

No Sunday Law

As Adventists we have become used to the understanding that the mark of the beast is a Sunday Law, to the point where we probably think of the mark of the beast as synonymous with the Sunday Law, and that those verses in Revelation 13 and 14 are referring solely and exclusively to a Sunday Law. This article will examine the identity of the mark of the beast in the book Spiritual Gifts, and investigate what the implications might have for us today.

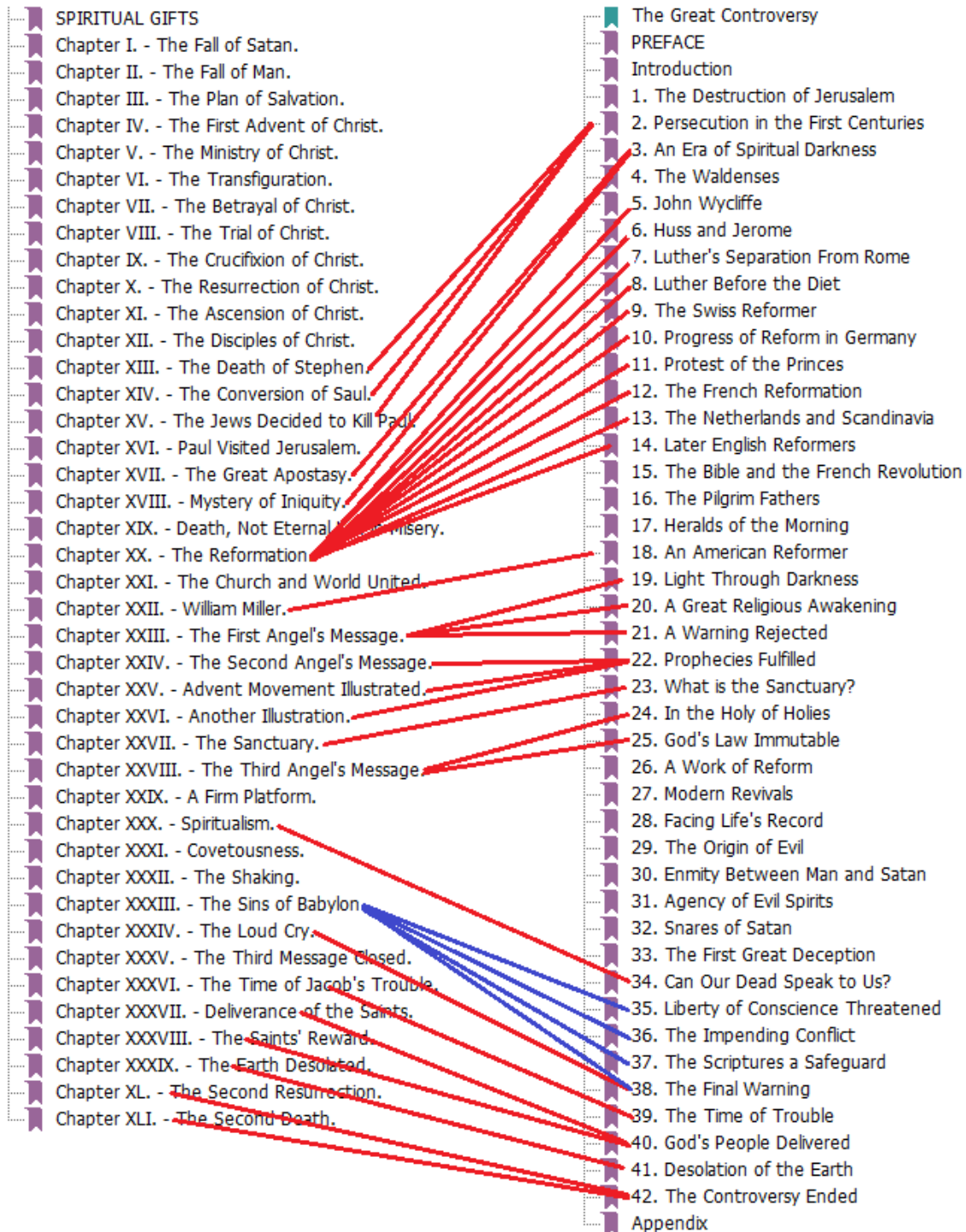
We usually take our understanding of the mark of the beast law from The Great Controversy.

*“The enforcement of Sunday-keeping on the part of Protestant churches is an enforcement of the worship of the papacy--of the beast... **the enforcement of Sunday-keeping in the United States would be an enforcement of the worship of 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.”**”*
(The Great Controversy, 448.3-449.1)

However If you search for the concept of a Sunday Law in Spiritual Gifts you will see that it does not exist anywhere in that book. So why the difference? Spiritual Gifts was written in 1858 whereas The Great Controversy was written in 1888, and if you simply compare their chapter headings, you will see they are documenting identical histories, but the mark of the beast issue in Spiritual Gifts is different to the mark of the beast issue in The Great Controversy.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS Written 1858

THE GREAT CONTROVERSY Written 1888



They seem to be parallel books, except they are written thirty years apart. Although *Spiritual Gifts* begins at the war in Heaven and proceeds through the first advent of Christ, when Ellen White begins her narrative on the first century Christians, these two books start to line up with each other.

We know Christ was intending to return within ten years of the writing of *Spiritual Gifts*, evidenced by the following quote from 1858,

“The long night of gloom is trying; but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God’s unwillingness to have His people perish has been the reason for so long delay.”
(Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, 193.3).

So *Spiritual Gifts* was the book designed to guide God’s people through their last day events when Jesus intended to return in that dispensation, and there we see the mark of the beast would not have been a Sunday Law. Actually if you read what the sins of Babylon are in *Spiritual Gifts*, it is slavery, not Sunday worship. Below is an excerpt taken from the chapter, *“The Sins of Babylon”* delineated with the blue lines in the graphic above. The excerpt I would like to look at begins, *“Said the angel, Their sins and pride have reached unto heaven...”* (*Spiritual Gifts*, 190.1). Here, Revelation 18:5, *“For her sins have reached unto heaven”*, is being quoted, and Revelation 18 is the mark of the beast and loud cry time period. Verses one to three prophesy the mark of the beast, and verse four and onward, the loud cry. Ellen White continues, *“The fearful threatenings of the third angel are to be realized, and they will drink the wrath of God”* (*Spiritual Gifts*, 190.1). So again, we are in the time of the loud cry of the third angel, or when *“the fearful threatenings of the third angel”* are being realised. Then she writes,

“All heaven beholds with indignation, human beings, the workmanship of God, reduced to the lowest depths of degradation, and placed on a level with the brute creation by their fellow men. And professed followers of that dear Saviour whose compassion was ever moved as he witnessed human woe, heartily engage in this enormous and grievous sin, and deal in slaves and souls of men... Agony, human agony, is carried from place to place, and bought and sold. God will restrain his anger but a little longer. His anger burns against this nation, and especially against the religious bodies who have sanctioned, and have themselves engaged in this terrible merchandise.”
(*Spiritual Gifts*, 191.1)

“These professed Christians read of the sufferings of the martyrs, and tears course down their cheeks. They wonder that men could ever possess hearts so hardened as to practice such inhuman cruelties towards their fellow-men, while

at the same time they hold their fellow-men in slavery... God's anger will not cease until he has caused the land of light to drink the dregs of the cup of his fury, and until he has rewarded unto Babylon double. Reward her even as she rewarded you, double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double."

(Spiritual Gifts, 192.1)

Above we again see Ellen White quoting directly from Revelation 18, this time from verse six. Then she ends the chapter with,

"I saw that the slave-master would have to answer for the soul of his slave whom he has kept in ignorance; and all the sins of the slave will be visited upon the master. God cannot take the slave to heaven, who has been kept in ignorance and degradation, knowing nothing of God, or the Bible, fearing nothing but his master's lash, and not holding so elevated a position as his master's brute beasts."

(Spiritual Gifts, 193.1)

Clearly Ellen White is identifying the sins of Babylon as the slavery which existed in America at that time. The sins of Babylon are those sins which are enforced by law as the mark of the beast. The sins of Babylon are detailed in the second angel's message, *"Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."* The wine of Babylon are the sins of Babylon proclaimed under the loud cry in Revelation 18. This is known as *"the loud cry of the third angel"* (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, 186.1). The third angel's message is the mark of the beast, hence, the mark of the beast is a law enforcing the sins of Babylon, making these two concepts almost synonymous. Ellen White makes this connection clear below,

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.' 'After these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her

plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

(The General Conference Bulletin January 1, 1900, Art. A paragraph 2)

In summary, Spiritual Gifts was designed to be the book which leads God's people through end-time events when Jesus intended to return before 1868. If He did, the mark of the beast law would not have been a Sunday Law, but would have been a pro-slavery law. Then, as Jesus did not come by 1868, time continued until 1888, when He next intended to return. So Ellen White wrote *The Great Controversy* for that 1888 dispensation - and in *The Great Controversy*, the mark of the beast law is now a Sunday Law. So you can see that the mark of the beast law is not always and exclusively a Sunday Law. It depends on what dispensation you are in. Perhaps that is why Ellen White wrote, *“The Sabbath question has been touched upon, but has not been presented as the great question, the test **for this time.**”* (The General Conference Bulletin January 1, 1900, Art. A paragraph 2). So you have to ask yourself, do we live in the same dispensation as Ellen White? Is the world today, the same world as it was in 1888, or have the social, religious and political landscape changed?

Let us try to discover exactly what law would have been the mark of the beast in that 1858 dispensation. The mark of the beast is enforced at the same time as the loud cry is given, and as we have seen, it is the loud cry of the third angel. The loud cry is essentially to warn the world not to adhere to the mark of the beast law. So the loud cry could not have been given, and therefore the mark of the beast law passed, until the Millerites understood their third angel's message. If we can identify when that was, we can identify when their mark of the beast law would have been.

So when did the Millerites understand the third angel's message? On the 1843 chart you only have the first and second angel's messages, but on the 1850 chart you have the first, second and third angel's messages. The third angel's message was the sanctuary, the Sabbath, and the law in the most holy place. The increase of knowledge on that arrived in 1846, and the tracts they published on the Sabbath in 1848 was the formalisation.

BABYLONIA
 The image of the head of the golden image.
 Rev. 2:8. I saw a woman sitting on a harlot.
 Rev. 17:1. The first woman is a harlot.
 Rev. 17:15. The woman is a harlot.

BABYLON.
 Rev. 17:1. And behold another head, it seemed like a lion's head.

MEDIA AND PERSIA.
 Rev. 17:1. And it seemed like a lion's head, four wings like four bears, hair also four heads.

GRECIA.
 Rev. 17:1. Behold a fourth head, dreadful and terrible, and seeing exceedingly, and it had ten horns.

PAGAN ROME.
 Rev. 17:1. In the little horn, was a little horn, speaking arrogantly, he shall speak great words against the Most High.

PAPAL ROME.
 Rev. 17:1. And I saw an angel fly in the midst of heaven, bearing the evil tidings, great as to grief, to every nation, tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice.

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Victorial Illustration
VISIONS OF DANIEL & JOHN
 and their Chronology.
 Published by G. NICHOLS
 BOSTON
 MASS.

Rev. 8:1. And I beheld an eagle flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice.

Rev. 8:3. In the midst of the eagle, by reason of the three wings which are on its wings.

Rev. 9:1. The first was commenced July 23rd 1851, when the number of the Turkish empire made a new attack upon Greece. Rev. 9:1. These prophecies to have now five months, 150 years, ending 1,111, 112.

Rev. 9:1.3. Angel ascended.

Rev. 9:1.3. Angel ascended.

Rev. 9:1.3. Angel ascended.

MAHOMETANS.
 Rev. 9:1.3. Angel ascended.

Rev. 9:1.3. Angel ascended.

1 AM
 Rev. 10:1. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, bearing the good tidings, great as to joy, to every nation, tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice.

THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT IS COME.
 Rev. 10:1. And these followed another voice saying, say, say.

2 AM
 Rev. 10:2. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

THE VOICE IS FALLING, FALLEN.
 Rev. 10:2. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

1844

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MINISTRATION OF CHRIST IN THE WEST INDIES.
 Rev. 10:2. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MINISTRATION OF CHRIST IN THE WEST INDIES.
 Rev. 10:2. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MINISTRATION OF CHRIST IN THE WEST INDIES.
 Rev. 10:2. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

THE OTTOMAN SUPREMACY CEASED.
 Rev. 10:2. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

THE OTTOMAN SUPREMACY CEASED.
 Rev. 10:2. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

THE OTTOMAN SUPREMACY CEASED.
 Rev. 10:2. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

3 AM
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, AND THE FAITH OF JESUS.
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, AND THE FAITH OF JESUS.
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

MOST HOLY, HER 9:3
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

MOST HOLY, HER 9:3
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

MOST HOLY, HER 9:3
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

IMAGE OF PAPACY.
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

IMAGE OF PAPACY.
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

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EXPLANATION OF THE TIME.
 Rev. 10:3. And the voice which I heard said, say, say, say.

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EXPLANATION OF THE TIME.
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So by 1850 they understood the third angel's message and were ready to give the loud cry, therefore by 1850 God could allow the mark of the beast law to be passed. So we should be able to find a pro-slavery law in 1850 which would have been the mark of the beast law. It should be a law which tests everyone, and not just slave owners for example..

"The fugitive slave law was calculated to crush out of man every noble, generous feeling of sympathy that should arise in his heart for the oppressed and suffering slave. It was in direct opposition to the teaching of Christ. God's scourge is now upon the North, because they have so long submitted to the advances of the slave power. The sin of Northern proslavery men is great. They have strengthened the South in their sin by sanctioning the extension of slavery; they have acted a prominent part in bringing the nation into its present distressed condition."

(Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, 264.1-2)

Ellen White says the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law was in direct opposition to Christ, or perhaps one could say, it was anti-Christ. In the passage below she directly commanded them to break this law, and my suggestion is that this law was the mark of the beast law for the Millerites in that dispensation.

When the laws of men conflict with the word and law of God, we are to obey the latter, whatever the consequences may be. The law of our land requiring us to deliver a slave to his master, we are not to obey; and we must abide the consequences of violating this law.

(Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, 201.2)

Spiritual Gifts does reference the Sabbath in much detail, as it was part of the third angel's message for its time. It even says,

"I saw a writing, and copies of it scattered in different parts of the land, giving orders, that unless the saints should yield their peculiar faith, give up the Sabbath, and observe the first day, they were at liberty, after such a time, to put them to death. But in this time the saints were calm and composed, trusting in God, and leaning upon his promise, that a way of escape would be made for them."

(Spiritual Gifts, 201.1)

This passage is not referencing the mark of the beast law. It is identifying the Sabbath as the means by which Seventh-day Adventists would be persecuted during the time of Jacob's trouble. In each reform line, the test which symbolises the Sunday Law is always different to the persecution after the shut door. In the time of Noah, the test

which symbolised the Sunday Law was the animals boarding the ark, but the persecution was the seven days after the door was shut. In the time of Elijah, the test which symbolised the Sunday Law was on Mount Carmel, but the persecution was the death decree. Likewise in the omega of ancient Israel, the test which symbolised the Sunday Law was 34 A.D., but the persecution was the destruction of Jerusalem. So the test for the Millerites which symbolises the Sunday Law test was the Fugitive Slave Law, but when they were to be persecuted, they were being identified as Seventh-day Adventists, so the wicked were to try and force them to give up the Sabbath. It might be akin to persecuting the Jews by making them eat pork, as abstinence from pork is an important part of their identity in society.

Regardless of that, below, Ellen White does seem to say the mark of the beast test will be on “*present manifestations*”, or current issues.

"Revelation 12:17. "And 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." This prophecy points out clearly that the remnant church will acknowledge God in His law and will have the prophetic gift.

*Obedience to the law of God, and the spirit of prophecy has always distinguished the true people of God, and **the test is usually given on present manifestations**. In Jeremiah's day the people had no question about the message of Moses, Elijah, or Elisha, but they did question and put aside the message sent of God to Jeremiah until its force and power was wasted and there was no remedy but for God to carry them away into captivity.*

Likewise in the days of Christ the people had learned that Jeremiah's message was true, and they persuaded themselves to believe that if they had lived in the days of their fathers they would have accepted his message, but at the same time they were rejecting Christ's message, of whom all the prophets had written."

(Loma Linda Messages, 33.5).

While Ellen White specifically identifies “*present manifestations*” as the prophetic message for each dispensation, it is also true that each prophet can only test God’s people on the present manifestations in their particular society. Each prophetic message can only be a test on something extant in society during that dispensation. Each test is different for each dispensation and relies on the conditions being extant at the time. The test Moses gave could not have been to board an ark for example.

*“Those who have had living faith in **the messages of God for the time in which they have lived**, and who have acted out their faith in obedience to his commands, have been accepted of God, and have escaped the judgments that were to fall upon the disobedient and unbelieving. The word came to Noah, “Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me.” Noah obeyed and was saved. The message came to Lot, “Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city.” He placed himself under the guardianship of the heavenly messengers, and was saved. Those who obeyed the warning of Christ in marking the sign of the coming ruin, and in fleeing from Jerusalem, were not involved in her destruction. The message comes in our own time, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen.... Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Those who obey this message will escape the terrible plagues that will surely be visited upon her.”*

(The Review and Herald, November 5, 1889, paragraph 11)

So it is impossible to read Spiritual Gifts today and just say, “The sins of Babylon are slavery and I believe it because it is a plain thus saith the Lord”, as slavery does not exist today. By 1888 slavery was abolished, so God could not use that as a test anymore. However, what was extant in 1888 society, religion and politics, was Sunday Laws. You cannot be tested on something that does not exist in your life. If I’m not married, God cannot test me on marriage. If I do not have children, God cannot test me on parenthood, and if I don’t own a business, God cannot test me on good business practices. So the present manifestations of our prophetic message for our time cannot test us on anything but the current issues which exist in our society today.

Sunday Laws do not exist in our society or politics today, in the way they are described in The Great Controversy. They are not an issue for the Religious Right, the White House, Supreme Court or Congress. Churches are not talking about Sunday Laws and neither are the media. It is simply not an issue for our time. In fact since the end of World War II, the Christendom holds the Jews in extremely high regard. So again, you can see how things have changed dramatically since Ellen White’s generation. It’s inconceivable now, to think the Religious Right would persecute the Jews through a Sunday Law.

If you still wanted to insist on Sunday Laws today based on a plain thus saith the Lord, then I’d ask you why you chose to take it from The Great Controversy and not Spiritual Gifts? No doubt you would answer that The Great Controversy is for a more recent dispensation, in which case you are using the same logic as I am, and I would again ask you, then are we in the same generation as Ellen White?

To really know what the current issues, or “*present manifestations*” are today, all you need to do is look at what Apostate Protestantism is fighting for. Revelation 13 says it is America that passes the mark of the beast law (Revelation 13:11-18). Revelation 17 teaches that the papacy today has a deadly wound and is dead, and it is her American harlot daughter that is currently the church which steers and directs the state. So to find out what the mark of the beast issue will be

in our dispensation, we need to look to the Religious Right, and the Trump supporters in America.

So what are their issues? What is the political agenda of the Religious Right? Legislation restricting LGBTQ+ rights, or abortion, or issues concerning Black Lives Matter etc. In other words, racism, sexism, homophobia - or equality.

“In every age there is a new development of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation. The old truths are all essential; new truth is not independent of the old, but an unfolding of it. It is only as the old truths are understood that we can comprehend the new.”

(Christ Object Lessons, 127.4)

The quote above demands that “every age” or “generation” receives new light. So again, do you think we are still living in Ellen White’s age, or generation? Are we the same generation as Ellen White, or is the world a very different place now? She died over a hundred years ago, and as we saw, even a gap of thirty years required “a new development of truth” because the world had changed so much between 1858 and 1888.

Therefore this quote demands that we have, “a new development of truth” today. Then she says new truth is dependent on old truth, or Adventists have coined the phrase, “new light cannot contradict old light”. So when Ellen White introduced the health message and a plant-based diet was new truth, what old truth was it dependent on? Because there is nothing in the Bible to uphold a plant based diet after the Flood.

“God is working in behalf of His people... He is bringing them back to the diet originally given to man...”

(Counsels on Diet and Foods, 81.5)

So new truth can seem to contradict old truth, but it is the principle that it must not contradict - and what is the principle of a plant-based diet? God is restoring His people to Eden. He is bringing us from Eden to Eden. Flesh was a curse added after the Flood, but now God is removing those curses one by one.

“We cannot now do as we have ventured to do in the past in regard to meat eating. It has always been a curse to the human family...”

(Counsels on Diet and Foods, 412.1)

So let us look at some of the other curses added to the world after sin and see how one can create a chiasm when comparing them to their respective removal. Sexism was the first curse to enter the world after sin. Originally God created man and woman to be equal.

*“Eve was told of the sorrow and pain that must henceforth be her portion. And the Lord said, “Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” **In the creation, God had made her the equal of Adam.** Had they remained obedient to God—in harmony with His great law of love—they would ever have been in harmony with each other; but sin had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other. Eve had been the first in transgression; and she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction. It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned, and **she was now placed in subjection to her husband.** Had the principles enjoined in the law of God been cherished by the fallen race, this sentence, though growing out of the results of sin, would have proved a blessing to them; **but man's abuse of the supremacy thus given him has too often rendered the lot of woman very bitter, and made her life a burden.**”*

(Adventist Home, 115.1)

The second recorded sin to enter the world was false worship, as Cain's offering was a counterfeit offering. The curse, or natural consequences of this was breaking, or counterfeiting the Sabbath.

“The Sabbath was honored by all the children of Adam that remained loyal to God. But Cain and his descendants did not respect the day upon which God had rested. They chose their own time for labor and for rest, regardless of Jehovah's express command.” (PP 80.3)

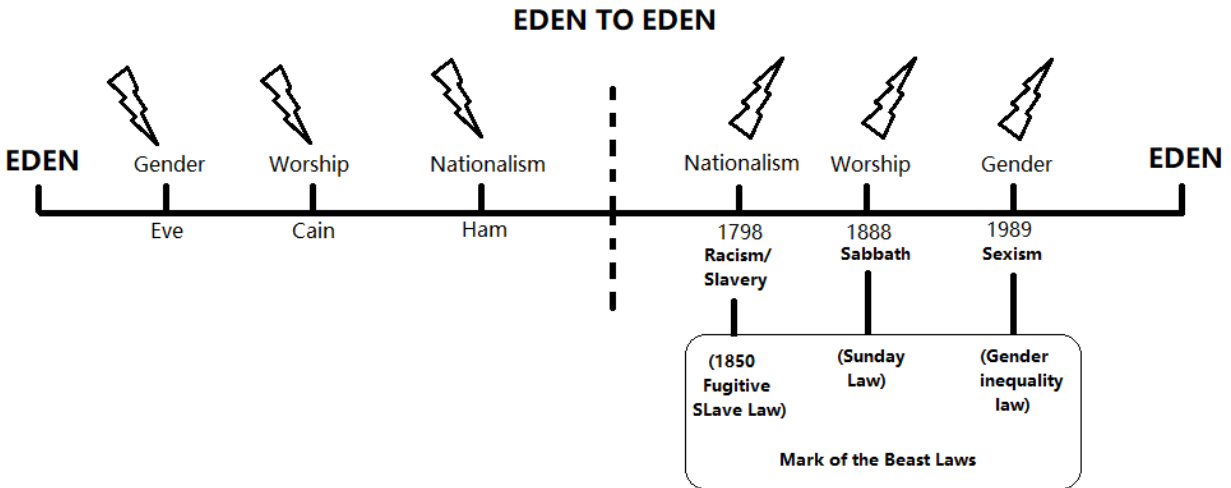
Then the next curse was the curse of Ham,

“And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.”

(Genesis 9:25)

The words, “*servant of servants*” in Hebrew means a slave of slaves. In other words, Ham's descendents were to be the lowest of the lowest slaves. So this curse is race-based slavery, or racism or nationalism.

By implementing a chiasm you can see the order that God will lift these curses from the world.



From 1798 God began to lift the curse of racism, nationalism and race-based slavery, as we saw in Spiritual Gifts. Next God should lift the curse of counterfeit worship, and we saw how He did this in the 1888 dispensation, which we read in The Great Controversy. So what curse does God have to lift next, in order to restore us to Eden? Sexism.

Notice in the above diagram how the other two curses became the mark of the beast law for their dispensations. Hence the mark of the beast law will have to do with gender in our dispensation. A law persecuting certain gender minorities will be the mark of the beast test for the final generation, because it has to be the final curse which is lifted before we are restored to Eden. Once we understand this, we can open the news and see the mark of the beast issue literally everywhere, and if Adventists understood this, they should be as excited, and as concerned, as if we were reading about Sunday Laws everywhere. Presently Adventists are scouring the news for stories about the Pope, or Sunday Laws, and when they think they know something is true, but cannot find it anywhere in the news, what do they do? They make it up! They turn to conspiracy theories! And there are so many conspiracy theories you can find anything you want in them. In this way, conspiracy theories have become the Christians' methodology for interpreting prophecy, as they do not know how to use parable methodology.

Ellen White tells us exactly where the mark of the beast law will come from, so all we need to do is watch the movements to unite church and state, and see what their agenda is.

“The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of a union of Church and State...”

(The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, 424.1)

The Jews of ancient Israel rejected the Messiah in part because they misunderstood prophecy. They mistook the Messianic prophecies of the second advent for the first advent. They did not

understand how to apply prophecy to its correct dispensation. But like the Jews who are still looking for the Messiah even today, will Adventists still be looking for a Sunday Law, way, way after the mark of the beast law has already been passed and probation has closed. Please let's not be among those that say, "*The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.*" (Jeremiah 8:20).