

Rome Establishes the Vision - Number Fifteen

The Final Test: Awakening to the Prophetic Controversy of the Image of the Beast

Jeff Pippenger

2024-09-03

We are now in the testing period of the image of the beast, and the first prophetic controversy in Adventism's history is now being repeated. In July of 2023, Michael the archangel descended to awaken Ezekiel's dead dry bones, who were lying slain in the street of that great city of Sodom and Egypt. There in chapter eleven of Revelation, they are brought out of their sleep of death by the impartation of the Spirit. In chapter thirty-seven of Ezekiel, the message of the four winds is identified as the message that turns the dead dry bones, which is identified as the whole house of Israel, into the Lord's army. The prophet Daniel represents John's two slain witnesses, and he also represents those in the valley of dead dry bones as well as the wise virgins in the parable.

When the Millerites fulfilled the parable, they recognized that their experience was represented in the parable. The one hundred and forty-four thousand will also need to recognize that they had been in the tarrying time. Like Daniel in chapter nine, they will need to recognize that they have been scattered into the enemies' land as represented by the seven times of Leviticus twenty-six, and also understand Nebuchadnezzar's secret image of beasts.

In each of these lines a prophetic test from God's word is represented. The two witnesses dead in the street are filled with the Spirit as they are resurrected. Ezekiel's dead bones needed to hear a prophetic message. Daniel had been studying the writings of Moses and Jeremiah when he was awakened to his scattered condition. In chapter two Daniel and the three worthies were metaphorically awakened to the fact that they had been placed under a death decree, and then the prophetic light which had been hidden and then unsealed rescued Daniel and his three friends. The virgins of the parable are awakened by a "cry" at midnight. The Millerites were awakened when Christ removed His hand from the figures on the chart. In all six witnesses it is a prophetic message that awakens the dead or sleeping ones. It then produces a testing where two classes are manifested at the conclusion of the testing process.

Based upon these lines, it is established that when the one hundred and forty-four thousand are awakened in the last days, it is Ezekiel's message of the four winds, and of Moses' scattering of seven times in Leviticus twenty-six. It is the message of the resurrection that is brought by Michael the archangel. It is the message of Nebuchadnezzar's secret dream of the image of beasts.

The virgins are tested based upon whether they have oil, which is identified as "the messages of God's spirit." The Millerites were awakened when they realized they were identified within God's prophetic word, and also when they saw the same evidence that first led them to predict 1843 actually predicted October 22, 1844. Based upon these lines, it is established that when the one hundred and forty-four thousand are awakened in the last days, they will be awakened to a

prophetic testing message which produces two classes of worshippers.

All of these lines find their perfect and final fulfillment in the period of prophetic testing represented by the formation of the image to and of the beast. That test is finished when probation closes upon the virgins at the Sunday law. Therefore, the image of the beast testing process that is repeatedly represented as a test that manifests who have understood the message that was unsealed, is represented by all these prophetic lines. In Daniel twelve the wise who understand the increase of knowledge navigate a three-step testing process represented as being made pure, white and tried. Those three steps are the steps of conviction brought by the Holy Spirit, representing a conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment. Those three steps are the courtyard, the holy place and the Most Holy Place. Those three steps are also represented in the three angels of Revelation fourteen as well as in the experience of Daniel and the three worthies in chapter one. There they first passed a dietary test, then a visual test and finally they passed the third test given by the king of the north—represented by Nebuchadnezzar.

As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. Daniel 1:17–20.

The last of three tests for Daniel and the three worthies was a test carried out by Nebuchadnezzar, thus typifying the final prophetic test Daniel and the three worthies typify is about Babylon, for Nebuchadnezzar was the king, which in Isaiah chapter seven, verses eight and nine establishes a king, a capital of a nation and a “head” which are interchangeable symbols. The “head” is representing the head of Modern Babylon in the last days. That “head” in the last days is the whore of Revelation seventeen, who has written upon her forehead, “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

The one hundred and forty-four thousand’s last prophetic test is associated with a correct or incorrect understanding of the “head” of modern Babylon in the last days. Their last test also includes understanding that modern Babylon and Modern Rome are interchangeable symbols, and therefore modern Babylon’s “head” is the same “head” in either line, for they are interchangeable symbols.

“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.” Testimonies, volume 7, 182.

Daniel and the three worthies illustrate that the final prophetic test, for it is always a test upon prophecy, is a test over the subject of Rome, for the head in the last days is the papal power, who is typified by Nebuchadnezzar, the first head of Babylon, who personally tested Daniel and the three worthies. The controversy typified by Daniel and the three worthies, is also prefigured by the first

controversy in the foundational history of Adventism, as represented upon the 1843 chart, which was directed by the hand of the Lord, and was not to be altered. The controversy represented upon the 1843 chart was based upon identifying Antiochus Epiphanes or pagan Rome as the power who established the vision in verse fourteen of Daniel chapter eleven.

In the history of the last days the one hundred and forty-four thousand will be tested upon their prophetic understanding. Prophetic understanding is established by the several lines of prophecy that uphold the final test as prophetic in nature. The test will be progressive and will reach its conclusion with a manifestation of two classes of worshippers.

As represented in Daniel chapter twelve, the testing begins when new prophetic light is unsealed, and the first test is then whether to eat the message or reject the message. That test is represented by Daniel as “purified,” and the next test Daniel called, “made white,” and the process ended at the third and final test represented as “tried.” The third and final test is where the two classes are “tried,” and it is there they manifest whether they have oil, or not.

Daniel chapter one directly identifies the last test, and therefore Daniel is identifying the test which is represented as “the formation of the image of the beast” which is the “test God’s people must pass,” both before “they are sealed” and also before “probation closes” at the soon-coming Sunday law.

The test of how the image of the beast is formed involves the prophetic test of understanding the threefold union’s prophetic structure. The dragon, the beast and the false prophet have a specific prophetic structure that is established upon a multitude of prophetic witnesses. To understand how the threefold union comes together as a single prophetic power in the last days is to understand how the image of the beast is formed.

A simple, but complex illustration of the importance of understanding how the image of the beast is formed in the last days is Paul’s testimony of the man of sin in chapter two of Second Thessalonians. Paul addresses the prophetic relationship of pagan Rome and papal Rome, and when he does so, he identifies that “the prophetic relationship of pagan Rome and papal Rome” is a subject that manifests two classes of worshippers.

One group that loves the truth of “the prophetic relationship of pagan Rome and papal Rome,” and another group that doesn’t love that truth and therefore receive strong delusion. The prophetic relationship of pagan Rome and papal Rome that Paul set forth is but one of many prophetic passages that represent the relationship of those two powers, and also the relationship of those two powers with the United States.

Pagan Rome is the dragon, papal Rome is the beast and the United States is the false prophet. Ahab is the dragon king of ten kings, who is married to Jezebel the whore, who rules over a twofold set of false prophets. The male prophets were the prophets of Baal, and the priests of the grove represented the female goddess Ashtaroth. Together they typify the false prophet of the last days who forms and image of the beast as represented by the female priests and the male prophets.

The dragon is Ahab, who is a symbol of the ten kings of Revelation seventeen, and is the seventh kingdom of eight kingdoms. The sixth kingdom is the United States, Jezebel's false prophets; the seventh kingdom is the ten kings, the United Nations, the dragon power, and the eighth kingdom, that is of the seven is the fifth kingdom that received a deadly wound, who is resurrected as the eighth and final kingdom which is the beast, that the United States and thereafter the entire world makes an image to and of.

Daniel chapter one identifies a final prophetic test that involves understanding Rome as represented within God's Word. Second Thessalonians identifies that the final prophetic test includes light concerning the structure of Modern Rome, as represented by the prophetic and political relationship between pagan and papal Rome.

Daniel chapter two illustrates that there is a secret that is unsealed in the last days that tests the one hundred and forty-four thousand, for Daniel and the three worthies in chapter two represent God's last-day people. The prophetic secret that is unsealed, and therefore tests them, is Nebuchadnezzar's secret dream of the image of the beasts, thus representing the last test for the one hundred and forty-four thousand which is, as Sister White recorded, "the formation of the image of the beast."

The test represented by chapter two of Daniel is placed under the threat of death. As an illustration of the last days, it is confirming what Paul taught when he identified the strong delusion that comes upon those who do not love the truth. In Daniel's history, his understanding saved the wise men of Babylon, but there is no probation after the final test of the last days.

Every line of the controversy over Rome as a symbol that we have identified provides direct witness to the controversy that is now under way. As the movement for Sunday legislation is now making its way in darkness, God's prophetic word is identifying its approach, though very few souls are children of the day, and those who are not children of the day, are therefore unaware that the sands of probationary time are rapidly running out. This is occurring in the context identified by Sister White, where the final movements will be rapid ones. In July 2023 Michael descended to bring His mighty army to its feet, but to be part of the army there is a prophetic work that must first be accomplished, and it is accomplished in the political environment where the image of the beast is being formed.

The prophetic work that must be accomplished includes a recognition of the formation of the image of the beast. The student of prophecy must recognize by the events taking place in the current history that the religious and political factors that produce the image of the beast in the United States are under way. The student must also recognize how the image of the beast is prophetically formed as set forth in God's word. He must also recognize that as the image of the beast is being formed in the United States, that the image of God is being formed in the one hundred and forty-four thousand. He must understand the parallel of last-day history with the Millerites during the development of the Midnight Cry message in their history, when they were awakened to the fact that they were in the tarrying time of the parable, and therefore they themselves are the virgins. All three elements are part of the prophetic test which began to play out

in July of 2023.

“Line upon line” each controversy over Rome that has arisen in Advent history was sacred history that is repeated in the last days. The final controversy over Rome is in direct consequence of God’s people refusing to awaken at the message that arrived in July of 2023.

“God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep. Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us. This light should lead us to a diligent study of the Scriptures and a most critical examination of the positions which we hold. God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God so that when the testing time shall come and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear.

“Agitate, agitate, agitate. The subjects which we present to the world must be to us a living reality. It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny. With those who have educated themselves as debaters there is great danger that they will not handle the word of God with fairness. In meeting an opponent it should be our earnest effort to present subjects in such a manner as to awaken conviction in his mind, instead of seeking merely to give confidence to the believer.

“Whatever may be man’s intellectual advancement, let him not for a moment think that there is no need of thorough and continuous searching of the Scriptures for greater light. As a people we are called individually to be students of prophecy. We must watch with earnestness that we may discern any ray of light which God shall present to us. We are to catch the first gleamings of truth; and through prayerful study clearer light may be obtained, which can be brought before others.” Testimonies. Volume 5, 708.

The Protestants of Miller’s time refused to be governed by the rules of grammar, and chose to ignore the word “also” in verse fourteen, which grammatically defines that “the robbers of thy people” represented a new power being introduced to the flow of events that were represented in the verses where verse fourteen is located. Uriah Smith did the very same thing when he ignored the grammatical evidence that proves the king of the north in verse thirty-six and later in verse forty had to be the same king of the north that had been the subject since verse thirty-one.

Today those who teach the United States is the “robbers” employ a passage from Sister White that identifies the papal power and the United States as the two primary persecuting powers of the last days, and twist the grammar to argue that the reference of “old world” which Sister White uses to define Europe actually represents past history. The grammar in the passage proves this to be an incorrect assumption, and the way in which Sister White uses “old world” in the passage agrees

with how she uses it other places in her writings. When she does so she is also in agreement with historians who use the expression “old world” in relation to the “new world” to make a distinction between Europe and the Americas.

“Romanism in the Old World and apostate Protestantism in the New will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts.” *The Great Controversy*, 615.

Grammatically the expression “will pursue” identifies that both powers represented by the “old world” and the “new” both “pursue” the persecution of God’s people in the last days, and it is grammatically flawed to claim this sentence is referring to the “old world” as past history, and “new” as the last days. “Line upon line” all the old controversies of Rome inform the student of prophecy of the last days that when they are awakened the image of the beast test will include an environment where the correct identification of the robbers of thy people is manifested. The correct understanding of the “robbers,” is set forth upon the 1843 pioneer chart, and is therefore a foundational truth, that was confirmed by the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy. This identifies that when the students of prophecy awaken to their final test, the subject of the “robbers,” will also represent the final attack upon the foundational truths, and the Spirit of Prophecy.

We will continue these thoughts in the next article.