

AN IMAGE TO THE BEAST

REVIEW QUESTIONS. — (a) From what did the Protestant churches soon depart? (b) What soon became their condition as regards unity of doctrine? (c) What is the spiritual condition of these divided churches? (d) What unscriptural dogma is held by them in common? (e) To what is appeal made that the Sunday sabbath may be established?

1. When a backslidden and divided church unites with the state, what always results? Rev. 14:8.

2. What warning does the Lord in love still send to His people? Verses 9-12. See Note 1.

3. Against what three things does this message warn? Verse 9.

4. What have we found the beast to be?

Ans.—The Papacy. But note that the "beast" is not the Roman Catholic Church as such, nor the Papacy as meaning the church. It is the union of that church with the state.

5. What occurred in 1798? Rev. 13:3, first part, and verse 11.

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6. Was this to be the end of the first beast power? Verse 3, last part.

7. What scriptures show that it will be an active, living oppressor of God's people in the last great conflict? Rev. 14:9-12; 13:14; 15:2; 16:10; 19:19, 20.

8. What power did the prophet see arising when the papal beast went into captivity (A. D. 1798)? Rev. 13:11.

9. What prominent characteristics did the beast possess? Verse 11, last part.

10. Of what are a lamb and a dragon symbols? Rev. 5:6; 12:9.

11. What would the two horns symbolize? 1Sam. 2:1, 10.

Ans.— "Horn" is a symbol of exaltation, power, and honor. 1 Sam. 2 :1, 10. They would here indicate the two leading features in the government represented by the beast, which are Christian in origin, and which give the government its prominence and power.

12. What would be represented by "speaking like a dragon"? See Rev. 12:13.

Ans.—Beast represents government. A government speaks through its laws. Speaking like a dragon would therefore be to issue persecuting laws (Rev. 12:13) against the people of God.

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13. To what, then, in the character of a government must the symbol of the two-horned beast apply?

Ans.— To a government just rising to power and prominence in 1798, which held professedly to two prominent Christian features that gave it prominence, and which, notwithstanding this, shall become a persecutor.

14. What two characteristics of Christianity apart from its spiritual power give it prominence in the world?

Ans.— Absolute equality of mankind (Acts 17:26), and absolute religious liberty or freedom to believe or not believe without coercion (John 12: 47).

15. In what government alone can and do these specifications find fulfilment? See Note 2.

16. How great power does the two-horned beast exercise, and for what purpose is it used? Rev. 13:12.

17. What was to be manifest in his territory, and in what fulfilled? Verses 13, 14. Fulfilling in Modern Spiritualism and other workings of Satan.

18. What would these deceptions lead the people to do? Verse 14, last part.

19. What did the first beast represent, and what elements constituted it?

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20. In what, then, would an image to the beast consist?

Ans.— In a union of church and state, or the church using the state for the furtherance of her own cause.

21. What law was .to follow the making of the image? Rev. 13:15.

22. What would be fulfilled in this? Verse 11, last clause.

NOTES

1. IT has ever been true that a backslidden body — one that has turned from God's word to men, from God's power to the state — was never reformed in itself. Invariably God's message has called out those from the fallen church who would do His will and preach His gospel. Israel went down to Egypt for help, and their captivity and loss of power followed. Out of the captives God gathered a faithful band to do His work. The Jewish church failed, and God called out the apostolic church to do His bidding. The Roman Church failed, and out of it God called the churches of the Reformation. Some of these churches failed to advance, and God called out others to bear His gospel to the world — such as the Baptist, Methodist, Congregationalist, Disciple, Adventist. His last "called-out" people will know no standard but His word, no power but His Spirit. The third message comes home to every individual soul in great Babylon.

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2. (a) The prophecy demands a government rising to prominence in 1798. This is met in the United States and no other. (b) It was to rise out of the earth in contradistinction to the sea. Dan. 7:1-7; Rev. 13:1. "Sea," or waters, represents peoples, etc. Rev. 17:15. "Earth," therefore, would indicate territory outside of the civilized nations of the earth. This is met in America. (c) The two principles of equality and religious liberty – the freedom to believe or not to believe – are found alone in the Christian religion of all the religions of earth. It was these which gave it influence among the lowly and downtrodden of earth, to know that God loved them as well as others, and that He respected their rights. These two principles are found alone in this government of all the governments of earth. Equality is expressed in the Declaration of Independence; religious liberty, in the first amendment to the Constitution. All other governments of note have had a state religion, or the feature of caste, or both. The symbol applies unequivocally to the United States. Other specifications confirm this.