

# BIBLE READINGS

*for the*

# HOME



devotion of the faithful might be free from all disturbance.”—AUGUSTUS NEANDER, *General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Torrey translation (3d American ed.), Vol. 2, p. 301.

NOTE.—In the fourth and fifth centuries, Sunday shows and Sunday theaters, it was complained, hindered the “devotion of the faithful,” because many of the members attended them in preference to the church services. The church, therefore, demanded that the state should interfere and promote Sunday observance by law. “In this way,” says Neander, “the church received help from the state for the furtherance of her ends.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 300, 301. This union of church and state served to establish the Papacy in power. A similar course pursued now will produce the same results.

“On the baseless assumption that the seventh day, set apart and established in the law, has been in some way superseded by the first day, recognized in the gospel, a good deal of hurtful legislation has been enacted on the pretext of sanctifying the Sabbath and honoring God. Men who really do know better are willing to wrest the Scriptures and appeal to popular ignorance in order to gain a point. Such conduct is unworthy of any good cause.

“This error had its origin in the iniquitous union of church and state, and is a relic of that oppressive system. . . . In current usage the so-called Sabbath legislation does not apply to the Bible Sabbath at all, but to the first day of the week. The practical effect of such legislation generally is to annul the divine commandment, and to put in its place a human statute. The vicious assumption underlying such legislation is that divine law may be changed or amended by human enactment. In thousands of minds to-day the law of God concerning the Sabbath day is rendered of none effect by the so-called Sabbath legislation enacted by civil governments. Such legislation belittles the authority of Jehovah.”—J. J. TAYLOR (Baptist), *The Sabbatic Question* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1914), pp. 51, 52, 58. (See pages 323-328, 334, 335, 337-340 in BIBLE READINGS for statements by writers of various denominations.)

## EARLY AND MODERN SUNDAY LAWS

**Who is responsible for the present state Sunday laws of the United States?**

“During nearly all our American history *the churches* have influenced the States to make and improve Sabbath laws.”—W. F. CRAFTS, in *Christian Statesman*, July 3, 1890, p. 5.

NOTE.—These Sunday laws are a survival of the complete union of church and state which existed at the founding of the colonies. “Such laws [as the Maryland Sunday law of 1723] were the outgrowth of the system of religious intolerance that prevailed in many of the colonies.”—Decision of Court of Ap-

peals of the District of Columbia, Jan. 21, 1908, in *Washington Law Reporter*, Feb. 14, 1908, p. 103.

The first Sunday law imposed on an American colony (Virginia, 1610) required church attendance and prescribed the death penalty for the third offense. (See Peter Force, *Tracts Relating to the Colonies in North America* [1844 ed.], Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 11.)

### Why is a national Sunday law demanded?

“National Sunday legislation is needed to make the state laws complete and effective,” say its advocates.

NOTE.—The *state* laws enforcing a religious day are relics of a union of church and state in colonial times. But the *nation* whose foundation principles of civil and religious freedom are aptly symbolized by two lamblike horns does not exercise “all the power of the first beast” and require men “to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed,” until it abandons its separation of church and state to the extent of enforcing religious requirements on a national scale, thus constituting an “image,” or likeness, to the first beast.

## THE MARK OF PAPAL AUTHORITY

**What does the prophet say this second ecclesiastico-political power will attempt to enforce upon all the people?**

“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.” Revelation 13:16.

NOTE.—This mark, called in verse 17 “the mark . . . of the beast,” is set over against the seal of God in the Book of Revelation. (See Revelation 14:9, 10, and the reading on page 329.)

**What means will be employed to compel all to receive this mark?**

“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.” Revelation 13:17.

NOTE.—That is, all who refuse to receive this mark will be boycotted, or denied the rights and privileges of business and trade, or the ordinary means of gaining a livelihood.

To picture this other “beast” which John saw coming up out of the earth with lamblike horns (Revelation 13:11), the artist has used the native American bison, or buffalo, which fittingly symbolizes the great United States.

Jim Padgett, Artist



