

February 8, 1910 The Dragon Voice

By Mrs. E. G. White

To the apostle John on the Isle of Patmos, were opened scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the *experience of the church*. Subjects of vast importance were presented to him in figures and symbols, that those who should turn from error to truth might become intelligent concerning the perils and conflicts before them. The *history of the Christian world* to the very close of time, was revealed to him. With great clearness he saw the position, dangers, conflicts, and final deliverance of the people of God. He records the closing message which is to ripen the harvest of the earth, either as sheaves for the heavenly garner, or as fagots for the fires of the last day. {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 1}

John beheld in vision the redeemed people of God. He saw the triumph of those who had gained the victory over the beast and over his image. He marked the trials which they had endured for the truth's sake. He saw their unyielding firmness in adhering to the commandments of God against the oppressive powers that sought to force them to disobedience. {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 2}

#### Important Symbols

Under the symbols of the *great red dragon*, a leopard-like beast, and a beast with lamblike horns, the *earthly governments* which would be especially engaged in trampling upon God's law and persecuting His people, were presented to John. Their war is to be carried on till the close of time. The people of God, symbolized by a holy woman and her children, are represented as greatly in the minority. In the last days, only a remnant still exists. John speaks of them as those that "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 3}

For many centuries, first through paganism and then through the Papacy, Satan exerted his powers to blot from the earth God's faithful witnesses. Both heathen and papists were actuated by the same dragon spirit. *They differed only in that the Romish apostate, making a pretense of serving God, was the more dangerous and cruel foe. Through the agency of Romanism, Satan took the world captive. The professed church of God was swept into the ranks of this delusion,* and for more than a thousand years the true people of God suffered under the dragon's ire. {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 4}

#### A New Persecutor

*At the time when the Papacy, robbed of its strength, was forced to desist from persecution,* John beheld a new power coming up to echo the dragon's voice, and carry forward the same cruel and blasphemous work. *This power, the last that is to wage war against the church and the law of God,* is represented by a beast with lamblike horns. The beasts preceding it had risen from the sea; but this came up out of the earth, representing the peaceful rise of the nation which it symbolized--the United States. {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 5}

The "two horns like a lamb" well represent the character of our own Government, as expressed in its two fundamental principles,--Republicanism and Protestantism. These principles

are the secret of our power and prosperity as a nation. Those who first found an asylum on the shores of America, rejoiced that they had reached a country free from the arrogant claims of popery and the tyranny of kingly rule. They determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty. {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 6}

But the stern tracings of the prophetic pencil reveal a change in this peaceful scene. The beast with lamblike horns speaks with the voice of a dragon, and "exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him." Prophecy declares that he will say to them that dwell on the earth, "that they should make an image to the beast," and that it will cause "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." *Thus Protestantism is to follow in the steps of the Papacy.* {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 7}

### God's Warning

It is at this time that the third angel is seen flying in the midst of heaven, proclaiming, "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. {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 8}

In marked contrast with this multitude stands a little company who will not swerve from their allegiance to God. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." These are they of whom Isaiah speaks: "They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach. The restorer of paths to dwell in." The breach was made in the law of God when the Sabbath was changed by the Romish power. But the time has come for that divine institution to be restored. The breach is to be repaired, and the foundation of many generations to be raised up. And this message is the last to be given before the coming of the Lord. Immediately following its proclamation, the Son of Man is seen by the prophet coming in glory to reap the harvest of the earth. {ST, February 8, 1910 par. 9}

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 (Revelation 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.* {GC 438:2}

**37-42. A Dual Representation.**--The image revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, while representing the deterioration of the kingdoms of the earth in power and glory, also fitly represents the deterioration of religion and morality among the people of these kingdoms. As nations forget God, in like proportion they become weak morally. {4BC 1168.4}

Babylon passed away because in her prosperity she forgot God, and ascribed the glory of her prosperity to human achievement. {4BC 1168.5}

The Medo-Persian kingdom was visited by the wrath of heaven because in this kingdom God's law was trampled under foot. The fear of the Lord found no place in the hearts of the

people. The prevailing influences in Medo-Persia were wickedness, blasphemy, and corruption. {4BC 1168.6}

The kingdoms that followed were even more base and corrupt. They deteriorated because they cast off their allegiance to God. As they forgot Him, they sank lower and still lower in the scale of moral value (YI Sept. 22, 1903).

The Prospect Before Us.--Prophecy represents Protestantism as having lamblike horns, but speaking like a dragon. *Already we are beginning to hear the voice of the dragon.* There is a satanic force propelling the Sunday movement, but it is concealed. Even the men who are engaged in the work, are themselves blinded to the results which will follow their movement. {7BC 975.5}

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. {7BC 976.8}

But continually increasing numbers were attracted to the shores of America, *actuated by motives widely different from those of the first Pilgrims.* Though the primitive faith and purity exerted a widespread and molding power, *yet its influence became less and less as the numbers increased of those who sought only worldly advantage.* {GC 296.4}

The regulation adopted by the early colonists, of permitting *only members of the church to vote or to hold office in the civil government,* led to most pernicious results. This measure had been accepted as a means of preserving the purity of the state, but it resulted in the corruption of the church. A profession of religion being the *condition* of suffrage and officeholding, many, actuated solely by motives of worldly policy, united with the church without a change of heart. Thus the churches came to consist, to a considerable extent, of unconverted persons; and even in the ministry were those who not only held errors of doctrine, but who were ignorant of the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. Thus again was demonstrated the evil results, so often witnessed in the history of the church from the days of Constantine to the present, of attempting to build up the church by the aid of the state, of appealing to the secular power in support of the gospel of Him who declared: "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36. The union of the church with the state, be the degree never so slight, while it may appear to bring the world nearer to the church, does in reality but bring the church nearer to the world. {GC 297.1}

The great principle so nobly advocated by Robinson and Roger Williams, that truth is progressive, that Christians should stand ready to accept all the light which may shine from God's holy word, was lost sight of by their descendants. *The Protestant churches of America,--and those of Europe as well,--so highly favored in receiving the blessings of the Reformation, failed to press forward in the path of reform.* Though a few faithful men arose, from time to time, to proclaim new truth and expose long-cherished error, the majority, like the Jews in Christ's day or the papists in the time of Luther, *were content to believe as their fathers had believed and to live as they had lived. Therefore religion again degenerated into formalism; and errors and superstitions which would have been cast aside* had the church continued to walk in the light of God's word, *were retained and cherished. Thus the spirit inspired by the Reformation gradually died out, until there was almost as great need of reform in the Protestant churches as in the Roman Church in the time of Luther. There was the same worldliness and spiritual*

*stupor, a similar reverence for the opinions of men, and substitution of human theories for the teachings of God's word.* {GC 297.2}

## Chapter 17

1-5 (chs. 13:11-17; 18:1-5; 2 Thess. 2:7-12). Deceiver of All Nations.--In the seventeenth of Revelation is foretold the destruction of all the churches who corrupt themselves by idolatrous devotion to the service of the papacy, those who have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. [Rev. 17:1-4 quoted.] {7BC 983.3}

Thus is represented the papal power, which with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, by outside attraction and gorgeous display, deceives all nations; promising them, as did Satan our first parents, all good to those who receive its mark, and all harm to those who oppose its fallacies. The power which has the deepest inward corruption will make the greatest display, and will clothe itself with the most elaborate signs of power. The Bible plainly declares that this covers a corrupt and deceiving wickedness. "Upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." {7BC 983.4}

What is it that gives its kingdom to this power? Protestantism, a power which, while professing to have the temper and spirit of a lamb and to be allied to Heaven, speaks with the voice of a dragon. It is moved by a power from beneath (Letter 232, 1899). {7BC 983.5}

13, 14 (chs. 13:11-17; **16:13-16**). A Confederacy of Satan's Forces.--[Rev. 17:13, 14 quoted.] "**These have one mind.**" There will be a universal **bond of union**, **one great harmony**, **a confederacy of Satan's forces**. "And shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Thus is manifested *the same arbitrary*, oppressive power against religious liberty, freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, *as was manifested by the papacy, when in the past it persecuted those who dared to refuse to conform with the religious rites and ceremonies of Romanism.* {7BC 983.6}

In the warfare to be waged *in the last days* there will be united, in opposition to God's people, *all the corrupt powers* that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah. In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue; for in the Sabbath commandment the great Lawgiver identifies Himself as the Creator of the heavens and the earth (MS 24, 1891). {7BC 983.7}

Note: Union means many separate parts. Still have ten toes/horns. Example They have united to solve correct the financial crisis, yet they are still separate and ten.

As we approach the last crisis, it is of vital moment that harmony and unity exist among the Lord's instrumentalities. *The world is filled with storm and war and variance.* Yet under one head--the papal power--the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. {Mar 187.1}

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Strange, eventful history is being recorded in the books of heaven. Everything in our world is in agitation. Events are changing to bring about the day of God, which hasteth greatly. The *world*

is filled with storm and war and variance. ***Under one head (of the 7 heads Rev. 17:9,12), the papal power, it has*** united to oppose God in the person of His faithful witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate (*Satan*). All jealousy, evil surmising, and evil speaking are of *him*, and ***tend to produce discord and disunion***. Then shall God's people be at variance with one another? Shall they not be cemented together by the Holy Spirit, each worker filled with love and sympathy for his fellow-worker, each filling his appointment with faithful effort, seeking earnestly to prepare the way of the Lord? In the general discord there should be one place where harmony and unity should exist because ***the Bible is the guide***. When the principles of God's Word are followed, it becomes a bright light shining in a dark place. All who build on this Rock can be sure that their house will stand amid the tempest. {ST, February 7, 1900 par. 3}{7T 182.2}{Maranatha 187.3-6}Same as {GC 267.2; 576.1; 61.2}{AA 265.2}{LP 117.1\*}{4SP 66.2\*}Parenthesis and contents mine.

"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 supremacy of the papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time the pope was 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." {GC 439.2}

I also stated that "Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God." I will give another sentence from the same page: "I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne." Now this praying company was in this mortal state, on the earth, yet represented to me as bowed before the throne. I never had the idea that these individuals were actually in the New Jerusalem. Neither did I ever think that any mortal could suppose that I believed that Satan was actually in the New Jerusalem. But did not John see the great red dragon in heaven? Certainly. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; ***and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns***." Revelation 12:3. What a monster to be in heaven! Here seems to be as good a chance for ridicule as in the interpretation which some have placed upon my statements. {EW 92.2}