

“The Lord has shown me clearly that **the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes**; for it is to be **the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided**. Your position is such a jumble of inconsistencies that but few will be deceived.

“In Revelation 13 this subject is plainly presented; [Revelation 13:11–17, quoted].

“This is **the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed**. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 15, 15.

STILL REMAINS TO BE DEFINED

“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.**” *The Great Controversy*, 445.

“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 beast. It is also called an image *of* the 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 of 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.**” *The Great Controversy*, 443.

IF THE READER WOULD UNDERSTAND

“**If the reader would understand the agencies to be employed in the soon-coming contest, he has but to trace the record of the means which Rome employed for the same object in ages past**. If he would know how papists and Protestants united will deal with those who reject their dogmas, let him see the spirit which Rome manifested toward the Sabbath and its defenders.

“**Royal edicts, general councils, and church ordinances sustained by secular power were the steps by which the pagan festival attained its position of honor in the Christian world. The first public measure enforcing Sunday observance was the law enacted by Constantine. (A.D. 321.)** This edict required townspeople to rest on ‘the venerable day of the sun,’ but permitted countrymen to continue their agricultural pursuits. Though virtually a heathen statute, it was enforced by the emperor after his nominal acceptance of Christianity.

“The royal mandate not proving a sufficient substitute for divine authority, Eusebius, a bishop who sought the favor of princes, and who was the special friend and flatterer of Constantine, advanced the claim that Christ had transferred the Sabbath to Sunday. Not a single testimony of the Scriptures was produced in proof of the new doctrine. Eusebius himself unwittingly acknowledges its falsity and points to the real authors of the change. ‘All things,’ he says, ‘whatever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord’s Day.’— Robert Cox, *Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties*, page 538. But the Sunday argument, groundless as it was, served to embolden men in trampling upon the Sabbath of the Lord. All who desired to be honored by the world accepted the popular festival.

“As the papacy became firmly established, **the work of Sunday exaltation was continued**. For a time the people engaged in agricultural labor when not attending church, and the seventh day was still regarded as the Sabbath. But **steadily a change was effected**. Those in holy office were forbidden to pass judgment in any civil controversy on the Sunday. Soon after, all persons, of whatever rank, were commanded to refrain from common labor on pain of a fine for freemen and stripes in the case of servants. Later it was decreed that rich men should be punished with the loss of half of their estates; and finally, that if still obstinate they should be made slaves. The lower classes were to suffer perpetual banishment.” *The Great Controversy*, 573, 574.

“A time is coming when the law of God is, **in a special sense**, to be made void in our land. The rulers of our nation will, by legislative enactments, enforce the Sunday law, and thus God’s people be brought into great peril. When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws **to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, 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; and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin.” *Review and Herald*, December 18, 1888.

“If the light of truth has been presented to you, revealing the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and showing that there is no foundation in the Word of God for Sunday observance, and yet you still cling to the false sabbath, *refusing to keep holy the Sabbath* which God calls ‘my holy day,’ you receive the mark of the beast. *When does this take place?*—**When you obey the decree** that commands you to *cease from labor on Sunday and worship God*, while you know that there is not a word in the Bible showing Sunday to be other than a common working-day, you consent to receive the mark of the beast, *and refuse the seal of God*. If we receive this mark in our foreheads or in our hands, the judgments pronounced against the disobedient must fall upon us. But the seal of the living God is placed upon those *who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord*.” *Review and Herald*, April 27, 1911.

“Those who would not receive the mark of the beast and his image **when the decree goes forth**, must **have decision now** to say, Nay, we will not regard the institution of the beast.” *Early Writings*, 68.

“When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, **their character will remain** pure and spotless for eternity.” *Testimonies*, volume 5, 216.

IN THE VERY ACT

“The enforcement of Sunday keeping 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 Sunday keeping in the United States would be an enforcement of the worship of the beast and his image.**” *The Great Controversy*, 448–449.

SPEAKING

“The ‘speaking’ of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities.” *The Great Controversy*, 442.

“I saw that the two-horned beast had a **dragon’s mouth**, and that his power was in his head, and that **the decree would go out of his mouth**. Then I saw the Mother of Harlots; that the mother was not the daughters, but separate and distinct from them. She has had her day, and it is past, and her daughters, the Protestant sects, were the next to come on the stage and act out the same mind that the mother had when she persecuted the saints. I saw that as the mother has been declining in power, the daughters had been growing, and soon they will exercise the power once exercised by the mother.

“I saw the nominal church and nominal Adventists, like Judas, would betray us to the Catholics to obtain their influence to come against the truth. The saints then will be an obscure people, little known to the Catholics; but the churches and nominal Adventists who know of our faith and customs (for they hated us on account of the Sabbath, for they could not refute it) will betray the saints and report them to the Catholics as those who disregard the institutions of the people; that is, that they keep the Sabbath and disregard Sunday.

“Then the Catholics bid the Protestants to go forward, and issue a **decree** that all who will not observe the first day of the week, instead of the seventh day, **shall be slain**. And the Catholics, whose numbers are large, will stand by the Protestants. The Catholics will give their power to the image of the beast. And the Protestants will work as their mother worked before them to destroy the saints. But before **their decree bring or bear fruit**, the saints will be delivered by the Voice of God.” *Spalding and Magan*, 1–2.

“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.**” *Signs of the Times*, May 6, 1897.

FIRST THE UNITED STATES

“As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the Papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example.” *Testimonies*, volume 6, 18.

“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.” *Testimonies*, volume 6, 395.

“But the stern tracing of the prophetic pencil reveals 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 “he causeth 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 follows in the steps of the Papacy.**” *Signs of the Times*, November 1, 1899.

“Everything in God’s world—men and doctrines, and nature itself—is fulfilling God’s sure word of prophecy, and accomplishing his grand and closing work in this world’s history. We are to be ready, and waiting for the orders of God. Nations will be stirred to their very center. Support will be withdrawn from those who proclaim God’s only standard of righteousness as the only sure test of character. **And all who will not bow to the decree of national councils, and obey the national laws to exalt the sabbath instituted by the man of sin to disregard God’s holy day, will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast.**” *Review and Herald*, March 9, 1911.

“**Character is revealed by a crisis.** When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, ‘Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,’ the sleeping virgins **roused** from their slumbers, and it was seen who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares, but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. **Character is revealed by circumstances.** Emergencies bring out the true metal of character. **Some sudden and unlooked-for calamity, bereavement, or crisis, some unexpected sickness or anguish, something that brings the soul face to face with death, will bring out the true inwardness of the character. It will be made manifest** whether or not there is any real faith in the promises of the word of God. **It will be made manifest** whether or not the soul is sustained by grace, whether there is oil in the vessel with the lamp.

“Testing times come to **all**. How do we conduct ourselves under the test and proving of God? Do our lamps go out? or do we still keep them burning? Are we prepared for every emergency by our connection with Him who is full of grace and truth? The five wise virgins could not impart their character to the five foolish virgins. Character must be formed by us as individuals.” *Review and Herald*, October 17, 1895.

IN THE DAYS OF QUEEN ESTHER

“Under the favor shown them by Cyrus, nearly **fifty thousand of the children of the captivity had taken advantage of the decree** permitting their return. These, however, in comparison with the hundreds of thousands scattered throughout the provinces of Medo-Persia, were but a mere remnant. The great majority of the Israelites had chosen to remain in the land of their exile rather than undergo the hardships of the return journey and the re-establishment of their desolated cities and homes.

“A score or more of years passed by, when a second decree, quite as favorable as the first, was issued by Darius Hystaspes, the monarch then ruling. Thus did God in mercy provide another opportunity for the Jews in the Medo-Persian realm to return to the land of their fathers. The Lord foresaw the troublous times that were to follow during the reign of Xerxes,—the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther,—and He not only wrought a change of feeling in the hearts of men in authority, but also inspired Zechariah to plead with the exiles to return.

“**‘Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north,’** was the message given the scattered tribes of Israel who had become settled in many lands far from their former home. ‘I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath He sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me.’ Zechariah 2:6–9.

“It was still the Lord’s purpose, as it had been from the beginning, that His people should be a praise in the earth, to the glory of His name. During the long years of their exile He had given them many opportunities to return to their allegiance to Him. Some had chosen to listen and to learn; some had found salvation in the midst of affliction. Many of these were to be numbered among the remnant that should return. They were likened by Inspiration to ‘the highest branch of the high cedar,’ which was to be planted ‘upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel.’ Ezekiel 17:22, 23.

“It was those ‘whose spirit God had raised’ (Ezra 1:5) who had returned under the decree of Cyrus. But God ceased not to plead with those who voluntarily remained in the land of their exile, and through manifold agencies He made it possible for them also to return. The large number, however, of those who failed to respond to the decree of Cyrus, **remained unimpressible to later influences**; and even when Zechariah warned them to flee from Babylon without further delay, they did not heed the invitation.

“Meanwhile conditions in the Medo-Persian realm were rapidly changing. Darius Hystaspes, under whose reign the Jews had been shown marked favor, was succeeded by **Xerxes the Great**. It was during his reign that those of the Jews who had failed of heeding the message to flee were called upon to face **a terrible crisis**. Having refused to take advantage of the way of escape God had provided, now they **were brought face to face with death**.

“Through Haman the Agagite, an unscrupulous man high in authority in Medo-Persia, Satan worked at this time to counterwork the purposes of God. Haman cherished bitter malice against Mordecai, a Jew. Mordecai had done Haman no harm, but had simply refused to show him worshipful reverence. Scorning to ‘lay hands on Mordecai alone,’ Haman plotted ‘to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.’ Esther 3:6.

[Exodus 17:7–16; 1 Samuel 15:1–29; Esther 3:10; 7:4–6; 8:1; 9:10, 24; Psalm 83:1–8.]

“Misled by the false statements of Haman, Xerxes was induced to issue a **decree** providing for the massacre of all the Jews ‘scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces’ of the Medo-Persian kingdom. Verse 8. A certain day was appointed on which the Jews were to be destroyed and their property confiscated. Little did the king realize the far-reaching results that would have accompanied the complete carrying out of this **decree**. Satan himself, the hidden instigator of the scheme, was **trying to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God**.

“‘In every province, whithersoever the king’s commandment and his **decree** came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.’ Esther 4:3. The decree of the Medes and Persians could not be revoked; apparently there was no hope; all the Israelites were doomed to destruction.

“But the plots of the enemy were defeated by a Power that reigns among the children of men. In the providence of God, Esther, a Jewess who feared the Most High, had been made queen of the Medo-Persian kingdom. Mordecai was a near relative of hers. In their extremity they decided to appeal to Xerxes in behalf of their people. Esther was to venture into his presence as an intercessor. ‘Who knoweth,’ said Mordecai, ‘whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?’ Verse 14.

“**The crisis that Esther** faced demanded quick, earnest action; but both she and Mordecai realized that unless God should work mightily in their behalf, their own efforts would be unavailing. So Esther took time for communion with God, the source of her strength. ‘Go,’ she directed Mordecai, ‘gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.’ Verse 16.

“The events that followed in rapid succession,—the appearance of Esther before the king, the marked favor shown her, the banquets of the king and queen with Haman as the only guest, the troubled sleep of the king, the public honor shown Mordecai, and the humiliation and fall of Haman upon the discovery of his wicked plot,—all these are parts of a familiar story. God wrought marvelously for His penitent people; and **a counter decree** issued by the king, allowing them to fight for their lives, was rapidly communicated to every part of the realm by mounted couriers, who were ‘hastened and pressed on by the king’s commandment.’ ‘And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king’s commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.’ Esther 8:14, 17.

“On **the day appointed** for their destruction, ‘the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people.’ Angels that excel in strength had been commissioned by God to protect His people while they ‘stood for their lives.’ Esther 9:2, 16.

“Mordecai was given the position of honor formerly occupied by Haman. He ‘was next unto King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren” (Esther 10:3); and he sought to promote the welfare of Israel. Thus did God bring His chosen people once more into favor at the Medo-Persian court, making possible the carrying out of His purpose to restore them to their own land. But it was not until several years later, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes I, the successor of Xerxes the Great, that any considerable number returned to Jerusalem, under Ezra.

“**The trying experiences that came to God’s people in the days of Esther were not peculiar to that age alone.** The revelator, looking down the ages to the close of time, has declared, ‘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.’ Revelation 12:17. **Some who today are living on the earth will see these words fulfilled.** The same spirit that in ages past led men to persecute the true church, will in the future lead to the pursuance of a similar course toward those who maintain their loyalty to God. Even now preparations are being made for this last great conflict.

“**The decree that will finally go forth against the remnant people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews.** Today the enemies of the true church see in the little company keeping the Sabbath commandment, a Mordecai at the gate. The reverence of God’s people for His law is a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling on His Sabbath.

“Satan will arouse indignation against the minority who refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt.

“Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. By false representations and angry appeals, men will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a ‘Thus saith the Scriptures’ to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to **oppressive enactments** to supply the lack. To secure **popularity and patronage**, legislators will yield to the demand for Sunday laws. But those who fear God, cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield will be fought the last great conflict in the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Today, as in the days of Esther and Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people.” *Prophets and Kings*, 598–605.

“The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is still seeking to rid the earth of those who fear God and obey His law. Satan will excite indignation against the humble minority who conscientiously refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will **seek to overthrow their faith**. By false representations and angry appeals they will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a ‘Thus saith the Scriptures’ to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to **oppressive enactments** to supply the lack. To secure **popularity and patronage**, legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. Those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people.

“By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. **When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.**

[Revelation 13:11–13.]

“As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God’s forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation’s iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob’s trouble. The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs’ graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults: ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?’

“The Lord is doing His work. All heaven is astir. **The Judge of all the earth is soon to arise and vindicate His insulted authority.** The mark of deliverance will be set upon the men who keep God’s commandments, who revere His law, and who refuse the mark of the beast or of his image.

“God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath. Those who have been warned of the events before them are not to sit in calm expectation of the coming storm, comforting themselves that the Lord will shelter His faithful ones in the day of trouble. We are to be as men waiting for their Lord, not in idle expectancy, but in earnest work, with unwavering faith. It is no time now to allow our minds to be engrossed with things of minor importance. While men are sleeping, Satan is actively arranging matters so that the Lord’s people may not have mercy or justice. **The Sunday movement is now making its way in darkness.** The leaders are concealing the true issue, and many who unite in the movement do not themselves see whither the undercurrent is tending. Its professions are mild and apparently Christian, but when it shall speak it will reveal the spirit of the dragon. It is our duty to do all in our power to avert the threatened danger. We should endeavor to disarm prejudice by placing ourselves in a proper light before the people. We should bring before them the real question at issue, thus interposing the most effectual protest against measures to restrict liberty of conscience. We should search the Scriptures and be able to give the reason for our faith. Says the prophet: ‘The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.’” *Testimonies*, volume 5, 451, 452.

“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 **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.

“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.

“The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of spiritualism. Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded. **Papists, Protestants, and worldlings** will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium.

“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. Satan delights in war, for it excites the worst passions of the soul and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in vice and blood. It is his object to incite the nations to war against one another, for he can thus divert the minds of the people from the work of preparation to stand in the day of God.

“Satan works through the elements also to garner his harvest of unprepared souls. He has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature, and he uses all his power to control the elements as far as God allows. When he was suffered to afflict Job, how quickly flocks and herds, servants, houses, children, were swept away, one trouble succeeding another as in a moment. It is God that shields His creatures and **hedges them in from the power of the destroyer**. But the Christian world have shown contempt for the law of Jehovah; and the Lord will do just what He has declared that He would—He will withdraw His blessings from the earth and remove His protecting care from those who are rebelling against His law and teaching and forcing others to do the same. Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. He will favor and prosper some in order to further his own designs, and he will bring trouble upon others and lead men to believe that it is God who is afflicting them.

“While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring **disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation**. Even **now he is at work**. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. **These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous**. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. ‘The earth mourneth and fadeth away,’ ‘the haughty people . . . do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.’ Isaiah 24:4, 5.

“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. Thus the accusation urged of old against the servant of God will be repeated and upon grounds equally well established: ‘And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.’ 1 Kings 18:17, 18. As the wrath of the people shall be excited by false charges, they will pursue a course toward God’s ambassadors very similar to that which apostate Israel pursued toward Elijah.” *The Great Controversy*, 590.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree. Galatians 3:3.