

Second Quarter 2023

EGW Notes - Lesson 12, 10 – 16 June

# ***The Seal Of God And The Mark Of The Beast***

## ***Part 2***

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### **Sabbath Afternoon, June 10**

November 26, 1885, Mrs. White left Basel for Torre Pellice, Italy. . . . Mrs. White remained in Torre Pellice three weeks. She spoke to the people ten times, and visited some of the noted places where the Waldenses, fleeing from their persecutors, had been followed and captured, tortured, and slain. Referring to these experiences, she wrote:

“If their voices [the Waldenses] could be heard, what a history the everlasting mountains surrounding these valleys could give of the sufferings of God’s people because of their faith! What a history of the visits of angels unrecognized by these Christian fugitives! Again and again have angels talked with men, as man speaketh with a friend, and led them to places of security. Again and again have the encouraging words of angels renewed the drooping spirits of the faithful, and, carrying their minds above the tops of the highest mountains, caused them to behold by faith the white robes, the crowns, the palm branches of victory, which the overcomers will receive when they surround the great white throne.”

—*Life Sketches, p. 290.*

Whenever, through faith in the Lamb of God, a soul renounces the service of sin, Satan's wrath is kindled. The holy life of Abel testified against Satan's claim that it is impossible for man to keep God's law. When Cain, moved by the spirit of the wicked one, saw that he could not control Abel, he was so enraged that he destroyed his life. And wherever there are any who will stand in vindication of the righteousness of the law of God, the same spirit will be manifested against them. It is the spirit that through all the ages has set up the stake and kindled the burning pile for the disciples of Christ. But the cruelties heaped upon the follower of Jesus are instigated by Satan and his hosts because they cannot force him to submit to their control. It is the rage of a vanquished foe. Every martyr of Jesus has died a conqueror. Says the prophet, "They overcame him ["that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan"] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Revelation 12:11, 9.

—*Patriarchs ad Prophets, p. 77.*

Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest day, these faithful ones will "shine as lights in the world." Philippians 2:15. The darker the night, the more brilliantly will they shine.

—*Maranatha, p. 196.*

## **Sunday, June 11 The Deadly Wound**

Rome presumed to expunge from the law of God the second commandment, forbidding image worship, and to divide the tenth commandment, in order to preserve the number.

The spirit of concession to paganism opened the way for a still further disregard of Heaven's authority. Satan tampered with the fourth commandment also, and essayed to set aside the ancient Sabbath, the day which God had blessed and sanctified, and in its stead to exalt the festival observed by the heathen as "the venerable day of the sun." This change was not at first attempted openly. In the first centuries the true Sabbath had been kept by all Christians. They were jealous for the honor of God, and, believing that His law is immutable, they zealously guarded the sacredness of its precepts. But with great subtlety Satan worked through his agents to bring about his object. That the attention of the people might be called to the Sunday, it was made a festival in honor of the resurrection of Christ. Religious services were held on it; yet it was regarded as a day of recreation, the Sabbath being still sacredly observed.

– ***The Story of Redemption, p. 328.***

"Power was given unto him [the leopardlike beast] 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 . . . 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."

– ***The Great Controversy, p. 439.***

The only thing in our world upon which we can rely is the word of God. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things

shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33. Even in this life it is not for our good to depart from the will of our Father in heaven. When we learn the power of His word, we shall not follow the suggestions of Satan in order to obtain food or to save our lives. Our only questions will be, What is God’s command? and what His promise? Knowing these, we shall obey the one, and trust the other.

In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death. See Revelation 13:11-17. But to the obedient is given the promise, “He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” Isaiah 33:16. By this promise the children of God will live.

—*The Desire of Ages, p. 121.*

## **Monday, June 12 The Falling Away**

Then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. Matthew 24:10.

As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel’s message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.

—*Maranatha, p. 196.*

Nothing less than the whole armor of righteousness can enable man to overcome the powers of darkness and retain the victory over them. Satan has taken full possession of the churches as a body. The sayings and doings of men are dwelt upon instead of the plain, cutting truths of the Word of God. The spirit and friendship of the world are at enmity with God. When the truth in its simplicity and strength, as it is in Jesus, is brought to bear against the spirit of the world, it at once awakens the spirit of persecution. Very many who profess to be Christians have not known God. The natural heart has not been changed, and the carnal mind remains at enmity with God. They are Satan's faithful servants, notwithstanding they have assumed another name.

**—Early Writings, p. 274.**

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. 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 use 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. 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.

The fact that God's people, who know the truth, have failed to do their duty according to the light given in the word of God makes it a necessity for us to be the more guarded, lest we offend unbelievers before they have heard the reasons for our faith in regard to the Sabbath and Sunday.

**—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, pp. 243, 244.**

## Tuesday, June 13 Satan's Final Strategy

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.

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.

“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.

—*Maranatha, p. 187.*

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. 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.

—*Maranatha, p. 198.*

All things in nature and in the world at large are charged with intense earnestness. Satan, in cooperation with his angels and with evil men, will put

forth every effort to gain the victory, and will appear to succeed. But from this conflict, truth and righteousness will come forth triumphant in victory.

—***Manuscript 24, 1891.***

It will be found a terrible thing to have worn out the divine patience; for the wrath of God will fall so signally and strongly that it is presented as being unmixed with mercy; and the very earth will be desolated. It is at the time of the national apostasy, when, acting on the policy of Satan, the rulers of the land will rank themselves on the side of the man of sin—it is then the measure of guilt is full; the national apostasy is the signal for national ruin.

God has thrust His people into the gap, to make up the hedge, to raise up the foundation of many generations. The heavenly intelligences, angels that excel in strength, are waiting, obedient to His command, to unite with human agencies; and the Lord will interpose when matters have come to such a pass that none but a divine power can counteract the satanic agencies at work. When His people shall be in the greatest danger, seemingly unable to stand against the power of Satan, God will work in their behalf. Man's extremity is God's opportunity.

—***Selected Messages, book 2, pp. 372, 373.***

## **Wednesday, June 14 The Mark of the Beast**

Christians of past generations observed the Sunday, supposing that in so doing they were keeping the Bible Sabbath; and there are now true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. God accepts their sincerity of purpose and their integrity before Him. But when Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than

that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshiping the beast and his image.

As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome—“the mark of the beast.” And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive “the mark of the beast.”

**—*The Great Controversy, p. 449.***

The worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment—since this is the sign of His creative power and the witness to His claim upon man’s reverence and homage. The wicked will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator’s memorial, to exalt the institution of Rome. In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel “all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond” (Revelation 13:16), to receive the mark of the beast, yet the people of God will not receive it.

The prophet of Patmos beholds “them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God” (Revelation 15:2) and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

**—*Selected Messages, book 2, p. 55.***



## **Thursday, June 15 The Sabbath Test**

There are many, even of those engaged in this movement for Sunday enforcement, who are blinded to the results which will follow this action. They do not see that they are striking directly against religious liberty. There are many who have never understood the claims of the Bible Sabbath and the false foundation upon which the Sunday institution rests. Any movement in favor of religious legislation is really an act of concession to the papacy, which for so many ages has steadily warred against liberty of conscience.

Sunday observance owes its existence as a so-called Christian institution to “the mystery of iniquity;” and its enforcement will be a virtual recognition of the principles which are the very cornerstone of Romanism. When our nation shall so abjure the principles of its government as to enact a Sunday law, Protestantism will in this act join hands with popery; it will be nothing else than giving life to the tyranny which has long been eagerly watching its opportunity to spring again into active despotism.

**—*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 711.***

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. . . .

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.

**—*Maranatha, p. 187.***

Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads—it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved—just as soon as God’s people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming. . . .

The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. . . . All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ’s righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness.

—*Maranatha*, p. 200.

## Friday, June 16 For Further Reading

*The Upward Look*, “Our Competent Saviour,” p. 39;

*Early Writings*, “The Mark of the Beast,” pp. 64–67.

### *Our Competent Saviour*

These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. Revelation 17:14. {UL 39.1}

What is life? A standing memorial of the only true God. The work of creation can never be explained by science. What intellect is there that can explain the science of life? Can we wonder that the materialist has no place for the existence of God? The fourth commandment declares to the whole universe, to the worlds unfallen and the fallen world, that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. The evidence there given does not leave standing room for skepticism.... {UL 39.2}

Christ, the Commander in the heavenly courts, was accustomed to receive the attendance and adoration of angels. And at any time during His life on this earth He could have called to His Father for twelve legions of angels. But no bribe, no temptation to lead Him to manifest His divine prerogatives, could induce Him to deviate from the path of God's appointment. Great tact and cunning were shown in the tactics which Satan followed. Three times did the enemy try to gain the victory over Christ. He assailed Him on the point of appetite. He appealed to His pride. He presented before Him the most captivating scenes of this world. He challenged Him to give evidence that He was the Son of God. Christ gave him none, but righteously maintained His dignity as One to whom God has committed all power. {UL 39.3}

Today, Satan has great power in the world. He has been permitted to have proprietorship of this earth for an appointed time. During this period, when iniquity prevails, men and women are given a chance to take sides. In every possible way, Satan tries to make the broad road attractive and the narrow road grievous, humiliating, and objectionable. He lays ingenious plans to allure men and women to indulge appetite. Cheap, unsatisfying pleasures are made all and in all in this degenerate age. Satan throws his glamour about these amusements, which eclipse eternal things. Many will sell their birthright, as did Esau, for trifling consideration by the indulgence of appetite. Worldly pleasure will appear more desirable to them than the heavenly birthright. {UL 39.4}

But Christ has overcome in our behalf. He was the only one who could be a competent Saviour. He had divine wisdom, ability, and power. He could stand before the world as a wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.—Letter 7, January 25, 1900, to W. K. Kellogg, brother of and assistant to Dr. J. H. Kellogg. {UL 39.5}

### *Mark of the Beast*

In a view given June 27, 1850, my accompanying angel said, “Time is almost finished. Do you reflect the lovely image of Jesus as you should?” Then I was pointed to the earth and saw that there would have to be a getting ready among those who have of late embraced the third angel’s message. Said the angel, “Get ready, get ready, get ready. Ye will have to die a greater death to the world than ye have ever yet died.” I saw that there was a great work to do for them and but little time in which to do it. {EW 64.1}

Then I saw that the seven last plagues were soon to be poured out upon those who have no shelter; yet the world regarded them no more than they would so many drops of water that were about to fall. I was then made capable of enduring the awful sight of the seven last plagues, the wrath of God. I saw that His anger was dreadful and terrible, and if He should stretch forth His hand, or lift it in anger, the inhabitants of the world would be as though they had never been, or would suffer from incurable sores and withering plagues that would come upon them, and they would find no deliverance, but be destroyed by them. Terror seized me, and I fell upon my face before the angel and begged of him to cause the sight to be removed, to hide it from me, for it was too dreadful. Then I realized, as never before, the importance of searching the Word of God carefully, to know how to escape the plagues which that Word declares shall come on all the ungodly who shall worship the beast and his image and receive his mark in their foreheads or in their hands. It was a great wonder for me that any could transgress the law of God and

tread down His holy Sabbath, when such awful threatenings and denunciations were against them. {EW 64.2}

The pope has changed the day of rest from the seventh to the first day. He has thought to change the very commandment that was given to cause man to remember his Creator. He has thought to change the greatest commandment in the Decalogue and thus make himself equal with God, or even exalt himself above God. The Lord is unchangeable, therefore His law is immutable; but the pope has exalted himself above God, in seeking to change His immutable precepts of holiness, justice, and goodness. He has trampled underfoot God's sanctified day, and, on his own authority, put in its place one of the six laboring days. The whole nation has followed after the beast, and every week they rob God of His holy time. The pope has made a breach in the holy law of God, but I saw that the time had fully come for this breach to be made up by the people of God and the waste places built up. {EW 65.1}

I pleaded before the angel for God to save His people who had gone astray, to save them for His mercy's sake. When the plagues begin to fall, those who continue to break the holy Sabbath will not open their mouths to plead those excuses that they now make to get rid of keeping it. Their mouths will be closed while the plagues are falling, and the great Lawgiver is requiring justice of those who have had His holy law in derision and have called it "a curse to man," "miserable," and "rickety." When such feel the iron grasp of this law taking hold of them, these expressions will appear before them in living characters, and they will then realize the sin of having that law in derision which the Word of God calls "*holy, just, and good.*" {EW 65.2}

Then I was pointed to the glory of heaven, to the treasure laid up for the faithful. Everything was lovely and glorious. The angels would sing a lovely song, then they would cease singing and take their crowns from their heads and cast them glittering at the feet of the lovely Jesus, and with melodious voices cry, "Glory, Alleluia!" I joined with them in their songs of praise and

honor to the Lamb, and every time I opened my mouth to praise Him, I felt an unutterable sense of the glory that surrounded me. It was a far more, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Said the angel, “The little remnant who love God and keep His commandments and are faithful to the end will enjoy this glory and ever be in the presence of Jesus and sing with the holy angels.” {EW 66.1}

Then my eyes were taken from the glory, and I was pointed to the remnant on the earth. The angel said to them, “Will ye shun the seven last plagues? Will ye go to glory and enjoy all that God has prepared for those who love Him and are willing to suffer for His sake? If so, ye must die that ye may live. Get ready, get ready, get ready. Ye must have a greater preparation than ye now have, for the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. Sacrifice all to God. Lay all upon His altar—self, property, and all, a living sacrifice. It will take all to enter glory. Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where no thief can approach or rust corrupt. Ye must be partakers of Christ’s sufferings here if ye would be partakers with Him of His glory hereafter.” {EW 66.2}

Heaven will be cheap enough, if we obtain it through suffering. We must deny self all along the way, die to self daily, let Jesus alone appear, and keep His glory continually in view. I saw that those who of late have embraced the truth would have to know what it is to suffer for Christ’s sake, that they would have trials to pass through that would be keen and cutting, in order that they may be purified and fitted through suffering to receive the seal of the living God, pass through the time of trouble, see the King in His beauty, and dwell in the presence of God and of pure, holy angels. {EW 67.1}

As I saw what we must be in order to inherit glory, and then saw how much Jesus had suffered to obtain for us so rich an inheritance, I prayed that we might be baptized into Christ’s sufferings, that we might not shrink at trials, but bear them with patience and joy, knowing what Jesus had suffered that we

through His poverty and sufferings might be made rich. Said the angel, “Deny self; ye must step fast.” Some of us have had time to get the truth and to advance step by step, and every step we have taken has given us strength to take the next. But now time is almost finished, and what we have been years learning, they will have to learn in a few months. They will also have much to unlearn and much to learn again. 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. {EW 67.2}