From Death’s Gate to Deity, Sabbath Afternoon, Jan. 18

In Chapter three the subject of “worship” will float to the top, but it is a carry-over thought from chapter 2 wherein the King, upon receiving the clear and accurate interpretation of his dream, bowed himself down to Daniel and “worshipped” him. To a heathen, worshiping an image, an idol, or another human being is a matter of little thought, and being fully convinced that Daniel possessed powers to commune with “the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh,” (Dan. 2: 11), this propelled Nebuchadnezzar even further in his desire to “worship” the Hebrew captive, for his testimony bore witness that he communes with the God whom the wise men of Chaldea only knew about, but had no direct contact with. The king knew that Daniel’s “God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets,” (v. 47), and as such was worthy of worship. Though correct in his analysis of Daniel’s God, the king was in gross error concerning the act of “worship,” and this subject will permeate his thoughts as we delve into Chapter 3. But before we do so, let’s for a moment try to gain an appreciation for the king’s thoughts, and the basis of his understanding concerning the “gods” of the heavens and earth.

* It should not be forgotten that only a few days earlier, both Daniel and his three companions were on death row (Dan. 2: 12, 13), in company with the wise men of Babylon, on account of the King’s forgotten dream, and the inability of the wise men to both disclose the dream as well as providing its associated interpretation! Now their faith in YHWH will receive yet another test—allegiance to YHWH alone as the one and only worshipful being in the universe.

In this study we will see a lesson in evangelism as well, that not every error can be immediately corrected, and that in time God will set the records straight, and open blind eyes that they may see, know, and understand the truth as it is in Christ Jesus (Y’shuah) our Lord.

This act on the king’s part, should not be lightly considered, for Satan was using it as an introduction to a new system of false worship in Babylon, in which the Hebrews would be commanded to worship in a manner contrary to the Torah—the Statutes, Judgments, and commandments of YHWH!

- “12 For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. 13 And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.” Dan. 2: 12, 13
- Daniel’s Deified Name:* “8 But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the
dream, saying, 9 O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.” Dan. 4: 8, 9.

The Golden Image; Sunday, Jan. 19

As we read through chapter 3 it leaves a solitary question, why was Daniel not included in the company of the righteous protesters against the image worship, but his three companions only? While it is probable that the golden Image the king erected was a representation of His enduring kingdom, there is room to consider that the king was preserving a statute of this man in whom “the spirit of the holy gods” indwelt! After all, Daniel’s Babylonian name, Belteshazzar, was the name attributed to the king’s god! See Dan. 4: 8

- Daniel is Worshipped: **“46 ¶ Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him.”** Dan. 2: 46
- “18 Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.” Dan. 4: 18*
  - * In Dan. 2: 38 we read, of Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom, “Thou art this head of gold.” This might have inspired his design of the “golden image” in chapter 3, as a representation of enduring Babylon. So from the very outset his ambitions were not pure, and in the open face of Divine revelation, he was willing to bend it towards his feelings and favor! How many today twist and bend the word of God to accommodate their own suppositions. There are those today who stultify reason to teach, for example, that “the stone was cut out from Heaven,” rather than from the mountain, and the Scriptures so succinctly teach, and they will move earth, sea, and sky to justify why this is the true intent of Daniel’s interpretation, while completely discounting the two mountains as irrelevant to the interpretation of the prophecy! This spirit we must guard against, for it will lead us to abominable ends, as it had Nebuchadnezzar!
- “47 The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret. 48 Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. 49 Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate [courts] of the king.” Dan. 2: 47-49

The Call to Worship—Music, Mon. Jan. 20

Music is a vital part of worship and when rightly presented enhances the worship experience and brings “heaven down to earth,” so to speak, for in it we can express or highest praise and deepest emotions. But the same instruments used in a corrupt, and unholy manner can invoke spirits of darkness to canker around the worship halls, and manifest themselves in unholy human emotions! Knowing this to be true, we must be most guarded about the quality, and type of music we introduce into our worship services.

- Read these verses to see what they have in common:
“Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him [Daniel].” Dan. 2: 46**

- ** The word “worship” would be used fully 12 times between the close of Chapter 2 and the end of chapter 3. More impressively, this worship required genuflexion, or falling down in an act of obeisance and divine worship, and was initiated by the king himself, before Daniel! We are not told anywhere in Daniel that he rebuked the king for this blasphemous act, but it should not be assumed that Daniel was being entertained in this abomination.
- This worship act is common in Scripture, when the Saints come in contact with unbelievers who suddenly come to the light, their first response is to worship the individuals who were God’s agents of light. This was manifested in the lives of the Apostles and finally by John in the book of revelation, who attempted to worship an angel, but was rebuked. Jesus said, in Matt. 4:10, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

- “5 That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. 7 Therefor at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick***, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.” Dan. 3: 5-7

*** We will address music in worship, shortly.

- “10 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the image which I have made; but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?”
- “18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up.”
- “28 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.”

**A Call For The Whole Nation (World) To Worship in Unison!**
• “2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.” Dan. 3: 2
  o On Friday’s lesson we shall provide an application to our modern day global call for climate change laws including a climate Sabbath day of rest, in which the whole world will be commanded to comply with this type of “forced worship.”

• The use of musical instruments to create a bedlam of noise, shocks the senses and perverts the worship. — “The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit’s working.”—2SM 36.3.

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• “No encouragement should be given to this kind of worship. The same kind of influence came in after the passing of the time in 1844. The same kind of representations were made. Men became excited, and were worked by a power thought to be the power of God. They turned their bodies over and over, like a carriage wheel, claiming that they could not do this except by supernatural power. {SMR 108.2}

• “Men and women, supposed to be guided by the Holy Spirit, held meetings in a state of nudity. They talked about holy flesh. They said they were beyond the power of temptation, and they sang, and shouted, and made all manner of noisy demonstrations. These men and women were not bad, but they were deceived and deluded . . . . {SMR 108.3}

• “Satan was molding the work, and sensuality was the result. The cause of God was dishonored. Truth, sacred truth, was leveled in the dust by human agencies. {SMR 108.4}

Below are thoughts from two who have made a living in the Music-Entertainment Industry, and cringe to see the same notes, beats, rhythms and styles being offered in churches as “worship” to the Majesty of the Universe. Louis Torres, is a former rock musician with Bill Haley and the Comets, and Carol, a former concert violinist. Together they’ve written this book as a guide to Churches who are experimenting with innovative worship music, blending the sacred with the common, and literally warning Christians to know what Devil-worship music sounds, looks, and feels like, and to stay away from this genre,

• “‘Yesterday’ the music accompanied and encouraged dances such as the ‘danse du ventre’ in which ‘the shoulders, buttocks, stomach and breasts are all separately or simultaneously rotated, wagged or otherwise set in motion.’; and the voodoo dances which featured ‘contortions of the upper part of the body, especially the neck and shoulders.’ Today, you could easily use the very same description.
• “Yesterday it ‘altered consciousnesses’ from mere ‘ecstasy to unconsciousness.’ Today, the very same ‘highs’ are being experienced. Even ‘auditory driving’ to the point of seizures and unconsciousness is not uncommon.

• “Yesterday’ it was part of the worship service, sacred obligations to the gods. What about today? In the late ’60s and early ’70s, this music found its way into the worship services of both Protestant and Catholic churches. It was used to create a spiritual ‘high,’ an altered emotional state. There is only one difference—a big difference. Where it had been used only in pagan worship, now it is being used in ‘Christian’ religious rites.” Notes On Music, Carol A Torres & Louise R. Torres, 2004, pp. 36-37

• Lesson Notes: “Today, we are bombarded from every side by calls to adopt new lifestyles, new ideologies, and to abandon our commitment to the authority of God as expressed in His Word and to surrender our allegiance to contemporary successors of the Babylonian empire. The allure of the world at times seems overwhelming, but we should remind ourselves that our ultimate allegiance belongs to the Creator God.”—Quarterly, Monday, January 20.

  • I appreciate this comment and only wished the Theologians had gone farther in giving applications of such modernity in culture-shift that the Church is being moored into.

The Test of Fire, Tuesday, Jan. 21

• “16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. 17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. 18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” Dan. 3: 16-18

• “15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Rev. 13: 15-17

Seeking Death and Not Finding It! To defy the Mark of the Beast’s call to worship and most of all to protest against its doctrines by teaching an oppositional Truth (read The Third Angel’s Message of Rev. 14: 9-12), is to draw rapid fire from the enemy’s camp. This is the surest way of seeking the death penalty, and all such believers know that they are marked by the enemy! God knows this too, and so “seals” them for salvation and against death, for He will use them as His “Missionary-Commandoes” to rescue the perishing, care for the dying, and snatch in pity from sin and the grave. They are the 144,000 Spirit-filled and anointed evangelists who run the gauntlet between life and death, not loving their lives in the face of death! And the good news is, they shall NOT be hurt or wounded by the enemy. Let’s read about them:

• “4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. 5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. 6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.” Rev. 9: 4-6

• “6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. 7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march everyone on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: 8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk everyone in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.” Joel 2: 6-8.
Some Will Die, but NOT from the 144,000’s camp: While the missionaries of hope are conducting their work, there will be people who have heard and read the truth of the Third Angel’s Message, and will not have bowed to the false worship, yet who will fall under the despotic power of the beast and be slain before their rescuers could arrive on the scene, but their death is in no way a sign of their being defeated, but for the glory of God!

- “12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. 13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.” Rev. 14: 12, 13
- “4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” Rev. 20: 4-6
- “32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” Matt. 10: 32, 33
- “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.” Rev. 12: 17

“The woman” here is now the 144,000, after the earth has swallowed up the dragon’s flood of unconverted believers who today are thronging the churches, and the “remnant” are those yet to be gathered in, the “great multitude,” (Rev. 7:9).

The 144,000 Have Divine Protection and cannot die:

- “15 Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. 16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. 17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.” Isa. 54: 15-17
- “Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.” Ps 66:12
- “2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap:3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. 4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.” Mal. 3: 1-4
- “5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.” Ps. 27: 5

The Fourth Man; Wednesday. January 22
“23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonied, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” Dan. 3: 23-25*

* Of great interest is the fact that the three Hebrews were “bound” prior to being cast into the furnace! Wonder of wonders! The fetters that bound them were the only things burnt by the furious flames whose intensity roasted their executioners while the three proceeded into the furnace with confidence, treating it like a huge walk-in air-conditioned room, of sorts, and with the fourth man, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they began a worship service in the air-conditioned flames! What a mighty God we serve!

Now, God does not propose to save his children from trouble every time, but he does what brings glory to Himself, based on the circumstance. Lazarus comes to mind… Christ could have been on the scene before he died, but the His words to Martha is sufficient confirmation that God is being glorified in it all, as a witness to the unbelieving world, that sinners might come to repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ, His son! [Read John 11].

“4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. 21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died… 23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again… 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?” John 11: 4, 21, 23, 25, 26

“25 … and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. 28 ¶ Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. 29 Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. * 30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.” Dan. 3: 25, 28-30

* Though Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the person of the fourth man in the fire as “the Son of God,” the king was not yet surrendered to Him as Lord and Saviour. And though he confessed, “there is no other God that can deliver after this sort,” yet, he still saw YHWH as “the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.” In other words, God still had work to do on his stubborn stony heart, he was seeking to save the king, and every attempt up to this point still did not curb his stony heart, but one more test would confront the King, in Chapter 4, and this final test, which led him in an antiphonal strain of open praise and worship! We shall discuss this transformative experience in next week’s lesson—the great tree that was cut down to its stump!

“How did Nebuchadnezzar know that the form of the fourth was like the Son of God? He had heard of the Son of God from the Hebrew captives that were in his kingdom. They had brought the knowledge of the living God who ruleth all things.”— (RH May 3, 1892)

“How did that heathen king know what the Son of God was like? The Hebrew captives filling positions of trust in Babylon had in life and character represented before him the truth. When asked for a reason of their faith, they had given it without hesitation. Plainly and simply they had presented the principles of
righteousness, thus teaching those around them of the God whom they worshiped. They had told of Christ, the Redeemer to come; and in the form of the fourth in the midst of the fire the king recognized the Son of God. {PK 509.2}

- “29 Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill.” Dan. 3: 29*

- * While admirable that YHWH, the ONLY true and living God was now being acknowledged in Babylon, it was the spirit of Satan that was motivating the King to issue his death-decree against those who do not freely worship the God of the Hebrews. Even here, the King demonstrated his lack of faith in that God to whom he was exacting worship of “every people, nation, and language.” He saw YHWH only as “the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,” and not as his only God and Saviour! It is from this that we know that the King was not yet converted, for no converted person will exact force in the worship of the Creator. Our relationship with Him is one built on faith and LOVE, and whenever (wherever) the spirit of force is introduced, we can be sure we are seeing the work of the Dragon on display, and not the pleadings of God’s Holy Spirit. {Read PK 510.4}

- “It was right for the king to make public confession, and to seek to exalt the God of heaven above all other gods; but in endeavoring to force his subjects to make a similar confession of faith and to show similar reverence, Nebuchadnezzar was exceeding his right as a temporal sovereign. He had no more right, either civil or moral, to threaten men with death for not worshiping God, than he had to make the decree consigning to the flames all who refused to worship the golden image. God never compels the obedience of man. He leaves all free to choose whom they will serve. {PK 510.4}

The Secret of Such a Faith, Thursday, January 23

- “32 ¶ And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jeththae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: 33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens... 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented... 39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” Heb. 11: 32-40*

- * As in our giving, so in our living, we do not worship God for what we can receive, but for the relationship we will share with Him. Therefore, when brought to the test, we are not assured of the outcomes to our likings, but guaranteed a place in His eternal kingdom! There are many Christians who have been slain by the enemy, by gladiators in Amphitheaters, by wild beasts, the guillotine, the dagger and the sword, bullets and the bombs, by strangulation and poisoning, by the flame and by the electrocution, etc., but in it all God is glorified. In Psalms 116:15, David said, “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.” Ps 116:15. There is a victory mark of remembrance placed by God in the book of His Remembrance for all who have given their all for the cause of Truth. The song writer, G.A. Young, once wrote, “Some through the
waters, some through the flood, Some through the fire, but all through the blood; Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song, In the night season and all the day long.”

• “5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 6 For **I am now ready to be offered**, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have **fought a good fight**, I have **finished my course**, I have **kept the faith**: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me **a crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but **unto all them also that love his appearing**.” **2 Tim. 4: 5-8**

• **Lesson Notes**: “Indeed, true faith, as manifested by Daniel’s friends, is measured by the quality of our relationship with God and its resulting absolute confidence in God. Authentic faith does not seek to bend God’s will to conform to our will; rather, it surrenders our will to the will of God. As we saw, the three Hebrew men do not know exactly what God has in store for them when they decide to challenge the king and remain faithful to God. They decide to do the right thing despite the consequences. This is what really characterizes a mature faith.”

**Further Study and Application Friday, Jan. 24**

• **The International Call To Worship to Stave Off effects of Climate Change!**

• “2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the **princes**, the **governors**, and the **captains**, the **judges**, the **treasurers**, the **counsellors**, the **sherrifs**, and all the **rulers of the provinces**, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.” **Dan. 3: 2**

• “11 ¶ And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” **Rev. 13: 11, 12**

Observe that in v. 12, there are two systems that are called upon to worship:

1. The Earth: There is only one way the earth can worship, and that is when humans worship. On this the Bible is clear (Read. 2 Chron. 36: 15-21). Only the principle of the Land Sabbath qualifies as a worship act by the earth (land), but in order for the land to rest, it must not be worked by people, its inhabitants.

2. The Inhabitants—“them which dwell therein”: When people keep the Sabbath, then the land (earth) rests from being “worked,” and as such both must work in unison! Knowing this to be true, the new climate change laws are calling for just such a universal decree. It was first brought to clear light under the current pope’s (Francis 1) encyclical, **Laudato Si!**

Pope urges politicians to take 'drastic measures' on climate change

**warming** and reduce the use of fossil fuels, saying the world was experiencing a climate emergency.

• Francis issued his appeal, a written message for Sunday’s World Day of Prayer for the **Care of Creation**, ahead of the United Nations Climate Action Summit this month in New York, a follow up to the 2016 Paris Agreement to curb global warming.

• Calling the U.N. summit “of particular importance,” he added:
• “There, governments will have the responsibility of showing the political will to take drastic measures to achieve as quickly as possible zero net greenhouse gas emissions and to limit the average increase in global temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius with respect to pre-industrial levels, in accordance with the Paris Agreement goals.”

• Francis has made many calls for environmental protection and has clashed over climate change with skeptics leaders such as U.S. President Donald Trump, who has taken the United States out of the Paris accord.

• “We have caused a climate emergency that gravely threatens nature and life itself, including our own,” the leader of the world’s 1.3 billion Roman Catholics said in the message for the prayer day, which is marked by various Christian Churches.

Pope Francis’ Laudato Si’ v. the Green New Deal

Thought Questions:

• Where were the other Hebrews during the king’s call to worship?
• What does that say about how many will be loyal in these last days?
• Think about the following statement, and prayerfully assess your spiritual compass on its sentiments to determine what it holds for us today, as Seventh-day Adventists!

“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. {GC 608.2}

“In this time of persecution the faith of the Lord’s servants will be tried. They have faithfully given the warning, looking to God and to His word alone. God’s Spirit, moving upon their hearts, has constrained them to speak. Stimulated with holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they entered upon the performance of their duties without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord had given them. They have not consulted their temporal interests, nor sought to preserve their reputation or their lives... They are threatened with destruction. The enthusiasm which animated them is gone; yet they cannot turn back. Then, feeling their utter helplessness, they flee to the Mighty One for strength. They remember that the words which they have spoken were not theirs, but His who bade them give the warning. God put the truth into their hearts, and they could not forbear to proclaim it.” {GC 608.3}

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