# IMAGE NASE OF A NAN

ROBERT BRINSMEAD

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The Image of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream From Eden to Eden, 1888

R.D. Brinsmead

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# The Image of a Man

#### 1. Daniel 2

THE most primary prophecy of *Daniel* and *Revelation* is *Daniel* 2. Here the kingdoms that dominate history until the formation of Christ's kingdom are symbolized by the image of a man.

If we fail to notice the significance of this symbolism, we shall fail to grasp many of the great lessons in the truths presented in *Daniel* and *Revelation*. The image of man, sinful, natural man, dominates the scene until the stone smashes it.

The kingdoms presented in *Daniel* are kingdoms of men. They are the result of man's genius, planning, and invention. Human history is but a revelation of the human heart. The image degenerates. So the golden dreams of man can be nothing better than man himself—miry clay.

The image teaches us that the progress of man is not upward, but downward. Where the image of man is, there is degeneration. Rome broke in pieces and bruised the people of earth because it was expressing the image and heart of man.

#### 2. The Heart of Man

In *Daniel* 7 the image of man is symbolized by wild beasts. Man without God is like a wild beast,

# The Review and Herald, May 5, 1885:

...the human heart is selfish, sinful and vicious.

Man without God degenerates into something worse than a natural wild beast, for the fourth beast of *Daniel* 7 was grotesque and fearful beyond natural symbolism.

Babylon is symbolized by a lion. A lion appears to be kingly and noble. Even the kingdom of Judah and her King are symbolized by the majestic lion. But there is a cruel twist in the lion of *Daniel* 7:

#### Daniel 7

4 ...a man's heart was given to it.

A man's heart...

#### Jeremiah 17

9 ...is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

Unless we see that Daniel's presentation of history is a revelation of the heart of man we will not learn the lessons that God has for us in the prophecies. God wants us to have a revelation of *self* as we trace down the manifestations of the *collective self*.

# 3. The Eyes of a Man...the Words of a Man

It is so easy for us to read God's condemnation of the Papacy and flatter ourselves that we recognize the antichrist. But do we really see the Papacy for what it is? Do we understand how the Papacy came into being? Let God's Word speak:

#### Daniel 7

<sup>8</sup> Behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things.

The Papacy is characterized by the eyes of a man's understanding. Christ established a pure church. It had a pure government and a pure faith. But when churchmen began to look at the problems of church government through the eyes of their own understanding, they gradually developed echelons of church office and a hierarchy of human authority that resulted in the Papacy.

When human scholarship and theology tried to explain the mystery of the incarnation and sinlessness of Jesus the result was the Catholic doctrine of the *Immaculate Conception* of Mary.

When natural reason attempted to explain how an immature Christian who had not reached a state of sinlessness could enter heaven, it came up with the teaching of *purgatory*.

The Papacy resulted from a gradual, almost imperceptible substitution of human teaching for divine revelation. As were the "eyes" of the Papacy, so was its "mouth." It was the image of a man, the heart of man, the eyes of man, and the mouth of man. Therefore its words—its dogmas and decrees—were the doctrines and commandments of men.

The Papacy is a revelation of the nature of man as that nature appears in a collective, corporate capacity. The Papal doctrine of infallibility first appeared in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned. When asked why they had eaten of the forbidden tree, each cast the blame on the other, on the serpent, and above all, on God. The spirit of self-justification and infallibility is the spirit of human nature. The spirit of antichrist is to put itself in God's place, but we must see that this is the original sin of man.

So also, the spirit of intolerance and religious persecution is the spirit of the human heart. Not just Rome, but the human heart also, is the cage of every unclean and hateful bird.<sup>1</sup>

In the Papacy is supremely manifested the image of man, the heart of man, the eyes of man, the mouth of man, and the words of man. The apostle Paul, obviously alluding to the prophecies of *Daniel*, calls this power, the...

#### 2 Thessalonians 2

<sup>3</sup> ...man of sin.

#### 4. The Number of a Man

Revelation carries on with the prophetic theme of *Daniel*. The thirteenth chapter focuses on a great religious crisis that will come to all who dwell on the earth. An image to the beast will be formed in the land of boasted light and freedom. All men will be required to worship in...

# The Great Controversy, p. 589:

...a new and more exalted system of religious faith.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Revelation 18:2.

<sup>4.</sup> The Number of a Man

Many do not anticipate what a wonderful thing the *image* will appear to be. Evidently, the formation of the image will be the ultimate in human goodness, as human "goodness" may be without God. All that dwell on the earth will wonder and worship.

But there will be a certain Remnant who will not worship this thing that will appear to be the hope of all mankind. They will discern that a number is written all over the religious system. It will not be the number of God, but the Word says:

#### **Revelation 13**

<sup>18</sup> ...it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.

Yes, the whole institution will have man's number upon it. Six, six, six will be discernible to those who have spiritual discernment.

Now the 144,000 are those who gain the victory, not only over the beast, his image, and his mark, but Scripture says that they obtain the victory over the number of his name.<sup>2</sup> This means more than victory over something written on the Pope's hat. It is victory over all religion that is corrupted by man.

Man's number is six. Six fails short of seven, the number of perfection. Man's very best always falls short of perfection, and sin is that which falls short of the glory of God. Therefore, man's very best, when God is not in it, is sin. There is a great principle that God would have us learn in all this:

# Testimonies to the Church, vol. 9, p. 156:

The religion that comes from God is the only religion that can lead to God.

# 5. Man's Religion

The first religious dispute between the children of men involved Cain and Abel. If we examine the principles of the conflict back

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Revelation 13:17; 15:2.

there we will see that it was the same in principle as the great final conflict that God's people must soon enter.

Now Cain was a religious man. How do we know? He had an altar and brought an offering; he had a system of worship. Did it lead him to God? No! Why not?

### Testimonies to the Church, vol. 9, p. 156:

The religion that comes from God is the only religion that can lead to God.

Cain did not obtain his concept of worship from God, but from himself. His religion was his own idea of how he ought to worship. It came from his own heart. It was the result of the eyes of his understanding. The number of man was upon his religion.

But that is not all. Cain, as the elder brother, was the priest. Since Abel was his younger brother, and since a certain amount of religious authority was invested in himself as the priest, he thought that his younger brother ought to yield his religious convictions to him. But Abel refused to receive his religion from man. He wanted only the religion that came from God, for that was the only religion that would lead him to God.

Now, man's religion has not the power of God in it so man sees to it that he backs it up with his own authority—this is passed off as zeal for God. So in the course of events Cain's "righteous" indignation waxed so hot that he slew his brother. God then placed a *mark* upon Cain. Here we see a type of the *mark* of the beast which will be received by all those who follow the religion of man in the last great conflict.

Let us pause here to learn a lesson that will sink deeply into our own hearts. May every word of the following quotation be engraved indelibly upon our minds:

# The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 1087:

Any man, be he minister or layman, who seeks to compel or control the reason of any other man, becomes an agent of Satan,

to do his work, and in the sight of the heavenly universe he bears the mark of Cain.

#### 6. Jesus and the Jewish Leaders

The same principles are illustrated in the conflict between Jesus and the leaders of the Jewish nation. The leaders of the Jewish nation were in a position of religious authority. But Jesus told them bluntly that their religion could not lead people to God. Why? Because it did not come from God! He said that they were...

#### Matthew 15

<sup>9</sup> ...teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

They were more interested in maintaining their religious authority than in teaching the truth. Again, Jesus said to them,

#### John 8

<sup>44</sup> You are of your father the devil...he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own.

Here Jesus puts His finger upon error. Satan is a liar because when he speaks, he speaks that which originates from himself. So when men teach that which originates from themselves, it cannot be anything but a lie. Their religion is the image of a man, the heart of a man, the eyes of a man, the words of a man; and upon it all there is written the number of a man.

On the other hand, the religion that Jesus taught led to God. It led to God because it came from God.

# John 7

<sup>16</sup> Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.

<sup>17</sup> If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

As with Cain, those who taught the commandments of men backed it up with a satanic zeal that had a semblance of zeal for God. They murdered the Son of God, flattering themselves that they were doing God's service. How very deceptive is any religion that has upon it the superscription of man!

# 7. Paul's Religion

The religion of God and the religion of man are forcibly contrasted by the words of the apostle:

#### Galatians 1

- <sup>11</sup> But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.
- <sup>12</sup> For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- <sup>13</sup> For you have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:
- <sup>14</sup> ...being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

The same could be said of Luther's religion and the religion of the Catholic Church. The principles at stake in the religious controversies of every age are the same.

#### 8. The Final Conflict

The final conflict presented in Revelation 13 and 14...

# The Great Controversy, p. 582:

...is a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition.

The Sabbath of the Bible and Sunday will be the prominent characteristic of each side. The Sabbath comes from God. It is God's idea of worship. Therefore true Sabbath-keeping will lead to God.

Sunday sacredness was man's idea of honoring the resurrection of Christ. Irrespective of man's intention, there can be no blessing in the Sunday sabbath. It is the offering of Cain. Only the religion that comes from God will lead to God.

That which originates with man is a lie. Sunday sacredness is the image of a man. It comes from the heart of a man. The eyes of man's understanding formed it. Man's word has declared its sacredness. The number of a man is written all over it. This is why God has singled out the mark of the beast for such stern condemnation.

Prophecy shows that force will not be wanting to compel all men to honor the Papal sabbath. As with Cain, the religion that comes from man leads to force, to murder, and to the mark of separation from God.

#### 9. The Problem in Laodicea

It is generally thought that if a man escapes out of the Catholic Church and the Sunday-keeping Protestant churches, he will be safe from receiving the mark of the beast. This concept betrays a very superficial grasp of the real principles of truth.

The problem of man's religion comes right down to the heart of every man. It is not natural for man to receive his religion wholly from God, to worship God in spirit and in truth. The heart of man tends toward the worship of man.

Gradually this developed in the early church until the Papacy was formed. Popery does not exist in the Roman Church only. Popery is the spirit of man. To the extent that man intrudes himself into religious affairs, to that extent will popery exist—in any church. Why should it be thought that God's people today are any more immune from deception than were the early Christians?

Let us consider some inspired counsel which has been given us about this very thing:

# **Testimonies to Ministers, p. 93:**

For years the church has been looking to man, and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered.

#### Testimonies to Ministers, p. 359-362:

And the General Conference is itself becoming corrupted with wrong sentiments and principles...I have been shown that the Jewish nation were not brought suddenly into their condition of thought and practice. From generation to generation they were working on false theories, carrying out principles opposed to the truth, and combining with their religion thoughts and plans that were the product of human minds. Human inventions were made supreme. . . .Satan's methods tend to one end—to make men the slaves of men. . . .The spirit of domination is extending to the presidents of our conferences. . . .They are following in the track of Romanism.

This testimony was written to God's people in 1895, and referred to the idolatry of human instrumentalities that was leavening the church at that time. Whole chapters in the same book are devoted to warnings against making flesh our arm. What does the Spirit of Prophecy call this human tendency which was working in the church? It calls it the spirit of Romanism.

#### Testimonies to Ministers, p. 380:

Our churches are weak because the members are educated to look to and depend upon human resources.

# Testimonies to Ministers, p. 477-484:

For years there has been a growing tendency for men placed in positions of responsibility to lord it over God's heritage, thus removing from church members their keen sense of the need of divine instruction and an appreciation of the privilege to counsel with God regarding their duty. . . .

I write thus fully, because I have been shown that ministers and people are tempted more and more to trust in finite man for wisdom, and to make flesh their arm. . . .

This message is spoken to our churches in every place. In the false experience that has been coming in, a decided influence is at work to exalt human agencies, and to lead some to depend on human judgment, and to follow the control of human minds. This influence is diverting the mind from God. God forbid that

any such experience should deepen and grow in our ranks as Seventh-day Adventists.

We cite one more statement from the many that appear in the same volume, and urge that every word of the statement may sink deeply into our minds:

### Testimonies to Ministers, p. 106-107:

The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men, and making flesh their arm. Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men, and accept the decisions they make; and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them.

We have quoted sufficiently to prove and demonstrate that the spirit of antichrist does exist even among God's remnant people. This is not because there is anything intrinsically wrong with the Seventh-day Adventist Church which God founded, but we must see that the problem exists right in the human heart. It is a malady that has appeared among God's own people for 6000 years.

One of the greatest sins that has characterized us as a people is the sin of idolatry of human instrumentalities. And unless we can be cured of this malady by the grace of God, then there is no way that we can obtain the victory over the number of man's name. The end of this system of putting man in the place of God must be, in the very nature of the case, the mark of the beast. It cannot be otherwise. Unless we as a people are effectively cured of this evil which is pointed out in the above citations, we are headed for the mark of the beast.

No man can reasonably contend that the problem has lessened since the death of our prophet. By every evidence the problem has grown in Israel today. The alpha of deadly heresy that confronted the church at the turn of the century was an attempt to confuse the life in nature with the personal God. By every indication the omega which Sister White warned would develop in the

church would teach people that the voice of man was the voice of God. Even now one of the most often quoted Spirit of Prophecy "statements" (which does not exist) is that:

"The voice of the General Conference is the voice of God."

Thus many of our own people have substituted the doctrine of papal infallibility for General Conference infallibility, and will unblushingly advocate it and urge it upon others with threats of church discipline.

Writing in reference to the omega that would develop within the church in the last days, Ellen G. White said:

# The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 4, p. 1162:

I ask our people to study the twenty-eighth chapter of *Ezekiel*. The representation here made, while it refers primarily to Lucifer, the fallen angel, has yet a broader significance. Not one being, but a general movement, is described, and one that we shall witness. A faithful study of this chapter should lead those who are seeking for truth to walk in all the light that God has given to His people, lest they be deceived by the deceptions of these last days.

# 10. The Awakening

The last few years have seen the development of a serious controversy among God's people. There is an awakening message calling God's people back to the sanctuary and into the experience of the cleansing of the sanctuary in the most holy place. Every attempt to overthrow the message with doctrinal arguments has utterly failed. The arguments have been presented, and the truth of the awakening message stands forth in all the authority of heavenly truth.

Consequently, very few opponents of the message will attempt to assail it with the truth of the Bible. There is a growing awareness that this cannot be done. Then what methods of opposition are resorted to? Church authority! The shaking is being caused by the conflict between the truth and church authority. It is nothing

10. The Awakening

new. The principles in every religious conflict are the same. To those who would wish to settle the present issue by force, we repeat the words of Inspiration:

# The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 1087:

Any man, be he minister or layman, who seeks to compel or control the reason of any other man, becomes an agent of Satan, to do his work, and in the sight of the heavenly universe he bears the mark of Cain.

# 11. A Warning to Awakening Believers

It must be seen that a man does not escape the sin of idolatry (man worship) by getting out of one church into another. Certainly, leaving the Sunday-keeping churches is part of the picture of escaping from the mark of the beast, but it is by no means the entire picture. That a man accepts the truthfulness of the awakening message is no guarantee that he is safe. The vital question is to ask ourselves:

"Is the sin of idolatry of human instrumentality going to be perpetuated in the name of the awakening?"

Unless a deeper work of grace is done in the hearts of those who profess to believe the present truth we will go the way of our fathers. God is calling for a people who will gain the full victory over the image of man, the heart of man, the eyes of man, the words and teachings of man, and over the number of man's name. The message for our time is recorded in *Isaiah*:

#### Isaiah 40

- <sup>3</sup> Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- <sup>6</sup> The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.
- <sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.
- <sup>9</sup> O Zion, that brings good tidings, get you up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that brings good tidings, lift up your

voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

For years the church has been looking to man and expecting much from man. God says cry,

"All flesh is grass,"

-but say unto God's people,

"Behold your God!"

Oh, who would want to be leaning upon a piece of grass in the great storm that is about to burst upon our heads! The awakening message points to Jesus in the present work in the most holy place of the sanctuary. Here is our only protection from the mark of the beast.

#### 12. The New Covenant Promise

The ministry of Jesus offers us in the most holy place the complete fulfillment of the new covenant promise—the blotting out of sin, the seal of the living God, so that God's purpose for all Israel can be fulfilled:

#### **Hebrews 8**

<sup>11</sup> And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

Scripture shall be fulfilled:

# John 6

45 They shall all be taught of God.

And again,

# 1 John 2

<sup>27</sup> You need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in Him.

Our only protection from the mark of the beast is to enter into the fullness of the new covenant fellowship with Jesus. This is what the ministry of Jesus in the most holy place is all about.

There in the most holy place, beside the law of God, is the pot of manna. It is the bread that comes wholly from God. While the bread in the first apartment came from God through the hands of priests, the bread in the most holy comes wholly from God. It represents the completion of the new covenant experience. God desires that we know Him, not through the eyes of man's understanding, but that we know Him ourselves and enter into His final at-one-ment through the ministry of Jesus in the most holy place. We repeat: this is the only protection from the mark of the beast.

To receive the mark of the beast one has only to neglect to receive the seal of God. The seal of God is called,

# Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 367:

...the pure mark of truth.

It is heavenly truth, thoroughly winnowed from all corruption of human teaching. The great work of cleansing of the sanctuary, brought to view in *Daniel* 8:14, must be seen as a work of cleansing the minds of God's people from all human teaching.<sup>3</sup> It is to obtain that victory that no community of saints has yet fully won—the victory over the number of man's name. No guile will be in the mouth of the sealed saints,<sup>4</sup> because they teach only the Word of God.

# Zephaniah 3

<sup>9</sup> For then will I turn to the people a pure language,

-a faith and a message purified of all that originates from man.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 826.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Revelation 14:5.



