 13, 1897/ Book of Daniel, p. 105.* .

"A severe [fiery] test came to . . . these youth when Nebuchadnezzar issued a proclamation, calling upon all the officers of the kingdom to assemble at the dedication of the great image, and at the sound of the musical instruments, to bow down and worship it/ Should any fail of doing this, they were immediately to be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. The worship of this image had been brought about by the wise men of Babylon in order to make the Hebrew youth join in their idolatrous worship. *They were beautiful singers*, and the Chaldeans wanted them to forget their God and accept the worship of the Babylonian idols.

"From age to age the *heroes of faith* have been marked by their fidelity to God, and they have been brought *conspicuously* before the world that *their light* might shine to those in darkness. Daniel and his three companions are *illustrious examples of Christian heroism*. From their experience in the court of Babylon we may learn what God will do for those who serve Him with full purpose of heart." – *My Life Today, p. 68/ Ibid, p. 104.*

*"To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages."* – Who are these men who give such commands in today's setting? Jesus said, "By their fruits you shall know them." "These are the ones who have *guile* in their mouths. These are the ones who profess to be followers of Christ while they are following a leader who was expelled from the courts of heaven. These men, who are working unrighteousness with such zealous zeal, show before the world and universe that if Christ was upon the earth, as at His first advent, they would do as the unbelieving Jews---follow Him as spies, *seeking to get Him to say something which they could use against Him to condemn Him to death.* If they had opportunity and power, they would do as Nebuchadnezzar when he set up his golden image in the plains of Dura."- *E.G. White, No. 14 Manuscript Releases, p. 94/ Ibid, p. 105*

"[Psams 119: 126 quoted]. A time is coming when the law of God is, in a special sense, to be made void in our land [America]. The rulers of our nation, will, by legislative

enactments, enforce the Sunday law, and thus God's people will be brought into great peril. When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the conscience of men in regard to their religious privileges [God-given inalienable rights, in fact], enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land." – *E. G. White, Review & Herald, Dec. 18, 1888/Maranatha 179*

**NOTE:**

**1. Worldly music** is one of Satan's most destructively efficient and effective agencies in these last days of making His people forget God and accept false worship! Watch and pray that you do not willfully *enter* into temptation by lending a sympathetic ear or word to justify the use of worldly music genre to be mixed into church services as a means to induce the younger generation "to stay in the church"! Such an amalgamation renders the church an even more deceptive place than in the world itself. No wonder God's servant says, in this context, that "there is more to fear from within than without."

**2. Words of Caution to the overzealous writers and speakers:**

"Let everyone bear in mind that we are in no case to invite persecution. We are not to use harsh and cutting words. Keep them out of every article written, drop them out of every address given. Let the word of God do the cutting, the rebuking; let finite men hide and abide in Jesus Christ. Let the spirit of Christ appear [as it appeared in Daniel and his friends]. Let all be guarded in their words, lest they place those not of our faith in deadly opposition against us, and give Satan an opportunity to used the unadvised words to hedge up our way.

"There is to be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation [Dan. 12: 1, 2]. Our work is to study to weed out of all our discourses everything that savors of retaliation and defiance and making a drive against churches and individuals, because this is not Christ's way and method." – *Testimonies, Vol. 9, pp. 239-244 (1909)/Counsels to Writers and Editors, pp. 64, 65.*

"Regarding the Catholics. – Brethren, I feel hurt when I see that so many decided thrusts are made against the Catholics. Preach the truth, but restrain the words which show a harsh spirit; for such words cannot help or enlighten anyone." – *Letter 20, 1896/Ibid, p. 65.*

"Less to Say. – There is need of a much closer study of the word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. *We may have to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the papacy, but we should call attention to what the prophets and apostles have written under the inspiration of the Spirit of God.* The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy, and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and the Lord of heaven and His law are to be exalted." – *Letter 57, 1896/Ibid, p. 65.*

**Attitude to Civil Authorities**

"Bring No Attack. – By some of our brethren many things have been spoken and written that are interpreted as *expressing antagonism to government and law*. It is a mistake thus to lay ourselves open to misunderstanding. It is not wise to find fault continually with what is done by rulers of government. It is not our work to attack individuals or institutions. *We should exercise great care lest we be understood as putting ourselves in opposition to the civil authorities.* It is true that our warfare is aggressive, but our weapons are those found in a plain 'Thus saith the Lord.' *Our work is*



*to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God. We should not be turned aside to lines that will encourage controversy, or arouse antagonism in those not of our faith.*

*“We should not work in a manner that will mark us out as seeming to advocate treason. We should weed out from our writings and utterances every expression, that, taken by itself, could be misrepresented as to make it appear antagonistic to law and order. Everything should be carefully considered, lest we place ourselves on record as encouraging disloyalty to our country and its laws. We are not required to defy authorities. There will come a time when, because of our advocacy of Bible truth, we shall be treated as traitors; but let not this time be hastened by unadvised movements that stir up animosity and strife.”- CW 68.*

*“Condemned By Our Own Words. – The time will come when unguarded expressions of denunciatory character, that have been carelessly spoke or written by our brethren, will be used by our enemies to condemn us. These will be not used merely to condemn those who made the statements, but will be charged upon the whole body of Adventists. Our accusers will say that on such and such a day one of our responsible men said thus and so against the administration of the laws of this government. Many will be astonished to see how many things have been cherished and remembered that will give point to the arguments of our adversaries. Many will be surprised to hear their own words strained into a meaning that they did not intend to have. Then let our workers be careful to speak guardedly at all times and under all circumstances. Let all beware lest by reckless expressions they bring on a time of trouble before the great crisis which is to try men’s souls.” – CW 69.*

*“Charges Against Authorities and Powers. – The less we make direct charges against authorities and powers, the greater work we shall be able to accomplish, both in America and in foreign countries. Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world.*

*“It is our work to magnify and exalt the law of God. The truth of God’s word is to be made manifest. We are to hold up the Scriptures as the rule of life. In all modesty, in the spirit of grace, and in the love of God, we are to point men to the fact that the Lord God is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord*

*“In the name of the Lord we are to go forward, unfurling His banner, advocating His word. When the authorities command not to do this work; when they forbid us to proclaim the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, then it will be necessary for us to say as did the apostles: ‘Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.’ Acts 4: 19, 20.*

*“The truth is to be set forth in the power of Holy Spirit. This alone can make our words effective. Only through the Spirit’s power will victory be gained and held. The human agent must be worked by the Spirit of God. The workers must be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. They must have divine wisdom, that nothing may be uttered which would stir up men to close our way. Through the inculcation of spiritual truth we are to prepare a people who shall be able, in meekness and fear, to give a reason for their faith before the highest authorities in our world.”*

*“We need to present the truth in its simplicity, to advocate practical godliness; and we should do this in the Spirit of Christ. The manifestation of such a spirit will have the best influence upon our own souls, and it will have a convincing power upon others. Give the Lord opportunity to work through His own agents. Do not imagine that it will be possible for you to lay out plans for the future; let God be acknowledged as standing at*

the helm at all times and under every circumstance. He will work by means that are will be suitable, and will maintain, increase, and build up His own people.” - CW 68, 69, 70, 71.

“When the land which the Lord provided as an *asylum for His people*, that they might worship Him according to the dictates of their own consciences, the land which for long years has favored by making it the depository of the pure religion of Christ---when that land, shall, through its legislators, abjure the principles of Protestantism, and give countenance to *Romish apostasy in tampering with God’s law*---it is then that the final that the final work of the man of sin will be revealed. *Protestants will throw their whole influence and strength on the side of the Papacy; by a national act enforcing the false sabbath, they will give life and vigor to the corrupt faith of Rome, reviving her tyranny and oppression of conscience.* Then it will be time for God to work in *mighty power* for the vindication of His truth.

What is this “mighty power”? - “The prophet says: ‘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 I hear 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. For her sins have reached unto heaven*, and God hath remembered her iniquities.’ Rev. 18: 1-5. This is a prophetic description of the final worldwide movement empowered by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power upon those who have prepared for it.

When do her sins reach unto heaven, or the cup of her iniquity be filled to the brim?

“When the law of God is finally made void by legislation. Then the extremity of God’s people is His opportunity to show who is the Governor of heaven and earth. As a satanic power is stirring up the elements from beneath, God will send light and power to His people, that the message of truth may be proclaimed to all the world.” – E. G. White, *Signs of the Times, June 12, 1893/Maranatha, 179.*

We cannot change what has been revealed by the prophetic pen. The image of the beast will be formed in God’s appointed time and place. What we can and must do *now* is to “ask, seek, and knock for the Holy Spirit” (Luke 11) to transform our hearts and minds and with our informed and willing consent and active participation, to have God’s image—His moral character in which man was originally created in, as revealed in Christ the Creator and Redeemer---to be fully restored in us. Indeed, “Christ in you” is “the hope glory.” Col. 1: 26, 27. This is God’s answer to Satan, the beast and to his image even as the three Hebrew youth, in life and deed while in Babylon, reflected Christ to Nebuchadnezzar, heathen king of Babylon so that he recognized the “fourth person” walking inside the fiery furnace with the unhurt Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as “looking like the Son of God!”

When faced with the certainty of a terrible death in the lion’s den (see Daniel chapter 6), Daniel “boldly yet quietly and humbly declared that no earthly power has a right to interpose between the soul and God [freedom of conscience]. Surrounded by idolaters, he was a faithful witness to this truth. His dauntless adherence to right was a bright light in the moral darkness of that heathen court. *Daniel stands before the world today a worthy example of Christian fearlessness and fidelity.*” E. G. White, *Prophets & Kings*, p. 542. By God’s grace, dare to be a Daniel today, and in the coming final test!

To be continued next month

