



Our Firm Foundation

30 Pieces
of
Silver

Volume 18, Number 8

August 2003

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary



The Seventh-day Adventist Church was called into existence by God in the final hours of the great controversy to complete the Reformation. Wycliffe, the morning star of the Reformation, began by hammering at the gates of false doctrine. Huss and Jerome were to pay with their lives as they preached the truth. The monk from Wittenberg boldly nailed his 95 Theses to the doors of the Catholic hierarchy—and the walls of pagan heresy came tumbling down. Luther brought back to the church justification by faith, and the Wesley brothers plainly taught righteousness by faith, justification, and sanctification. Yet, the great revival never reached the zenith required to bring the whole world to the knowledge of the first-century apostolic faith.

The pioneers of this church, often sitting around their kitchen tables on apple boxes, hammered out the doctrines of the apostles on their knees with their Bibles and concordances. Ellen White tells the story:

“Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband [Elder James White], Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its

meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, ‘We can do nothing more,’ the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the Scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me.” *Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, 56–57.*

The doctrines clarified at that time are now under attack by the enemy of souls; Satan himself wants to destroy the remnant church, and to do that he must destroy our confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy.

“The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. ‘Where there is no vision, the people perish.’ Proverbs 29:18. Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony.

“There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded.” *Selected Messages, book 1, 48.*

The devil is doing everything to keep the reformation from beginning and ending in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We have been

told parties will develop in the church (see *ibid.*, book 2, 114), and there will be separation and unity all at the same time (see *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 400), unity among those who are receiving the early rain experience in preparation for the latter rain, and separation by those who are rising up against the straight testimony that must come to this church. See *Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, 14, 20; Early Writings, 270; Testimonies, vol. 3, 252–253; 324.*

Those who are rising up against the straight testimony will lose their spiritual rationale, light will become darkness, truth will become error, and they will be forced to oppose it with all the ferocity that Satan can provide. Sadly, we are told that our worst enemies will be our fellow church members, leaders, and pastors who refuse the straight testimony. See *The Great Controversy, 608; Testimonies, vol. 5, 463.*

The devil has now come down to God’s faithful, loyal, and obedient with great wrath because he has but a short time and he expresses that wrath through the unsanctified, the unholy. The latter rain is soon to come, and we cannot have it without first having experienced the early rain.

“We may be sure that when the Holy Spirit is poured out those who did not receive and appreciate the early rain will not see or understand the value of the latter rain. When we are truly consecrated to God, His love will abide in our hearts by faith, and we will cheerfully do our duty in accordance with the will of God.” *Testimonies to Ministers, 399.* May God help us now to complete the Reformation by bringing our lives daily into complete surrender of our wills to God that the early rain experience can now be ours. ✨



It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days remaining for this world are few, and we must work quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world.

—Editors

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30 Pieces of Silver

Russell Standish

Would you sell your Savior? Would you sell Him for five dollars, a hundred, a thousand, a million, a billion? Of course, we all cry out “I would not sell my Savior for all the money in the world.” Yet, is that true?

Judas sold his Savior for a paltry 30 pieces of silver. Under the Hebrew law presented to Moses on Sinai,

“If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.” Exodus 21:32.

Centuries before Christ’s betrayal, the prophet Zechariah, in remarkable prophetic detail, foretold the precise sum for which our Savior would be sold.

“And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.” Zechariah 11:12–13.

Scripture describes the fulfillment of that prophecy.

“Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they cov-

enanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.” Matthew 26:14–16. “Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.” Verses 45–50.

It is true that Judas later felt terrible remorse for his evil act in accepting a bribe in order to betray his Lord.

“Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver

in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord appointed me.” Matthew 27:3–10.

In this passage we see the callousness of the leadership of God’s church. No doubt they had all attended the schools of the rabbis. Undoubtedly they would have studied the prophecy of Zechariah. However, so full of hatred were they of Christ, so deluded by Satan, that they did not recognize that they were precisely fulfilling every aspect of Zechariah’s prophecy, even to the matter of purchasing a potter’s field as the prophecy indicated. I have often wondered about that potter’s field. As Christ lay in death within the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, there were men and women, and no doubt children, who would have been healed by Christ had He not been dead. That Sabbath day in

Jerusalem was a day of mourning. The servant of the Lord tells us:

“Many had come from far to find Him who had healed the sick and raised the dead. On every side was heard the cry, We want Christ the Healer!” *The Desire of Ages*, 776.

Can you imagine the anguish as these poor people sought the great Healer in vain? The servant of the Lord goes on to inform us,

“The streets were filled with mourning. The sick were dying for want of the healing touch of Jesus. Physicians were consulted in vain; there was no skill like that of Him who lay in Joseph’s tomb.” *Ibid.*

As a physician myself, it is very humbling to learn that only in their desperation did the people seek the counsel and medical guidance of the physicians. How tragic was that Sabbath day in which that hoped-for Source of healing proved to be a futile quest. They had sought help in vain. What a reminder that is to us that all healing is a gift of God!

Could it be that some of those individuals who would have been healed had Christ been alive were buried in that potter’s field instead? After all, it was specifically purchased in order to provide a cemetery for those strangers who had died in Jerusalem. That dreadful Sabbath day was history’s worst. Sister White described it as follows:

“[The] great light had gone out of the world. Without Christ, the earth was blackness and darkness.” *Ibid.*

Those who placed Christ on the cross of Calvary were responsible for the premature deaths of those whom Christ would have healed.

Judas’ Confession

Let us examine Judas’ remorse. Perhaps if we had been present at that ecclesiastical tribunal and observed the distress and words of Judas, we would have judged him as having made a genuine confession of his sin. Let us review Matthew 27:3–10.

First, we discover in verse four that he made a confession that he had sinned. This is, of course, the

first step in repentance—the acknowledgement of our sin.

Second, he had committed a public sin. Many were present when he betrayed his Savior with a kiss. Thus it was proper that he repent publicly. This he did.

Third, his repentance was specific. He admitted that he had betrayed innocent blood.

Fourth, he did the best he could in making retribution by returning every single shekel of that bribe to those who had given it to him.

Here is a lesson for each one of us. All these steps were an essential

forfeiting his eternal salvation. They so thirsted for the blood of Jesus that they had lost all human feeling and tender emotion. Yet, they, too, had a day of earthly reckoning. On that mournful day when Christ lay in the tomb, they were tormented by the evidence that every Messianic prophecy concerning the Messiah’s sacrifice had been fulfilled on that day.

“His mock trial, and of the inhumanity of the priests and rulers, were circulated everywhere. By men of intellect these priests and rulers were called upon to explain

In deep contrition and sorrow we must recognize that we have disgraced our Lord, that we have brought Him to grief and have crucified Him afresh by our sin.

part of true confession. However, in this case, despite taking all those rightful steps, Judas’ “confession was forced from his guilty soul by an awful sense of condemnation and a looking for of judgment, but he felt no deep, heartbreaking grief that he had betrayed the spotless Son of God, and denied the Holy One of Israel.” *Ibid.*, 722.

As we contemplate this fact, we must be careful to recognize that our repentance has to be deep and true. In deep contrition and sorrow we must recognize that we have disgraced our Lord, that we have brought Him to grief and have crucified Him afresh by our sin. If we knew the heartache that our sins bring to our Savior, we would be a whole lot more serious about seeking His perfect character in our lives.

The Scripture briefly tells of Judas’ suicide. He had forfeited his eternal life for 30 miserable pieces of silver.

The callous leaders of God’s church had no sympathy for the one whom they had beguiled into

the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, and while trying to frame some falsehood in reply, they became like men insane.” *Ibid.*, 777.

We can just imagine one inquirer addressing a question to a priest: “There is a rumor spreading around Jerusalem that Judas was bribed with 30 pieces of silver to betray Jesus. It is also rumored, that in his remorse, he cast all that money at the feet of Caiaphas. Further, I have been told that the decision of the church leadership was to use that money to purchase a potter’s field. Priest, could it be that yesterday the prophecy of Zechariah was fulfilled?” It would be little wonder that the recipient of such a question, himself implicated in the false conviction and death of Christ, would act as a man who was insane.

Others may have inquired concerning the fulfillment of the twenty-second Psalm. They had seen the nails battered into Christ’s hands and feet. They had observed

the Roman soldiers casting lots for His raiment. Prophecy had fulfilled with pinpoint accuracy before their very eyes.

Sister White provides a graphic picture of Judas' end.

"Later that same day, on the road from Pilate's hall to Calvary, there came an interruption to the shouts and jeers of the wicked throng who were leading Jesus to the place of crucifixion. As they passed a retired spot, they saw at the foot of a lifeless tree, the body of Judas. It was a most revolting sight. His weight had broken the cord by which he had hanged himself to the tree. In falling, his body had

nation of the Far East, the nation of South Korea, the presidents of two separate hospitals absconded with approximately one million U.S. dollars each. One was the president of our hospital in Seoul. The other was the president of our hospital in Pusan. It is beyond understanding that men placed in such responsible positions could sell their Lord for such a pittance, for surely one million dollars is a totally insignificant reward as compared with eternal life with Jesus.

In my own responsibilities in Southeast Asia, I had to take part in the dismissal of five denominational leaders who had embezzled

declare that Christ is not in them." Ibid., 357.

Please read the above quotation once more. Can any one of us say that we have never denied our Savior by one or other of these means? Are we willing to sell our Lord so that we can continue evil speaking, or speaking foolish matters, using words that are untruthful and/or unkind?

Are we selling our Lord by shunning life's burdens, preferring to accept Social Security while, as able-bodied individuals, we could do an honest day's work? Would we sell our Lord by continuing in sinful pleasure, by conforming to the world, by acts of discourteousness and by self-justification?

Do we sell our Lord by setting ourselves up as experts in doubt concerning the established truths of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy? Would we sell Him by borrowing trouble and by dwelling in darkness, too indolent to study the Word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy under the guidance of the Holy Spirit? If we do, God declares that we crucify Christ afresh.

"If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Hebrews 6:6.

We are denying our Lord and Christ has told us, "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 10:33.

Others sell their Lord in order to retain a position in the organized work or in the local church. They, too, crucify Christ afresh. They hold Him up to open shame.

Once more I pose the question, I pose it for myself, as I do to each reader, "For how much would you sell your Lord?" Only those who value Jesus beyond all monetary value, beyond all honors and ecclesiastical preferments, above all sin, above all apostasy will inherit the kingdom of heaven. ✠

Would we sell our Lord by continuing in sinful pleasure, by conforming to the world, by acts of discourteousness and by self-justification?

been horribly mangled, and dogs were now devouring it. His remains were immediately buried out of sight; but there was less mockery among the throng, and many a pale face revealed the thoughts within. Retribution seemed already visiting those who were guilty of the blood of Jesus." Ibid., 722.

What Is Your Price?

The question comes pointedly to us today, For how much would *we* sell our Savior? We must not quickly dismiss this question. It is one that we should ponder, and ponder very carefully. Would you sell Him for a miserable five dollars? Some would! Inflating expense reports by denominational workers, by small sums of money, is not uncommon. Such must not believe that there is a judgment. Can you imagine selling your Lord for a few extra dollars?

Others would sell Him for larger amounts of money. In one

money from the work of God. One was a hospital treasurer in Thailand. The other four were working in Malaysia. One was the mission secretary-treasurer. Another was an ordained pastor. A third was an ordained elder, and the fourth was an ordained deacon. Again, I ask the question, "For how much would you sell your Lord?"

Yet, there are matters other than financial opportunities for which many would sell our Lord.

"Men may deny Christ by evilspeaking, by foolish talking, by words that are untruthful or unkind. They may deny Him by shunning life's burdens, by the pursuit of sinful pleasure. They may deny Him by conforming to the world, by discourteous behavior, by the love of their own opinions, by justifying self, by cherishing doubt, borrowing trouble, and dwelling in darkness. In all these ways they



The Approach of Elijah

Elvin Easton

Do you realize the possibility and necessity of experiencing the life of Christ in your family and in your daily life? Are you awake to the times in which we live? If ever there was a time for families to press together, it is now. The family unit, as God created it, plays a much more significant role in prophetic events than many of us realize. If we fail to recognize the exalted purpose God has given to the family unit, we shall place an insignificant value upon it and fail in identifying our own role in this life.

Those with even a minimal knowledge of the Bible can see that the horrible tragedies and crimes of recent weeks and months are clear indicators that the end of all things on earth is near. Wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, deceptions, and a general indifference among the people of the world at large all tell of the impending fate of a world without God as their leader. See Matthew 24:5-7, 12.

A more subtle yet greater indicator of what is soon to happen in this world is the calculated, open attack upon the two institutions founded by God in the Garden of Eden—marriage and the seventh-day Sabbath: “These were carried by man beyond the gates of paradise. He who loves and observes the Sabbath, and maintains the purity of the marriage institution, thereby proves himself the friend of man and the friend of God. He who by precept or example lessens the ob-

ligation of these sacred institutions is the enemy of both God and man, and is using his influence and his God-given talents to bring in a state of confusion and moral corruption.” *Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1884.

These two institutions are so very important to man that God put a hedge about them both in the law written with His own finger upon Mt. Sinai. Even the pagan and the irreligious recognize the institution of marriage and the attack set upon it. Until recent years, the family was understood by layman and leader alike to be the very foundational stone of every society, and any society that failed to properly guard this institution inevitably was led to corruption and near ruin.

A potent example is what happened to France during the Reign of Terror after she belittled the commandments and set up reason as her God. The family structure was the first in her society to go. Adultery and fornication were the norm. No one was safe after that; and eventually her priests and nobles were subjected to slaughter and death.

Now, at the very twilight of earth’s history, what of God’s law and the family? Are we headed in the same direction as France went? Who even among professed Christian institutions is willing to “raise up the foundations of many generations”? Isaiah 58:12. Where are the families who will present to the world the power of God through a loving, godly relation-

ship between husband and wife, parents and children? Where are the pure and innocent children who know right from wrong and are willing to shun all evil, even under immense social pressure?

There are several movements in the United States to place the Ten Commandments in prominent public places, especially government buildings and courthouses. There is nothing wrong with our government recognizing we are under a Sovereign Power; however, is this really what is needed to save our moral foundation in America?—Reason and history would tell us, No. Plaques are not sufficient.

“If religion is to influence society, it must first influence the home circle. If children were trained to love and fear God at home, when they go forth into the world they would be prepared to train their own families for God, and thus the principles of truth would become implanted in society, and would exert a telling influence in the world.” *Review and Herald*, May 4, 1886.

God has told us precisely what would be the ultimate demonstration of His glory on earth just before the end of all things: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet *before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD*: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” Malachi 4:5-6. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.) God wants to work out all

the difficulties in your family circle if you are willing to conform your lives to all the will of God.

If Elijah has not come yet, then when is he to come? Do you feel the call of God upon your heart to fix the void in your family? Then you are experiencing the work of Elijah. Are you concerned that your children or family members do not have characters that could stand in the presence of a holy God? Then your heart is being “turned” by the working of the Holy Spirit Himself.

God has specially designated the families that are operating under His divine guidance and following all His counsels to be the final models of the Kingdom of God

in the final battle to uphold all of God’s commandments when the world despises one or more of its eternal precepts?

Has the impending conflict distracted us from our God-given duties? Fathers, mothers, have the cares of this life distracted you from your high calling of preparing your children for time and eternity? Even parents who are involved in the greatest missionary endeavors are not excused from their God-given trust.

“Parents who have neglected their God-given responsibilities must meet that neglect in the judgment. The Lord will then inquire, ‘Where are the children that I gave you to train for Me? Why are they

... Millions upon millions have never so much as heard of God or of His love revealed in Christ. It is their right to receive this knowledge. They have an equal claim with us in the Saviour’s mercy. And it rests with us who have received the knowledge, with our children to whom we may impart it, to answer their cry.” *Education*, 262–263.

God has designed that families are to play a great role in showing to the world, by example, what man can and must accomplish through the grace of Christ.

“‘The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly.’ Zephaniah 1:14.

There is a world to be warned: “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come—the end of suffering and sorrow and sin! How soon, in place of a possession here, with its blight of sin and pain, our children might receive their inheritance where ‘the righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever;’ where ‘the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick,’ and ‘the voice of weeping shall be no more heard.’ Psalm 37:29; Isaiah 33:24; 65:19.” *Ibid.*, 270–271.

If not now, when? If not us, who? Parents, please consider the direction this world is headed and ask yourself, “Is my family headed down the broad road or are we climbing the narrow way?” Resolve today to take a stand for Christ in your family, by representing Him in all that you do and say among them. Pour out Christlike love upon them and tell them that you want to see them ready when Jesus comes and that God wants to use them now to prepare the world for that great and dreadful day. ❀

Elvin Easton writes from Rapidan, Virginia, where he serves in the World Mission Department at Hartland Institute.

Do you feel the call of God upon your heart to fix the void in your family? Then you are experiencing the work of Elijah.

on earth just before the end of all things so that the world will not be left without a clear witness.

The restoration of the family unit to the model that God intended it to be must happen now, in a time period when men’s hearts have become the darkest and the love of many has already waxed cold—as Jesus told us it would. See Matthew 24:12. The handful of families for Christ will have to press together and work in harmony with one another in a time when everything that could go wrong in the world and in the families of the world will be going wrong. We stand now on our tiptoes on the very precipice of time. Where are the families to represent Christ? Where are the children who will demonstrate the principles of the kingdom of heaven? See Matthew 19:14. Can your family as a whole stand up and be counted on the side of Christ

not at My right hand?” Many parents will then see that unwise love blinded their eyes to their children’s faults and left those children to develop deformed characters unfit for heaven. Others will see that they did not give their children time and attention, love and tenderness; their own neglect of duty made the children what they are.

“Parents, if you lose your opportunity, God pity you; for in the day of judgment God will say, ‘What have you done with My flock, My beautiful flock?’ . . .

“Suppose you should get to heaven and none of your children be there. How could you say to God, ‘Here am I, Lord, and the children which Thou hast given me?’” *Child Guidance*, 561.

“God’s purpose for the children growing up beside our hearths is wider, deeper, higher, than our restricted vision has comprehended.



The Fearful and the Unbelieving

Patricia Temple

is the old legalist message; I believe that all we need is Jesus!"

"God will protect His people—He will not let them be persecuted or face a death decree."

Note this solemn warning: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers,

and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21:8.

God's Word says the fearful will perish. It is very important that we understand why, and what we can do about heeding this warning.

A Covering in the Sealing Time

More than 150 years ago, instruction was given to us by our Savior through the pen of inspiration:

"Satan is now using every device in this sealing time to keep the minds of God's people from the present truth and to cause them to waver. I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty." *Early Writings*, 43.

Are we in the sealing time?—Most assuredly! In fact, we are in the very last moments of the sealing time. Never before in earth's history has Satan used so many devices to

distract and dull the mind, keep us busy, keep us from present truth, and thus destroy our spirituality.

"I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble." Now is that not the answer to our worries about how a God of love can allow His people to be persecuted? However, notice that not everyone will receive this covering. We will receive it only under one condition. "Every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart" will be covered. The only way to acquire this covering is to spend much time studying the Scriptures and inspired writings for ourselves so that we can become settled and solid on truth, and grasp the mighty power available for us to become "pure in heart."

A False Covering

There are many pastors and leaders today who will tell you that the church—the official denominational organization—is the ark of safety for us in these last days. Friends, this is a lie. No organization can be our ark of safety. The only ark of safety is the "covering" of the Almighty God, and only those who are "decided on the truth and . . . pure in heart" will be covered. This is an individual matter, between you and God!

"Satan knew this, and he was at work in mighty power to keep the minds of as many people as he possibly could wavering and unsettled on the truth. I saw that the mysterious knocking in New York and other places was the power of Satan, and that such things would be more and more common, clothed

"There is an indomitableness about true Christian character which cannot be molded or subdued by adverse circumstances. Men must have moral backbone, an integrity which cannot be flattered, bribed, or terrified." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 297. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

I am going to ask you an important question: Does the above paragraph describe you? Does it tell of what you are becoming through the grace of God, as day-by-day you become more and more dead to self and alive to the Lord? Or do these following sentences more accurately portray your real self, and the thoughts you dwell on?

"Oh, I don't want to talk about the 'time of trouble'; it makes me feel afraid."

"I don't see why a loving God would allow His people to go through persecution like that."

"I don't want to hear about apostasy and problems in the church; I just want articles and sermons about the 'love of Jesus.'"

"All that stuff about the mark of the beast and the seven last plagues

in a religious garb so as to lull the deceived to greater security and to draw the minds of God's people, if possible, to those things and cause them to doubt the teachings and power of the Holy Ghost." Ibid.

Satan sows doubts, distractions, higher criticism of the Scriptures, insinuations and wicked lies about the material that the Lord has provided for us to use to become settled and solid on truth. In addition, he bombards us with current events so startling and confusing that we become disconnected from our Power Source.

Clothed in a religious garb, Satan has brought his deceptions into the church "to lull the deceived to greater security." Security! That is just what fear-

"And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, *then ye shall be trodden down by it.*" Verse 18.

No matter how earnestly they believe the lies, no matter if they stand in perfect unity with their lying teachers under their cover of lies—they will perish! They will find out too late what they could have known if they had only taken the time and made the effort to seek and find out for themselves.

The Comforter

"In rejecting Christ, the Pharisees placed themselves where darkness and superstition closed around them, until, continually increasing

your soul and you resist Him and believe that He is the devil—*how can God reach you?* If you receive warning messages from those "sighing and crying" about the wickedness among God's people, urging all to repent, and you accuse them of being "troublers of Israel," *how can God warn you?*

There are some among us who are denying the existence of the Third Person of the Godhead.

This is a serious error, because it is through the Holy Spirit that we are saved and made ready to stand. He is really what the "covering" is all about. Is He not called the "Comforter"? So, if we leave Him out, we throw away the only means available to be sealed and saved.

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." John 16:8–11.

Pointing out people's sins, making them feel very insecure with their own righteousness, showing them the true standard, warning them that time is running out and their destinies will soon be sealed forever—all of this is a vital part of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, what do you do when you feel this terrible dread of being lost? When you shudder at anything that warns you of Christ's coming and the close of probation? What do you do when sins cling to your soul like cockleburs, and loom like mountains before your eyes and you loathe yourself?

Instead of running to see some sympathetic pastor, friend, or counselor who will comfort you with false coverings, fall on your knees and cry to the Lord, repent, surrender all, plead until you find the answer. Then take the Word of God and let Him begin to personally teach you the truth.

There is a type of darkness and discouragement that Satan brings upon us which usually centers

Through false teachings of peace and safety, Satan will make the unready feel so secure that they will make no attempt to get what they need to really be secure.

ful people are crying for. Through false teachings of peace and safety, Satan will make the unready feel so secure that they will make no attempt to get what they need to really be secure.

"Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, *it shall not come unto us*: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." Isaiah 28:15.

They *think* they have a covering, but what is their covering?—Lies and falsehood! Because they do not take the time and effort to read the inspired writings and make sure it is the truth they are being taught, they are deceived. Let us read what the Bible says about the end of these people:

in hatred and unbelief, they were ready to imbrue their hands in blood to accomplish their unholy ends, and would even take the life of one [Lazarus] whom Infinite Power had rescued from the grave. *They placed themselves where no power, human or divine, could reach them; they sinned against the Holy Spirit, and God had no reserve power to meet their case.* Their rebellion against Christ was settled and determined; He was a stumbling-block and a rock of offense to them; they would not have this man Jesus to reign over them." *The Signs of the Times*, October 9, 1879.

When the Jews had made up their minds that what Jesus was telling them was from the devil, then Jesus could do no more for them. Now, if the Holy Spirit is showing you that you are *not* in a saved condition, if He is "putting the fear of God" into

around the idea, "It is no use praying to God, you might as well give up!" This way, he sows doubt and discouragement, and tries to keep you from seeking the Lord. Yet, the fear and dread that the Holy Spirit brings to the soul always has hope connected with it. It urges us to fall before the One altogether gracious and let Him cleanse and heal us with His blood and cover us with His own life. It leads us to realize that there is no good thing in us at all. Those who yield to this deepening conviction will truly die to self and the flesh and will be born again to Christ and the Spirit.

Jesus and the Holy Spirit are engaged in one task—getting rid of sin forever. The Holy Spirit lays conviction hard and heavy upon us, because He wants us to seek the remedy while it is still available. Then, when you respond, He leads, teaches, and comforts as tenderly as a parent does with a repentant child. As Sister White states, "It is easy living after we are dead." *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 131.

The Deceptions of Satan

"I saw that Satan was working through agents in a number of ways. He was at work through ministers who have rejected the truth and are given over to strong delusions to believe a lie that they might be damned. While they were preaching or praying, some would fall prostrate and helpless, not by the power of the Holy Ghost, but by the power of Satan breathed upon these agents, and through them to the people. *While preaching, praying, or conversing, some professed Adventists who had rejected present truth used mesmerism to gain adherents*, and the people would rejoice in this influence, for they thought it was the Holy Ghost. Some even that used it were so far in the darkness and deception of the devil that they thought it was the power of God, given them to exercise. They had made God altogether such a one as themselves and had valued His

power as a thing of nought." *Early Writings*, 43–44.

"I saw that the mysterious signs and wonders, and false reformations would increase, and spread. The reformations that were shown me were not reformations from error to truth, but from bad to worse; for those who professed a change of heart had only wrapped about them a religious garb which covered

did this devilish work would be so deceived that they would really believe it to be the power of God when it is entirely satanic! How did they get so deceived?—By rejecting Present Truth.

"They had made God altogether such an one as themselves; and had valued His power as a thing of nought." These ministers will always exalt themselves, their col-

"The reformations that were shown me were not reformations from error to truth, but from bad to worse; for those who professed a change of heart had only wrapped about them a religious garb which covered up the iniquity of a wicked heart."

up the iniquity of a wicked heart. Some appeared to have been really converted, so as to deceive God's people; but if their hearts could be seen, they would appear as black as ever." *Review and Herald*, August 1, 1849.

You can be very zealous and enthusiastic when you have a strong delusion—so much so, that many will be deceived by your godliness. Anyone is a lost soul who will excuse sin or find some theory that tells him he is saved while he still follows the promptings of his carnal heart.

Notice that there is often supernatural power with these ministers—a force that causes people to have wonderful feelings, even collapsing to the floor in euphoria. "Satan breathed upon these agents, and through them to the people." It warns that these are ministers who have rejected "present truth" and use mesmerism (hypnosis and/or NLP) to influence people!

"The people would rejoice in this influence, for they thought it was the Holy Ghost." Those who

leagues and their organizations, and downplay, either openly or subtly the Spirit of Prophecy and the Bible. Whether they are aware of it or not, they are agents of Satan, and evil angels accompany them when they stand before the people and visit homes or when people visit them in their offices. Satan's agents work through them to deceive and draw away minds from God's truth.

Please, for your soul's sake, if you discern any one of these warning signs, do not push that conviction aside. The Holy Spirit's voice is a gentle voice. He will not knock you down and yell in your ear, but if you keep pushing away every warning He sends you, the time will come when He will leave you forever.

Trembling Knees, Sliding Feet

Now, reading further in *Early Writings*, page 44, we see a striking description of most Seventh-day Adventists today: "I saw some who were not standing stiffly for present truth. Their knees were

trembling, and their feet sliding, because they were not firmly planted on the truth, and the covering of Almighty God could not be drawn over them while they were thus trembling.”

They are fearful, trembling, slipping and sliding from one man’s opinion to another. They have nothing to anchor them, nothing to give them real security. They stay hidden behind pastors, organizations, entertainment, excuses, busyness, education, appetite, indulgence—anything that can give momentary relief from the terrible dread of the future. Meanwhile, the Holy

ter from the burning wrath of God, in the seven last plagues.” Ibid.

It is much scarier to *not* stand for God’s truth than to stand for Him. The whole world may oppose you, but under His wings you are safe. Even if man strips you of your belongings, imprisons you, or even kills you, you will be safe—safe in the arms of Jesus. Even Satan trembles before the weakest saint on his knees! A child who trusts completely in Jesus can stand against the entire host of darkness.

Friends, stop running from truth, stop pushing away the convictions of the Holy Spirit and

the power of the Holy Spirit will change your life.

Emmanuel—Our God Is With Us

“The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out, and left by the way. The careless and indifferent who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to agonize, persevere, and plead for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their numbers were immediately made up by others taking hold of the truth, and coming into the ranks. *Still the evil angels pressed around them, but they could have no power over them.*” *Review and Herald*, December 31, 1857. See also *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 182; *Early Writings*, 271.

Evil angels had no power over them, just like Satan had nothing in Jesus. “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” John 14:30.

Friends, quit hanging onto anything that would allow Satan to keep a hold on you! If he has even a thread on you, you will perish with him. Do not believe that you can go on sinning, ask forgiveness, hop into bed, and then wake up the next day and sin some more—what will you do when Jesus is not forgiving any more? What will you do when intercession has ceased, and the King comes to see His guests? Let not the cry be heard: “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” Jeremiah 8:20.

Friends, all the powers of heaven are available for us today; and we can, by the power of Jesus, crucify self and allow Him to live His life in us. It can be done in our hearts, now, if we will only let Him do it in us. He will send us the Comforter who will place His covering over us. Satan’s evil host will have no power over us then, because God will be with us, and nothing will stand against us. See Romans 8:31. ✨

Even Satan trembles before the weakest saint on his knees! A child who trusts completely in Jesus can stand against the entire host of darkness.

Spirit is doing His best to impress upon their hearts that they must wake up and seek the only True Shelter—before it is forever too late! God cannot cover them with His Comforter—because they are not planted on truth, nor are they standing stiffly for it!

If you have ever taken a stand for truth against a new theology advocate and as a result have been subjected to ridicule, mocked, and derided before the whole congregation you will know what “stiffly” means. Sometimes it is not the most comfortable place, but when God is with you, you can stand. Like Luther, you will say, “Here I stand, and I can do no other! God help me!”

Under the Shelter of Christ

“Satan was trying his every art to hold them where they were, until the sealing was past, until the covering was drawn over God’s people, and they [were] left without a shel-

calling them of the devil. Seek the Lord while there is still time to find Him!

“God has begun to draw this covering over His people, and it will soon be drawn over all who are to have a shelter in the day of slaughter. God will work in power for His people; and Satan will be permitted to work also.” Ibid.

Stop listening to the lying words of those who promise you a false comforter—a covenant with death, which will fail you when you most need it! In God’s shelter we can stand—no matter what comes against us. Even the weakest saints can stand—not in our strength, but in the Power of our Creator!

“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” Jeremiah 6:16.

Once you are truly born again, you will hate sin with the same intensity that you once loved it, and



A Church Asleep

Ron Spear

I saw one standing on a high platform with arms extended. He turned and pointed in every direction, saying, 'A world perishing in ignorance of God's holy law, and Seventh-day Adventists are asleep.'" *Evangelism*, 32.

Really? In the midst of all our activity? Could the Lord's assessment be so severe?—"It is a solemn and terrible truth that many who have been zealous in proclaiming the third angel's message are now becoming listless and indifferent! The line of demarcation between worldlings and many professed Christians is almost indistinguishable. Many who once were earnest Adventists are conforming to the world—to its practices, its customs, its selfishness. Instead of leading the world to render obedience to God's law, the church is uniting more and more closely with the world in transgression. Daily the church is becoming converted to the world. How many professing Christians are slaves of mammon! Their indulgence of appetite, their extravagant expenditure of money for selfish gratification, greatly dishonors God.

"And through lack of zeal for the promulgation of the third angel's

message, many others, while not apparently living in transgression, are nevertheless as verily lending their influence on the side of Satan as are those who openly sin against God. Multitudes are perishing; but how few are burdened for these souls! There is a stupor, a paralysis, upon many of the people of God, which prevents them from understanding the duty of the hour." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 118–119.

"I have been shown that the spirit of the world is fast leavening the church. You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. There is the same falling away from your holy calling as God's peculiar people. You are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Your concord with unbelievers has provoked the Lord's displeasure. You know not the things that belong to your peace, and they are fast being hid from your eyes. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe." *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 75–76.

And in *ibid.*, vol. 1, 129, we read this startling inspired statement of our spiritual condition:

"I saw that many who profess to believe the truth for these last days

think it strange that the children of Israel murmured as they journeyed; that after the wonderful dealings of God with them, they should be so ungrateful as to forget what He had done for them. Said the angel: 'Ye have done worse than they.'"

We should ask the question, How could the church have gotten into such spiritual apostasy?—God again answers by Inspiration:

"In the rejection of the ways of God for the ways of men, the downfall of Israel began. Thus also it continued, until the Jewish people became a prey to the very nations whose practices they had chosen to follow." *Education*, 50.

"The sin of ancient Israel was in disregarding the expressed will of God and following their own way according to the leadings of unsanctified hearts. Modern Israel are fast following in their footsteps, and the displeasure of the Lord is as surely resting upon them." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 94.

And so, we see clearly now from God's last-day prophet, that we have followed the example of the ancient church in apostasy. We have done worse than they because we have gone on in opposition not only to the light available to them

in their day, but also in opposition to the specific instruction of the *Spirit of Prophecy*. Nineteen times in *Testimonies*, vol. 5, we are told that we are repeating Israel's sordid history.¹

Ellen White tells us in the same volume, page 680, that to disregard the *Testimonies* is to reject them, and to reject them is to reject God and the Holy Spirit, which will lead to the sin that cannot be forgiven. Dear ones, we must see the seriousness of what we are dealing with.

As we study the history of ancient Israel, the tragedy of the past is clearly exposed.

"And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his

my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt." Ezekiel 20:8.

The Responsibility of Leadership

The children of Israel went into captivity because of their rebellion against the Almighty God, and who was mostly responsible?

"For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed." Isaiah 9:16.

"The watchmen are responsible for the condition of the people. While you open the door to pride, envy, doubt, and other sins, there will be strife, hatred, and every evil work. Jesus, the meek and lowly One, asks an entrance as your guest; but you are afraid to bid Him enter. He has spoken to us in both the Old and the New Testament; He is speaking to us still by His Spirit and His providences. His

for God's cause than to have unconsecrated men in positions of sacred trust.

Today, as always, there is a danger that God's children may follow unsafe leaders. It is the responsibility of all to consider well the path which they are encouraged to walk. Any leader who downplays the importance of the Spirit of Prophecy, who preaches a "gospel" which finds a way to tolerate sin in the life, or who shows disregard or disrespect for the historic doctrines and standards given to us as a people—any such man is not a safe leader to follow.

Will We Repent?

Will the Seventh-day Adventist Church repent of her backsliding; will she now see her mistake of following her own way instead of the way that God has outlined so carefully in the gift of prophecy?—Let us look carefully at this inspired statement:

"Unless the church, which is now being leavened with her own backsliding, shall repent and be converted, she will eat of the fruit of her own doing, until she shall abhor herself. When she resists the evil and chooses the good, when she seeks God with all humility and reaches her high calling in Christ, standing on the platform of eternal truth and by faith laying hold upon the attainments prepared for her, she will be healed. She will appear in her God-given simplicity and purity, separate from earthly entanglements, showing that the truth has made her free indeed. Then her members will indeed be the chosen of God, His representatives.

"The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife. Those who have not been living in Christian fellowship will draw close to one another. One member working in right lines will

Today, as always, there is a danger that God's children may follow unsafe leaders.

words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy." 2 Chronicles 36:15–16.

"That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us smooth things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits." Isaiah 30:9–10.

"But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish

instructions are designed to make men true to God and true to themselves." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 235.

"A nation's sin and a nation's ruin were due to the religious leaders." *The Desire of Ages*, 738.

Now it should be borne in mind that leaders are a part of God's plan. Even among the angels who have never fallen, there are leaders. Moses was appointed the leader of Israel, and the Lord defended him against the attacks of those who refused to recognize that leadership. The point of these verses is not that leadership is wrong, but that at times leaders have been wrong. As any student of the Bible well knows, nothing is more disastrous

lead other members to unite with him in making intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit. There will be no confusion, because all will be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit. The barriers separating believer from believer will be broken down, and God's servants will speak the same things. The Lord will cooperate with His servants. All will pray understandingly the prayer that Christ taught His servants: 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' Matthew 6: 10." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 250–251.

The church is asleep, asleep in carnal security. We are no more ready for the Second Coming than the church was for the First Coming. Where are the watchmen that should be blowing the trumpet in Zion? Where are the men that weep between the porch and the altar for sin committed in the church and the world?

"Gather together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger come upon you. Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger." Zephaniah 2:1–3.

May God help us now to confess our rebellion, that we will not follow in the ways of the ancient church any longer.

Our Only Hope

There is hope for Israel, hope for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but only through repentance, confession, and reformation.

"The Lord Jesus will always have a chosen people to serve Him. When the Jewish people rejected Christ, the Prince of life, He took from them the kingdom of God and gave it unto the Gentiles. God will continue to work on this principle with every branch of His work. When a church proves unfaithful

to the work of the Lord, whatever their position may be, however high and sacred their calling, the Lord can no longer work with them. Others are then chosen to bear important responsibilities. But, if these in turn do not purify their lives from every wrong action, if they do not establish pure and holy principles in all their borders, then the Lord will grievously afflict and humble them and, unless they repent, will remove them from their place and make them a reproach." *The Upward Look*, 131.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church will go through to the end; there will not be another. God will purify this one. All the rebels will join the ranks of the foe and tribes will

it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart." Jeremiah 3:15–17.

Now is the time above any other time in the world's history that the Lord's faithful and loyal need to arouse and go to work.

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all

There is hope for Israel, hope for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but only through repentance, confession, and reformation.

come from the world to take their place. In the shaking that is to come, all false-hearted leaders, pastors, and laity will abandon the church. So many will leave that it may well destroy the visible structure of the denomination as we know it today, but true Seventh-day Adventists will continue to uphold the Lord's truth under any circumstances.²

These facts are no reason to draw back now. Let us take heart and trust in this precious promise from the Lord:

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember

the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:3–9.

It is my earnest prayer that we may awake before it is eternally too late. ❀

Notes:

¹ See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 72, 75, 76, 77, 84, 94, 99, 160, 217, 226, 258, 297, 456, 535, 601, 689, 690, 710, 728.

² See *The Great Controversy*, 608; *Testimonies*, vol. 1 608–609; vol. 5, 136, 477, 463; vol. 7, 219; vol. 8, 41; vol. 9, 15–16.



The POWER of Music

Part III

H. Lloyd Leno

We have seen how the writings of Ellen White related to the entertainment practices of her day. Now the question "How does this apply to *our* day?" must be answered. As a part of this question we also need to discover whether the music of that era is still objectionable, or if it has become acceptable with age.

Every human being is capable of adapting to certain stimuli. We can develop a tolerance and become calloused to certain irritations and immune to some diseases. In music, what once seemed rather wild might seem tame compared with some music today. However, the question is not (or should not be) "Can we *tolerate* it now?" but rather, "Is it good now?" It is generally understood that in the entertainment world it is necessary to keep introducing new sensations in order to continue attracting the public. In the pop music industry this policy has resulted in a constant progression from one style and device to another, because success depends

upon the ability to satisfy public demand or, through promotion, create a market for a given product.

The development of jazz evidences this progression. The first jazz, known as Dixieland, moved from the "New Orleans" style to the faster "Chicago" style. Other styles followed: boogie-woogie, and swing (various styles and tempos), were followed by bebop, cool jazz, rhythm and blues, and funky. By the 1950s jazz had become intellectualized so that it was losing its primitive appeal among the young. The emphasis on dancing was diminishing, and the whole pop music scene was a sweet, sentimental, make-believe world. The subject of most of the songs was moonlight, star dust, roses, and lonely hearts, and the performers were mostly over age 30. The entire industry was controlled by middle-aged businessmen.¹

The teenagers were experiencing a social and economic climate that prepared them for revolt. They had money and no worries, but

as a group they had no identity. Delinquency became fashionable. Business became aware of the tremendous market for products to which a teen label could be attached. The record industry struck gold when they discovered the first record hit that had a unifying effect on the teen population.

Basically, rock was a mixture of Negro rhythm and blues and country-western. "What was new about it was its aggression, its sexuality, its sheer noise; and most of this came from its beat. . . . Electric guitars . . . had been around for years . . . but they had never before been used as bedrock, as the basis of a whole music. Crude, powerful, infinitely loud, they came on like space-age musical monsters and, immediately, wiped out all politeness that had gone before."²

Except for a few bawdy songs sung in the back rooms, most songs of the early 50s were only mildly suggestive and avoided open references to carnal desire; but with the new emphasis on the heavy beat,

both words and music filled a need for those who wished to express their feelings and attitudes more frankly and physically. Again, a new form of music needed an appropriate title. It was supplied by a flamboyant disk jockey, Allan Freed, who christened the new music "rock and roll" — an expression for sexual intercourse he had picked up from the ghetto.³

Meaning of Rock and Roll

The Blue Cross report referred to in part two of this series analyzes the meaning of rock and roll: "Taken as a whole, the new music embodies two messages: Come, swing with me. The crooning invitation to romance, which was the mainstay of popular music during the 30s and 40s and the essence of rock and roll in the 50s, has become a more direct invitation to dance the dance of life. This invitation — expressed in so many songs by the shout 'c'mon' — is sometimes aimed specifically at a possible sex partner and is a thinly disguised proposition. . . . Many parents and others are concerned that the music may be too suggestive, downright sexually arousing for young people listening and dancing to the sounds and lyrics. Many who are real believers in the new music would rather not defend themselves against such positions, for it is their feeling the notes and words are accurate presentations of attitudes and emotions. As for those who claim that music replaces intimate sexual relations by providing mass scenes of rhythmic orgasms, they respond, 'Look again . . . and while you're at it, look at your own generation's music and the inhibitions it covered up.'"⁴

Many people, including psychiatrists and sociologists, recognize the sensual implication or influence of the rhythm of rock music, even though they are unconcerned about the moral values involved: "Most sociologists, who take this sort of thing seriously, agree that the sen-

suality of rock 'n' roll is 'safe sex.' . . . 'These dances,' says Harvard psychiatrist Philip Solomon, 'are outlets for restlessness, for unexpressed and sublimated sex desires. This is quite healthy.'"⁵

Many people, including psychiatrists and sociologists, recognize the sensual implication or influence of the rhythm of rock music, even though they are unconcerned about the moral values involved.

Dr. Matterson, head of the Adolescent Out-Patient Clinic at Payne-Whitney Psychiatric Clinic, says: "The music is not only a physical outlet, but also, in a way, a kind of sexual expression. The beat has genuine sexual implications, and affords one means to work out their feelings."⁶

Time comments: "The highly sensual implications of big-beat dancing have some psychiatrists worried. Says one: 'It's sick sex turned into a spectator sport.'"⁷

How does this music affect young people? One young man explained how rock music influenced him in his early and mid-teens: "It's completely riotous and uninhibited and you can't help but let yourself go. Just a 'rock out' so to speak. . . . Sometimes I would dance in front of a mirror and work out all kinds of contortions and movements. I found myself getting deep into the music."⁸

Frank Garlock, chairman of the music theory department of Bob Jones University and director of brass ensembles, has lectured extensively in schools and clubs. He relates: "A young man who was noted for his many 'conquests' of teen-age girls told me that he found the best way 'to get the chicks turned on is to make love to the rhythm of rock 'n' roll. Any girl will go all the way under the right circumstances.'"⁹

A teenage girl speaking of the Stones says: "Their appeal . . . is sex — but don't print that; my mother would hit me."¹⁰

How do entertainers themselves regard their role? Morrison

(The Doors): "Think of us as erotic politicians."¹¹ Marty Balin (Jefferson Airplane): "We're not entertaining, we are making love."¹² Jagger (Rolling Stones): "You can feel the adrenaline going through your body. It's sort of sexual."¹³ Arthur Brown: "All soul music is sex."¹⁴ Zappa (Mothers of Invention): "To deny rock was to deny sexuality."¹⁵

Bob Larson's career as a rock musician gave him an unusual firsthand experience in observing the effects of rock music. His experiences led him to investigate possible physiological explanations for the behavior patterns he observed in young people. In his book, *The Day Music Died*, Mr. Larson says, "It is not difficult to see why these [rock 'n' roll] dances involve such erotic movements." His personal observation combined with medical counsel led him to conclude that the hysterical, indecent behavior that some girls exhibit is a result of their "undergoing a sexually climatic condition."¹⁶

Because the mind can subconsciously be affected by music, we can easily recognize its potential for controlling the mind. Gitler observed what psychologists have shown through investigation, that rhythm is a prime factor: "Rock has a pervasive beat, and the audience responds to it on a primal level."¹⁷ John Philips of The Mamas and the Papas found through observation and experimentation that riot and hysteria can be created "by carefully controlling the sequence of rhythms. . . . We know how to do it. . . . Anyone knows how to do it."¹⁸

Frank Zappa, one of the best-educated rock musicians, stated: "The ways in which sound affects the human organisms are myriad and subtle. The loud sounds and bright lights of today are tremendous indoctrination tools. . . . If the right kind of beat makes you tap your foot, what kind of beat makes you curl your fist and strike?"¹⁹

Time observed: "In a sense, all rock is revolutionary. By its very beat and sound, it has always implicitly rejected restraints and celebrated freedom and sexuality."²⁰

Rock Music and Mind Control

In his latest book, Bob Larson documents numerous examples of the use of rock music which, through its qualities of sound as well as its lyrics, is used to further the spirit of anarchy and revolution in America.²¹

One group, Country Joe and the Fish, are known to have assisted the Black Panthers and the SDS [Students for a Democratic Society]. A performance of the Detroit quintet called MC5 was

to music is basic, and its message, particularly in the popular music field, is understood universally. What happens to a person who has responded to jazz (including the milder forms of swing), soul, or rock in their natural setting, when he hears the *same basic beat and style* in a religious setting, complete with religious words? (For sake of discussion, let us assume that the words are scriptural.) How does the mind react to this mixture of good and evil?

In true-false examinations we are instructed to mark "false" any statement that is partially false. Can we afford to treat temptation with less caution? Ellen White tells us that this was the very technique

country-western, soft rock, and folk rock. Some attempt to disguise or rationalize their style under the guise of being a "folk group." It is quite obvious that these groups are using models whose goals are not compatible with Christian principles.

No Compromise

When Rick Shorter, former director of the Broadway show "Hair," became a Seventh-day Adventist Christian, he faced this problem of compromise, squarely and honestly. A professional vocalist and guitarist, Rick stated: "At first I thought I could rehash some old rock and soul songs and make them into gospel music. But now I realize there can be no compromise with the world—its music, its entertainment, or its philosophies."²⁵

As he reflected on his former life, which included acquaintances such as Janis Joplin, Jimmy Hendrix, and Jim Morrison, he uttered this warning: "There's absolutely nothing to that kind of life. I just wish I could get that message across to the kids whose heads are into Rock. They see the surface glitter, not the emptiness inside."²⁶

The mixture of dance rhythms and gospel music of today is not new; in fact it appeared in 1900, during one of the Seventh-day Adventist camp meetings. In September of that year Elder and Mrs. S. N. Haskell were sent by the General Conference to assist at the camp meeting held at Muncie, Indiana. Apparently a fanatical movement was attempting to dominate the meetings. Although the Haskells had witnessed similar manifestations before, that which they witnessed at Muncie was even more serious. Mrs. Haskell wrote to Sara McEnterfer and described not only the meeting in general, but also gave a helpful description of the music used: "We have a big drum, two tambourines, a big bass fiddle, two small fiddles, a flute and two cornets, and an organ, and

Accepting the good-evil mixture or constantly operating close to the borderline is a compromise, and nowhere is this fact more evident than in the field of religious music.

described by their original manager, John Sinclair: "The MC5 are a free, high-energy source that will drive us wild into the streets of America."²² The UP, who assist the White Panthers, were described by one rock magazine: "In the age of revolution, the UP are one of the finest examples of the battle's potent form: rock and roll music."²³

Jerry Ruin sums up the relation between his political ambitions and the Yippie lifestyle. "Our lifestyle—acid, long hair, freaky clothes, pot, rock music, sex—is the revolution. Our very existence mocks America."²⁴

In addition to more direct assaults on the mind which have been discussed, there is one which, because of its extremely subtle disguise, may prove to be even more devastating than all the rest. We have seen that human response

used to cause the fall of man. "By the mingling of evil with good, his mind had become confused." *Education*, 25; see also *Ibid.*, 231.

Accepting the good-evil mixture or constantly operating close to the borderline is a compromise, and nowhere is this fact more evident than in the field of religious music. The mass media has so thoroughly conditioned the masses with a diet of dance rhythm oriented music, that anything else seems bland and dull. The result has been something akin to an obsession among many Seventh-day Adventist gospel music composers and performers to clothe all gospel music with some kind of dance beat. Although some groups are more cautious or "conservative," the standard fare of many groups includes thinly disguised hybrid forms of dance styles such as waltz, swing (fox trot),

a few voices. They have *Garden of Spices* as the songbook and play dance tunes to sacred words."²⁷

Before this, Mrs. White had received a vision in which this entire event was shown her. In her reply to the Haskells she wrote: "The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit." *Selected Messages*, book 2, 36.

To emphasize that she was predicting future developments she also states that which was in the past will be in the future. See *Ibid.*

Older Styles Revived

What has happened to the popular music of the first half of the century? Did it disappear or lose all of its connotations, or did it become "classical" or serious as some have claimed? For a few years after rock first came on the scene it did virtually eclipse everything else; but most forms of jazz did not lose their appeal entirely. In addition to a blend of rock with jazz, today we see a strong comeback for ragtime and swing. To the perceptive Christian, it is not difficult to tell that these forms, while mild compared with rock, have not been transformed into the kind of material that would "uplift the thoughts to high and noble themes, to inspire and elevate the soul." *Education*, 167.

This music is experiencing a revival for two principal reasons. First, its appeal is the same as it was before; and it appeals to the same people. Those who were 15 to 20 years of age in the 1940s are now more than ready to hear "their music" again. Not only is it a relief from the music of their teenage

children, but its swing has the same sedative, sweet-dream effect it had back then. It continues to represent the lifestyle "of the world" of that era. Second, it has become quite fashionable for the youth to accept and encourage some of the older styles as part of their heritage of popular music.

Now, let us take a look at the pop-gospel field. The initial success of this lucrative industry was based largely on the use of the torch song and the swing style of this same era (the 1940s). For many

As we observe this inevitable progression from one style to another in both secular and religious music, surely the one-step-leads-to-another principle should become more and more obvious.

years, this style served the industry well, but after a while it began to move into the rock style, following just a few years behind the secular pop movement. Since a number of Seventh-day Adventist composers and performers had mimicked the industry by embracing the crooning, easy-listening, cocktail-lounge swing-style, it was only natural that some would unashamedly turn to rock and capitalize on the popularity of that sound. The country style, with its pronounced guitar rhythm which also led into rock, was also extensively used in religious music.

As we observe this inevitable progression from one style to another in both secular and religious music, surely the one-step-leads-to-another principle should become more and more obvious. Perhaps it can be compared with moving out into a stream with a strong current; no matter where we enter, we are pulled irresistibly in just one direction, *downstream*. ❀

Notes:

¹ Nik Cohn, *Rock From the Beginning* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970), 1-2.

² *Ibid.*

³ Bob Larson, *Rock and Roll, the Devil's Diversion* (McCook, Nebraska: Bob Larson, 1970), 48.

⁴ J. L. Simmons and Barry Winograd, "Songs of the Hang-Loose Ethic," *Adolescence for Adults*, (Blue Cross Association, 1970), 35-39.

⁵ *Time*, "Rock 'n' Roll: The Sound of the Sixties," May 21, 1965.

⁶ Phyllis Lee Levine, "The Sound of Music?" *New York Times Magazine*, March 14, 1965, 72.

⁷ *Time*, "Rock 'n' Roll."

⁸ David Wilkerson, *Purple Violet Squish* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Books, 1969),

129.

⁹ Frank Garlock, *The Big Beat, A Rock Blast* (Greenville, South Carolina: Bob Jones University Press, 1971), 19.

¹⁰ *Time*, "Rock 'n' Roll."

¹¹ *Newsweek*, "This Way to the Egress," November 6, 1967.

¹² *Time*, "Rock 'n' Roll: Open Up, Tune In, Turn On," June 23, 1967, 53.

¹³ *Newsweek*, "Mick Jagger and the Future of Rock," January 4, 1971.

¹⁴ Bob Larson, *Rock and Roll*, 44.

¹⁵ Frank Zappa, "The Oracle Has It All Psyched Out," *Life*, 1968, 104.

¹⁶ Bob Larson, *The Day Music Died*, (Carol Stream, Illinois: Creation House, 1972), 121.

¹⁷ Ira Gitler, "A Jazz Man Looks at Rock," *Bell*, 1970, 29.

¹⁸ William Kloman, "Just Call Us the Super Group," *Saturday Evening Post*, March 25, 1967.

¹⁹ Frank Zappa, 104.

²⁰ *Time*, "Rock," January 3, 1967.

²¹ Bob Larson.

²² *Time*, "Rock."

²³ Bob Larson.

²⁴ David Wilkerson, 30.

²⁵ Jiggs Gallager, *Insight*, Special Edition.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Ella M. Robinson, *S. N. Haskell, Man of Action* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald, 1967), 168.



Humanity and Divinity:

Seeking At-one-ment

Sarah Matthews Asaftei

Rules. Principles. Balance. Truth. In a society where chaos is the norm, and confusion reigns over the most basic elements of life and identity, it is a challenge to accurately apply biblical injunctions. Our society has blurred the boundaries between truth and error. Young people desiring to learn and think and discover for themselves are easily ensnared by teachings that favor popular opinion instead of seeking truth. Youth can become overwhelmed by the challenge to sort through and digest only what is truth.

In our search for that balance between practical living and personal spirituality, in trying to achieve genuine Christianity while avoiding ethereal pretense, we must rely on the Word of God to define and interpret itself. We must apply common sense as we seek to understand Scripture.

Studying God's laws given in Scripture, we occasionally find divine commands that seem to have little bearing on our lives today. Sometimes these are the most difficult to figure out, yet the most relevant to our lives once they are understood. In this process of defining ancient rules we must prayerfully open ourselves to God, allowing His Spirit to reveal things that may be hard to accept. We

must search for the deeper principle behind the rule instead of assuming that an injunction is irrelevant when it appears to have little influence on modern society. Let us examine one of these texts concerning the Day of Atonement:

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying: Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God." *Leviticus 23:26–28.*

The Day of Atonement was a solemn holiday for ancient Israel. Its tradition became so deeply embedded in Hebrew culture that many modern Jews still observe it.

This holy day was first designated by God to Moses as a nationwide day of fasting and prayer. It is included in a list of several feasts outlined in chapter 23 of Leviticus, but the Day of Atonement was special. More a time of reconciliation and renewal than of celebration, it has retained a deep level of significance throughout the centuries. Most other feasts foreshadowed the coming of the Messiah, and were consequently abolished after His

crucifixion. The Day of Atonement represented the cleansing of the sanctuary, an act of reconciliation between man and God, the achieving of ultimate unity or at-one-ment.

Several sacrifices were offered on the ancient Day of Atonement. In one important ritual, two male goats were brought to the tabernacle; one was proclaimed the Lord's goat, and the other was called the scapegoat. The high priest killed the Lord's goat and sprinkled its blood on the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant. This was the only day of the year that any mortal was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place.

After sprinkling the blood of the Lord's goat, the high priest returned to the tabernacle courtyard to confess the sins of Israel onto the head of the scapegoat. Then this second goat was led into a desolate and unpopulated area of the desert to die. With this ritual, the sins of the entire camp of Israel were symbolically cleansed and washed away.

Just as God prescribed the duties of the high priest in the sanctuary, He also gave specific commands for the rest of the people. Our text gives us four rules they were to follow. They were to

- 1) consider it a day of "holy convocation,"
- 2) "afflict their souls,"

3) make an offering of fire to the Lord, and

4) do no work throughout the entire camp.

To understand these divine injunctions, we ask several questions: Were these commands intended for all of the camp of Israel? What happened if someone chose to defy God's commands? Would the rest of the people be endangered by one's disobedience?

Moses continues, For any person who is not afflicted in soul or who does any work on that same day shall be cut off from his people. See verses 29–30. This statement implies that atonement was applied on an individual basis, not a collective one, leaving each person responsible to reconcile with God and with his fellow man. Since each person answered to God directly, the decisions of one did not reflect on those around him—God is interested in matters of the individual heart.

Our next questions draw us from ancient Israel into the twenty-first century. What significance does the day of atonement hold for us now? Why should we notice these four rules given so long ago? Are there underlying principles to unearth and apply to modern life? Deeper study reveals applications that are significant for us today.

Based on the knowledge that we are living in the anti-typical day of atonement, we can establish a foundation for clear applications to modern Christianity. The ancient Day of Atonement, as expounded by Stephen Haskell in *The Cross and Its Shadow* is a symbol of the time period in which we now live, and this day which Israel was commanded to observe correlates in prophecy to the years preceding the close of probation toward the end of time.

In the book of Hebrews Paul states, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." Hebrews 13:8. We know that God is unchanging. While His rules may adapt to time and circumstance, His

divine principles always remain the same. Our challenge is to uncover the principles beneath the rules, and discover how God intended to affect our environment through it. To accomplish this, we must research the contextual background to determine God's application at His first command.¹

Let us look back at the four injunctions given to Israel and consider their modern relevance.

Rule #1: The day "shall be a holy convocation unto you."

In Israel, this meant the congregation was to gather for religious ceremonies. In Hebrews 10:25, we are told that we should not for-

sake the "assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day [of Christ's return] approaching." Paul instructed the apostolic body to continue meeting together for fellowship, prayer, edification, and praise, a command that clearly carries forward to modern centuries, as Jesus' coming draws closer.

The principle apparently is that the followers of Christ need to stick together and obtain strength and encouragement through fellowship. If a follower of Jesus finds nothing uplifting in time spent with like-minded believers, it can be a sign of low spiritual dedication, or of a struggle within the heart. Applying this principle today, God's Word calls us to regularly seek companionship with other worshippers in a mutual desire to glorify God and praise Him.

Rule #2: "You shall afflict your souls."

During the typical Day of Atonement Israel was commanded to fast, to search their hearts for hidden sin, and to pray earnestly. Since the anti-typical counterpart lasts for many years, it is obvious that we cannot be expected to forego physical nourishment. So there must be another application of the principle underlying this rule.

The Day of Atonement was closely connected with the judgment of the people and the receiving of pardon for wrongdoing. During this time of fasting, the congregation meditated on the

Based on the knowledge that we are living in the anti-typical day of atonement, we can establish a foundation for clear applications to modern Christianity.

work taking place in the sanctuary. This principle holds importance that transcends centuries. Instead of filling our minds with worldly pursuits of pleasure and personal gain, we should be focused on the work Christ is doing for us in the heavenly sanctuary.

Fasting from physical food denotes a sense of self-control over fleshly desires, whether appetite or any other yearning. During this day, the Israelites were to keep their cravings and lusts surrendered to God's will. This, I believe, is a principle that makes the rule very pertinent to us.

"God calls upon His people to be *masters* of their appetites instead of *slaves* to it, that they may have clearer minds to comprehend divine truth and follow the work of their High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary." *The Cross and Its Shadow*, 224. (Emphasis in the original.)

So, we conclude that God desires us to exhibit control over our sinful desires and, with His help, to surrender them under the sway of His will. In this way, we can put the second principle into practice in our own spiritual experience.

Rule #3: “Offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.”

God no longer requires burnt sacrifices from His people, so, at first glance, this rule also seems inappropriate for application to daily modern life. However, the underlying meaning leads us to its symbolism in ancient Israel and how we can implement it today.

First, we note that the burnt offerings differed from all other sacrifices in the ancient tabernacle because they were fully consumed. Fire destroyed the entire offering—leaving nothing to be eaten or used by the priests. When we sur-

part for His service—holding nothing back.

Rule #4: You shall do no work on that same day.

Again, we have a rule which appears inapplicable to our lifestyle. The anti-typical day of atonement is not just the yearly 24-hour period that was required of Israel. It is neither logical nor feasible to assume that God would require us to refrain from work for our whole lives, since to do so would contradict many other Scriptures that command a lifestyle of diligent labor and satisfying service.

Look at the motive for abstaining from labor. Israel was commanded to focus their thoughts on the high priest’s ministry, keeping their minds trained on God’s work of divine judgment and reconciliation. God wanted no distractions—no other appointments—vying for

cares of this life, and so that day [the return of Christ] come upon you unawares.” Luke 21:34.

God is calling us as a people to vindicate His character before the universe. Christ’s life on earth proved that God’s commandments *can be obeyed*. God asserts that it is possible for us to live in obedience. Yet, in order for the universe to believe His claim, we must prove it in our daily lives. This is what God is waiting for! These four principles point to His desire for us to be the generation that verifies His Word! As we live in the anti-typical day of atonement, He desires that we will discover His principles and apply them to ourselves.

Instead of arbitrary, outdated commands, these principles are fresh—they are worthy of our attention. God never intended us to obey immaterial edicts, so He challenges us to delve into these subjects—confusing as they may appear on the surface—to find the spirit implicated in His commands. When we do, we glimpse a new angle of His laws and accordingly, of His character. It is the beauty of Christ’s love shown in the small details that makes divine injunctions worth obeying. It is this joy that helps us joyfully surrender our hearts from the inside out and that makes Christianity contagious. ✨

God asserts that it is possible for us to live in obedience. Yet, in order for the universe to believe His claim, we must prove it in our daily lives. This is what God is waiting for!

render our lives to God we often refer to it as “laying our all upon the altar,” do we not? This text provides another eternal principle of surrender.

“And the very God of peace, sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23. As growing Christians, when we submit to the calling of Jesus and allow our selfishness to be rooted out by His example, we are figuratively placing ourselves on an altar of sacrifice. God longs for our spiritual devotion to be all-consuming; He wants us to allow Him to use every

their concentration. This makes sense. God passionately longs for us to keep Him always before our minds, to practice living daily in His presence in every aspect. He wants us to concentrate on the work of judgment taking place now in heaven—hoping we will reflect on Christ’s intercessory work for us, just as Israel contemplated the mediation of the earthly high priest. While this should not detract from the growth of solid character and personal responsibility, God wants us to concentrate on service to Him first—giving temporal duties second place. Jesus said, “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with . . . [the]

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Note:

¹ Some may confuse my statements with the Historical Critical approach to biblical interpretation. I am not advocating an effort to bend the Bible to make it accommodate modern culture or traditions, nor am I supporting the reduction of biblical truth to a matter of “personal preference.” I am not suggesting that we take God’s Word with skepticism or our own biased adaptations in an effort to make it fit what we want it to say. I am stressing the importance of well-rounded study, of researching the context in which God’s commands were given, to arrive at a greater understanding of the concepts God was endeavoring to communicate to His children both in ancient times and today.



U.S. Tour of Vatican Treasures

News Item: By the time you read this, the Vatican will have concluded a four-city U.S. tour of its art treasures. It included “a full-size reproduction of what is believed to be the tomb of St. Peter,” rings, papal portraits, “a gold-and-diamond snuffbox used by Pope Benedict XV,” and the papal “tiara (or papal triple crown) worn by Pope Pius IX. It is made of gold, pearls, gilt silver, emeralds, enamel and precious stones.” There is also “a 500-page full color catalog” which would seem to indicate a large number of items.

While Jesus was here, His disciples were also very interested in this type of display. That was before they were converted. After their conversion, they rejected any earthly treasure. Then they were ready to receive the Spirit of Jesus. See Acts 3:6-7; 8:18-23. Watch and pray that you do not base your discernment of God’s leading in your life on appearances or material values. If you do, you will be very liable to make the same fatal misjudgments that are being made by the leadership of the above-mentioned organization.

Quotes are taken from the *National Catholic Register*, February 16-22, 2003.

Is the European Union Fulfilling Prophecy?

News Item: “The European Union’s acceptance of 10 new countries in 2004 means the continent ‘has not missed the appointment with history,’ says the Vatican’s semiofficial newspaper.

“Under the front-page headline ‘New Europe Is Born,’ the Dec. 15

edition of *L’Osservatore Romano* commented on the results of the Copenhagen summit that approved the EU expansion for May 1, 2004.

...

“On the eve of the meeting, the Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Community published a document titled ‘Hope, Trust and Solidarity,’ in which they see the enlargement of the EU as the realization ‘of a hope particularly cherished by the Church,’ namely, ‘reconciliation between the East and West of the continent.’” *National Catholic Register*, January 5-11, 2003.

End-Time Perspective: It is not hard to imagine where all of this could lead in light of Revelation 17:12-14.

Volunteering to Be Sued

News Item: In a short article found in *The Saturday Evening Post*, March/April 2003, doctor Fred Leonard, M.D. tells how he tried to volunteer to “help care for the less fortunate among us.”

“But giving back to the community is not always as easy as it seems. In the patchwork we call our healthcare system, tens of millions of us have neither insurance nor the resources to pay for basic medical care. I knew that there was a need for physician volunteers to help care for the less fortunate among us. What I did not know was that where I could volunteer would not be determined by where I was needed most, but ultimately by where I could be provided some protection from being sued.” Malpractice jury awards are averaging “a million dollars and climbing.”

“Studies of malpractice show there is no correlation between medical negligence and jury awards” and “up to half of the award may go to the lawyers.” So when he offered to volunteer, he found that he had to provide his own malpractice insurance. He says, “It was easier for me to volunteer in another country than in the United States.” How accurately Jesus described our social attitude in these last days. “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” Matthew 24:12.

48 Years in Prison for Evangelizing!

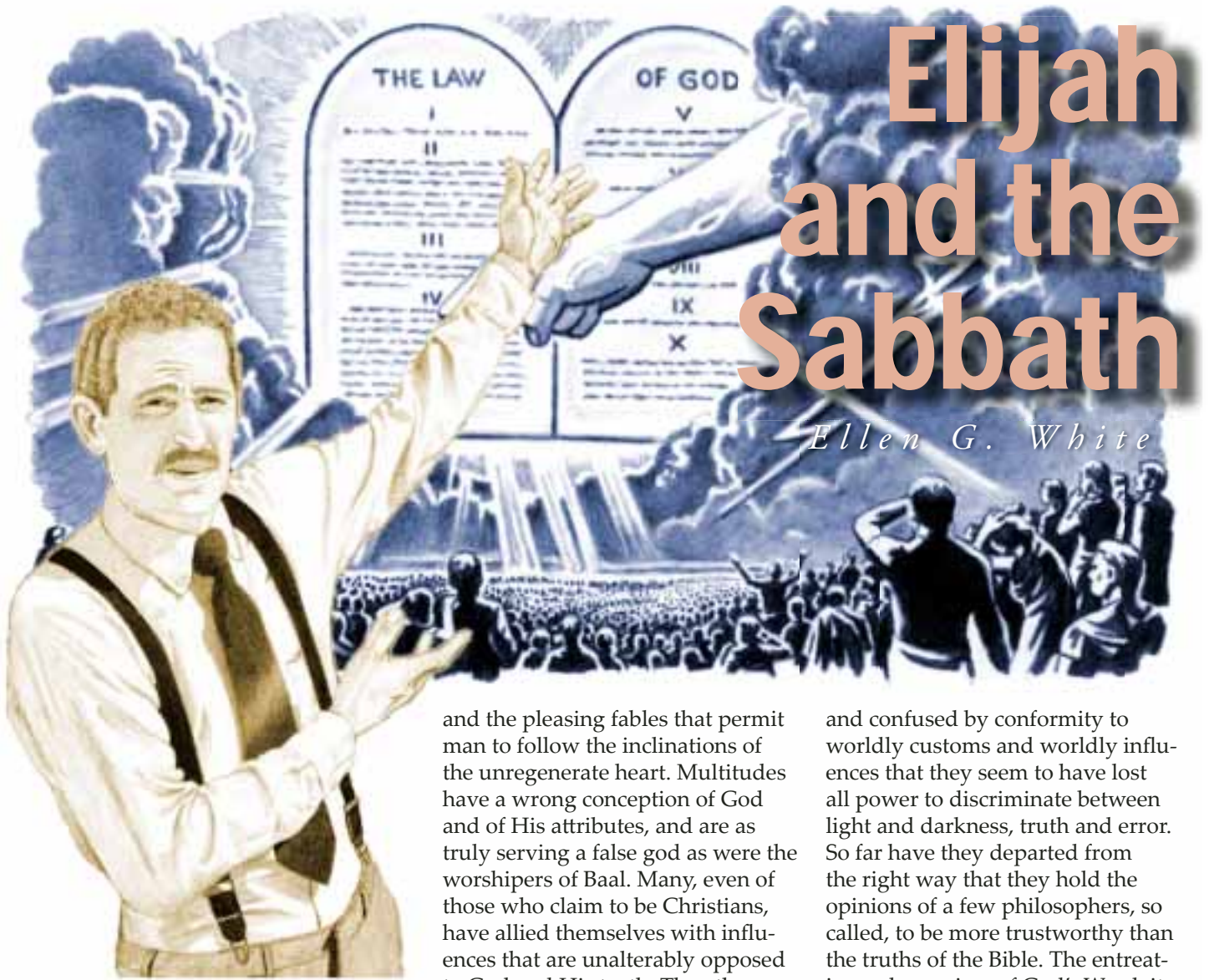
News Item: “Nearly half a century after being arrested and sentenced by the Stalinist regime to a year and a half imprisonment for ‘anti-state’ crimes, the Polish Supreme Court annulled the sentence issued in 1954 against an Adventist pastor, Konrad Janyszka, reports Andrzej Sioinski, spokesman for the Polish Seventh-day Adventist Church. The court’s decision ended a three-year process after he filed for annulment of the 1954 decision.”

Pastor Janyszka was accused and imprisoned in 1953 for “‘disseminating false information’ that allegedly aimed to ‘significantly erode the interests of the Polish state,’ public ‘showing slides,’ considered to be protected by state censorship, and for possession of printed materials for the use of Adventist clergy, alleged as intended to be hidden from the state authorities.” “Of course, under communism anything that had to do with God was censored by the state.

continued on page 28...

Elijah and the Sabbath

Ellen G. White



Through the long centuries that have passed since Elijah's time, the record of his life-work has brought inspiration and courage to those who have been called to stand for the right in the midst of apostasy. And for us, "upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11), it has special significance. History is being repeated. The world today has its Ahabs and its Jezebels. The present age is one of idolatry as verily as was that in which Elijah lived. No outward shrines may be visible, there may be no image for the eye to rest upon, yet thousands are following after the gods of this world—after riches, fame, pleasure,

and the pleasing fables that permit man to follow the inclinations of the unregenerate heart. Multitudes have a wrong conception of God and of His attributes, and are as truly serving a false god as were the worshipers of Baal. Many, even of those who claim to be Christians, have allied themselves with influences that are unalterably opposed to God and His truth. Thus they are led to turn away from the divine and exalt the human.

The prevailing spirit of our time is one of infidelity and apostasy—a spirit of avowed illumination because of a knowledge of truth, but in reality of the blindest presumption. Human theories are exalted, and placed where God and His law should be. Satan tempts men and women to disobey, with the promise that in disobedience they will find liberty and freedom that will make them as gods. There is seen a spirit of opposition to the plain Word of God, of idolatrous exaltation of human wisdom above divine revelation. Men have allowed their minds to become so darkened

and confused by conformity to worldly customs and worldly influences that they seem to have lost all power to discriminate between light and darkness, truth and error. So far have they departed from the right way that they hold the opinions of a few philosophers, so called, to be more trustworthy than the truths of the Bible. The entreaties and promises of God's Word, its threatenings against disobedience and idolatry—all are powerless to melt their hearts. A faith such as actuated Paul, Peter, and John, they regard as old-fashioned, mystical, and unworthy of the intelligence of modern thinkers.

In the beginning God gave His law to mankind as a means of attaining happiness and eternal life. Satan's only hope of thwarting the purpose of God is to lead men and women to disobey this law; and his constant effort has been to misrepresent its teachings and belittle its importance. His master-stroke has been an attempt to change the law itself, so as to lead men to violate its precepts while professing to obey it.

The Changed Signpost

One writer has likened the attempt to change the law of God to an ancient mischievous practice of turning in a wrong direction a signpost erected at an important junction where two roads met. The perplexity and misery which this practice often caused were great.

A signpost was erected by God for those journeying through this world. One arm of this signpost pointed out willing obedience to the Creator as the road to felicity¹ and life, while the other arm indicated disobedience as the path to misery and death. The way to happiness was as clearly defined as was the way to the city of refuge under the Jewish dispensation. But in an evil hour for our race, the great enemy of all good turned the signpost around, so that ever since multitudes have mistaken the way.

Through Moses the Lord instructed the Israelites: "Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:13–17.

In these words the Lord clearly defined obedience as the way to the city of God; but the man of sin has changed the signpost, making it point in the wrong direction. He

has set up a false sabbath, and has caused men and women to think that by resting on it they were obeying the command of the Creator.

God has declared that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord. When "the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them" (Genesis 2:1), He exalted this day as a memorial of His creative work. Resting on the seventh day "from all his work which he had made . . . God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it (verses 2–3)."

A Sign Between Me and Them

At the time of the exodus from Egypt, the Sabbath institution was brought prominently before the people of God. While they were

Before entering the Promised Land, the Israelites were admonished by Moses to "keep the sabbath day to sanctify it." Deuteronomy 5:12. The Lord designed that by a faithful observance of the Sabbath command, Israel should keep in mind their accountability to Him as their Creator and their Redeemer. While they kept the Sabbath in the proper spirit, there could exist no idolatry. But should the claims of this precept be set aside as no longer binding, the Creator would be forgotten, and men would worship other gods.

"I gave them my sabbaths," God declared, "to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify

"Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath."

still in bondage, their taskmasters had attempted to force them to labor on the Sabbath by increasing the amount of work required each week. And again and again the conditions of labor had been made harder and more exacting. But the Israelites were delivered from bondage, and brought to a place where they might observe unmo- lested all the precepts of Jehovah. At Sinai the law was given, and a copy of it, on two tables of stone, "written with the finger of God" (Deuteronomy 9:10), was delivered to Moses. And through nearly forty years of wandering, the Israelites were constantly reminded of God's appointed rest day, by the withholding of the manna every seventh day and the miraculous preservation of the double portion that fell on the preparation day.

them." But "they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols." Ezekiel 20:12, 16. And in His appeal to them to return to Him, He called their attention anew to the importance of keeping the Sabbath holy. "I am the LORD your God," He said; "walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and hal- low my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God." Verses 19–20.

In His terrible arraignment of Judah for her continual apostasy, the Lord declared, "Thou . . . hast profaned my sabbaths." The priests, He said, "have hid their eyes from my sabbaths."

"Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my

wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads." Ezekiel 22:8, 26, 31.

At the restoration of Jerusalem, in the days of Nehemiah, Sabbath-breaking was met with the stern inquiry, "Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath." Nehemiah 13:18.

Christ during His ministry on this earth emphasized the binding claims of the Sabbath, in all His teaching showing reverence for the institution He Himself had given. In the days of Christ, the Sabbath had become so perverted that its observance reflected the character

heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:17-19.

The Enemy's Plan

During the Christian dispensation the great enemy of man's happiness has made the Sabbath of the fourth commandment an object of special attack. Satan says: "I will work at cross purposes with God. I will empower my followers to set aside God's memorial, the seventh-day Sabbath. Thus I will show the world that the day sanctified and blessed by God has been changed. That day shall not live in the minds of the people. I will obliterate the memory of it. I will place in its

object of contempt. A sign? I will make the observance of the seventh day a sign of disloyalty to the authorities of earth. Human laws will be made so stringent that men and women will not dare to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. For fear of wanting food and clothing they will join with the world in transgressing God's law. The earth will be wholly under my dominion."

A Rebellious Generation

Through the setting up of a false sabbath the enemy has succeeded in turning the signboard around, so that it points toward the path of disobedience. He has insulted Jehovah by attempting to set aside a plain "Thus saith the Lord." He has thought to change times and laws. But has he really succeeded in changing God's law?—The words of the thirty-first chapter of Exodus are the answer. He who is the same yesterday, today, and forever has declared of the seventh-day Sabbath: "It is a sign between me and you throughout your generations." "It is a sign. . . . for ever." Verses 13, 17.

The changed signpost is pointing the wrong way, but God has not changed. He is still the mighty God of Israel. "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Isaiah 40:15-17. And He is just as jealous for His law now as He was in the days of Ahab and Elijah.

But how that law is disregarded! This is a truth-hating, Bible-neglecting, froward generation. Many do not hesitate to sneer at the Word of God; those who believe that Word just as it reads are held up to ridicule. Jesus sees the world filled with ingratitude, formalism, insincerity, pride, and apostasy. He sees His

The changed signpost is pointing the wrong way, but God has not changed. He is still the mighty God of Israel.

of selfish and arbitrary men, rather than the character of God. Christ set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. Although the rabbis followed Him with merciless hostility, He did not even appear to conform to their requirements, but went straight forward keeping the Sabbath according to the law of God.

In unmistakable language He testified to His regard for this law. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets," He said; "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of

stead a day that does not bear the credentials of God, a day that cannot be a sign between God and His people. I will lead those who accept this day to place upon it the sanctity that God placed upon the seventh day.

"Through my vicegerent I will exalt myself. The first day will be extolled, and the Protestant world will receive this spurious sabbath as genuine. Through the non-observance of the Sabbath that God instituted I will bring His law into contempt. The words, 'A sign between me and you throughout your generations,' (Exodus 31:13), I will make to serve on the side of my sabbath.

"Thus the world will become mine. I will be the ruler of the earth, the prince of the world. I will so control the minds under my power that God's Sabbath will be a special

love despised, His law rejected, His ambassadors treated with indifference. Jesus has spoken by mercies, but these mercies have been unacknowledged; He has spoken by warnings, but these warnings have been unheeded. The temple courts of the human soul have been turned into places of unholy traffic. Selfishness, envy, pride, malice—all are cherished.

Behold the world today, in open rebellion against God. Behold the disregard of the Sabbath commandment. Behold the growing contempt for law and order, directly traceable to a violation of the plain commands of Jehovah. Behold the violence and crime that have resulted from a turning aside from the path of obedience. Behold the wretchedness and misery of multitudes who worship at the shrine of idols, and who seek in vain for happiness and peace.

Behold also the daring impiety of those who, while enacting laws to safeguard the supposed sanctity of the first day of the week at the same time are making laws legalizing the liquor traffic. Wise above that which is written, they attempt to coerce the consciences of men, while lending their sanction to a curse that brutalizes and destroys the beings created in the image of God. It is Satan himself who inspires such legislation. He well knows that the curse of God will rest on those who exalt human enactments above the divine; and he does all in his power to lead men into the broad road that ends in destruction.

It is a terrible thing to place a sabbath of man's devising where the Lord's memorial of creation should be. It is a terrible thing for men to arrogate to themselves the power to set aside the day that God has declared holy and put in its place a common working day. And it is still more terrible to try to compel men to respect and reverence this day, while at the same time those who thus try to enforce

its observance are trampling under their feet the seventh-day Sabbath.

God's Cause Will Triumph

So long have men worshiped human opinions and human institutions that almost the whole world is following after idols. And he who has endeavored to change God's law is using every deceptive artifice to induce men and women to array themselves against God and against the sign by which the righteous are known. But the Lord will not always suffer His law to be broken and despised with impunity. There is a time coming when "the lofty looks of man shall be

human instrumentalities to bear a message that will not be silenced. In the great cities of the land, and in the places where men have gone to the greatest lengths in speaking against the Most High, the voice of stern rebuke will be heard. Boldly will men of God's appointment denounce the union of the church with the world. Fearlessly they will call upon men and women to turn from the observance of a man-made institution to the observance of the true Sabbath. "Fear God, and give glory to him," they will proclaim to every nation; "for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and

The whole force of the popular current may be turned against the truth . . . but in the hour of greatest peril the God of Elijah will raise up human instrumentalities to bear a message that will not be silenced.

humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day." Isaiah 2:11. Skepticism may treat the claims of God's law with jests, scoffing, and denial. The spirit of worldliness may contaminate the many and control the few; the cause of God may hold its ground only by great exertion and continual sacrifice, yet in the end it will triumph gloriously.

In the closing work of God in the earth the standard of His law will be exalted. False religion may prevail, iniquity abound, the love of many wax cold, the cross of Calvary be lost sight of, and darkness, like the pall of death, may spread over the world. The whole force of the popular current may be turned against the truth, plot after plot may be formed to overthrow the people of God; but in the hour of greatest peril the God of Elijah will raise up

the sea, and the fountains of waters. . . . 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." Revelation 14:7-10.

God has not altered the thing that has gone out of His lips. His word will stand fast forever, as unalterable as His throne. At the judgment, when every case shall be decided in the courts of heaven, this covenant will be brought forth, plainly written with the finger of God. The world will be arraigned before the bar of Infinite Justice to receive sentence.

Today, as in the days of Elijah, the line of demarcation between God's commandment-keeping people and the worshipers of false gods is clearly drawn. "How long halt ye between two opinions?"

Elijah cried; "if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." 1 Kings 18:21. And the message for today is, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen." Revelation 18:2. "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." Verses 4-5.

Like the Stars of Heaven

The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The observance of the false sabbath will be urged upon us. The contest will be between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. Those who step-by-step have yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will then yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. At this time the gold will be separated from the dross. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its bril-

liance will then go out in darkness. Those who have assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will then appear in the shame of their own nakedness.

Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people, and in the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond" (Revelation 13:16), to receive under

penalty of death the sign of allegiance to a false rest day, these faithful ones, "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke," will "shine as lights in the world." Philippians 2:15. The darker the night the more brilliantly will they shine.

What strange work Elijah would have done in numbering Israel at the time when God's judgments were falling upon the backsliding people! He could count only one on the Lord's side. But when he said, "I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life" (1 Kings 19:10), the word of the Lord surprised him, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal (verse 18)."

Then let no man attempt to number Israel today, but let every one have a heart of flesh, a heart of tender sympathy, a heart that, like the heart of Christ, reaches out for the salvation of a lost world. ✠

Note:

¹ Felicity: great happiness; bliss.

Review and Herald, November 6 and 20, 1913.

...continued from page 23

Brother Janyszka, now 79 years old, was not allowed to receive letters all that time, and his family was not allowed to visit him but once. *Religious Liberty E.lert*, January 2003.

End-Time Perspective: What an example of sacrifice for the truth, and the Great Commission that Jesus gave to us!

Survey Reveals Pastors' Expectations for the Future of Religion

News Item: "A large majority of pastors predict that alternative religions and New Age spiritual-

ity will become more influential in the next decade. According to the latest study by Ellison Research of Phoenix, 82 percent of ministers expect a growing influence of non-Christian faiths and 55 percent think New Age spirituality will increase in impact in the next 10 years, the Associated Press (AP) reported.

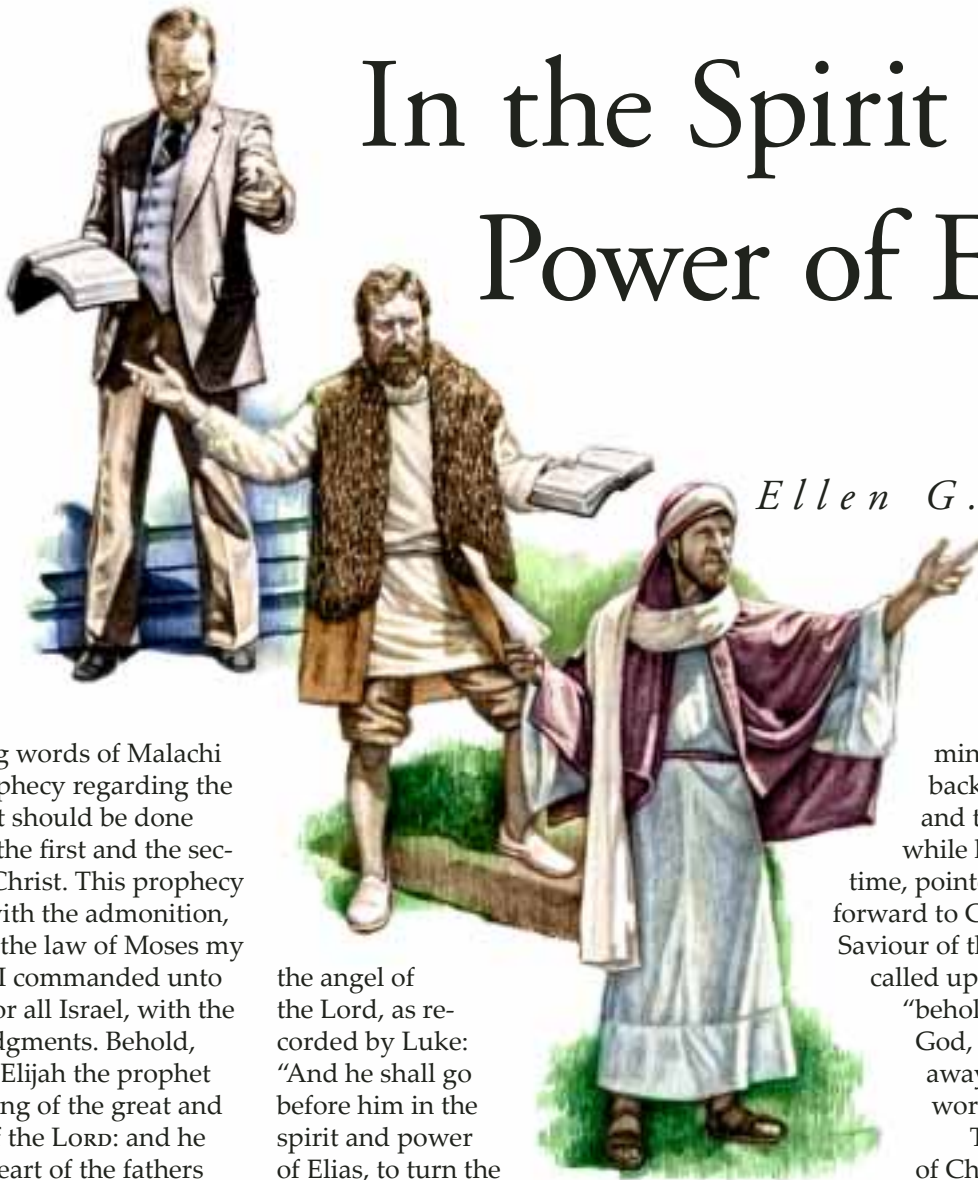
"The alarming findings of a survey of Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists and Pentecostal/charismatic ministers show many pastors are not upbeat about the future of Christianity in America.

"The 567 pastors polled by the Arizona organization were at their most pessimistic when asked about 'overall freedom of religion in the U.S.,' with 44 percent anticipating declining freedom of religion. In addition, just 41 percent predict decreasing influence of Christianity in Americans' daily lives in 2012 than it is in 2002, the AP reported.

"Pastors were even less likely to feel there will be a rise in 'the influence of Christianity in national politics,' with only 9 percent predicting increased Christian influence in that arena." *Crosswalk.com*, Religion Today Summary for November 12, 2002. ✠

In the Spirit and Power of Elias

Ellen G. White



The closing words of Malachi are a prophecy regarding the work that should be done preparatory to the first and the second advent of Christ. This prophecy is introduced with the admonition, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Malachi 4:4-5

This prophecy was fulfilled by John the Baptist; for the Saviour himself declared to his disciples, "Elias is come already." Matthew 17:12. Upon hearing this, the disciples "understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." Verse 13.

In every stage of this earth's history God has had His agencies to carry forward His work, which must be done in His appointed way. John the Baptist had a special work, for which he was born and to which he was appointed—the work of preparing the way of the Lord.

The mission and the work of John the Baptist were specified by

the angel of the Lord, as recorded by Luke: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke 1:17. The Holy Ghost was to be upon him.

The wilderness-ministry of John the Baptist was a most striking, literal fulfilment of prophecy. Isaiah had foretold his work as "the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3.

John, as a prophet, stood forth as God's representative, to show the connection between the law and the prophets and the Christian dispensation. Like Malachi, he pleaded with the Jews: "Remember ye the law of Moses . . . with the statutes and judgments." His work and

ministry pointed back to the law and the prophets, while he, at the same time, pointed the people forward to Christ as the Saviour of the world. He called upon them to "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

The forerunner of Christ lifted up his voice in the wilderness of Judea, crying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Matthew 3:2-3. "Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. . . . O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not

afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." Isaiah 40: 3-11.

In the spirit and with the power of Elijah, John the Baptist denounced the corruptions of the Jews, and reproved their prevailing sins. His discourses were plain, pointed, and convincing. Many

and the rough places plain" for history is to be repeated, and once again "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as that which John did, is to be carried on in these last days. The Lord is giving messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all

As John the Baptist, in preparing a people for Christ's first advent, called their attention to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come."

were brought to repentance, and, as evidence of their repentance, were baptized by him in Jordan. This was the work necessary in order to prepare the way for the earthly ministry of Christ.

The work of John the Baptist, and the work of those who in the last days go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah to arouse the people from their apathy, are in many respects the same. His work is a type of the work that must be done in this age. Christ is to come the second time to judge the world in righteousness. The messengers of God, who bear the last message of warning to be given to the world, are to prepare the way for Christ's second advent, as John prepared the way for His first advent. In this preparatory work, "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight,

heed the admonitions and warnings He sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was, Repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe in Christ's soon appearing, we have a definite message to bear—"Prepare to meet thy God." Amos 4:12.

Our message must be as direct as was that of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding the peril his life was in, he never allowed truth to languish on his lips. Our work in this age must be as faithfully done.

Look at the picture that the world presents today. Dishonesty and fraud, violence and bloodshed are seen on every hand. The widows and the fatherless are often robbed of their all. The theater, the

racetrack, and questionable amusements of every kind engage the attention of multitudes. In many churches sins have become fashionable. They are glossed over and excused. The right hand of fellowship is given to the very men who bring in false theories and sentiments. Right principles are no longer cherished. The conscience has become insensible to the counsel and reproofs that have been given. Messages calling for repentance are unheeded.

In this time of well-nigh universal apostasy, God calls upon His messengers to proclaim His law in the spirit and power of Elias. As John the Baptist, in preparing a people for Christ's first advent, called their attention to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." Revelation 14:7. With the earnestness that characterized Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ's second advent. Resolution, self-denial, and consecrated effort are required of every laborer. Alertness and consecrated zeal must take the place of listless indifference. The prayerful, earnest appeals that come from a heart imbued with the spirit that actuated Elijah, will bring conviction to the honest in heart.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:19.

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Verse 20. ✠

Southern Watchman, March 21, 1905.



I am writing in reference to the free book you sent, *Final Conflict Between Truth and Error*. There are so many different beliefs and opinions that a person would not know which one is the truth. I know that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth! See John 16:13. My prayer is that the church (body of Christ) would come to unity, in one accord, and stop all these different kinds of beliefs and what they think and just take the Bible for what it says. This would stop all the confusion!

JC, Tennessee

I got a flyer of the Law of God, the Ten Commandments from my lady friend. She attends the SDA church here in ——. I am really ashamed of myself. Here all along, some 46 years, I thought I knew something of God. But just this past year, thanks to your display ad of the Ten Commandments, I realize I have been tricked by the devil.

It is absolutely heart wrenching to realize how many of our brothers and sisters cannot recall the Ten Commandments from their memory. I was one of them! Not any more! I now keep the Sabbath, pray, and study the Word. I feel the Lord is bringing more and more truths to me.

The *Final Conflict* book you sent me is wonderful. I love Ellen G. White. She talks to my heart. She was truly gifted—timeless. She opens my mind's eye to heaven.

Don't give up! If you could reach me, you can reach anyone. Jesus is talking to His brethren. The time is drawing to a close. It is sad to think that good Christian people might be left behind because Satan has blind-

ed them to disobey God's law. That flyer opened my eyes. Thank you.

MV, Arizona

Thank you for sending five copies of Ron Spear's book *Retreating Toward Egypt*. I pray that God will show me who to give them to. Also, I thank you for *Our Firm Foundation*. With all the problems in our churches, it is comforting to know we have answers in our Bibles and Spirit of Prophecy books. The answers my son and I have wondered about have come to us in the *Our Firm Foundation*. Praise God! I thank Him over and over again for these answers.

RP, Nevada

Please send me ten copies of *Retreating Toward Egypt*. It is great reading material. I plan to share them with our new converts. God bless you and keep up the good work. I really appreciate the magazine *Our Firm Foundation*.

CH, New Mexico

I appreciate your magazine so much. Every sincere Adventist should be receiving *Our Firm Foundation*. I wanted you to know it is really a big help in my study of God's Word. I read it over and over until the next copy comes. Thank you for your ministry. May God bless you as we await His soon coming.

JK, Florida

Please renew my subscription with *Our Firm Foundation*. It is among the best denominational publications I've read. I am sending the subscription price, just please don't let my subscription lapse.

ME, Connecticut

I am sending a donation to help buy Bibles or Spirit of Prophecy books, especially *The Desire of Ages*, which I have on tapes and count it a blessing to drive to and fro hearing this message and being inspired with more of God's awesome love. I work with children and also adults at church and around my neighborhood, and I know all too well how great it is for God to lead us in our desire to help them understand the awesomeness of God's love. I see that in all Christ's ministry. He was showing all what love truly is. He was our perfect Example.

DB, Florida

From Overseas

Kindly pray for our small study group. We are young Christians pulling our little resources together to be able to buy Adventist books, especially E. G. White's books to enable us to develop a small library in one of our member's home so that we can be studying. At times we buy your monthly papers from — and we are encouraged.

JO, Kenya

I'm writing to express my gratitude toward your publication *Our Firm Foundation* magazine.

I'm a young man, aged 20 years, and an Adventist. I'm confused of what is happening in and outside our church, especially in areas of Sabbathkeeping, tithes and offering, music, and dressing. A friend loaned me the February 2002 *Our Firm Foundation*. On courtship counsel, the message was so touching and inspiring. Now I know clearly the difference between "love" and "passion". I'm very grateful.

WC, Zambia

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Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

— 1 Corinthians 13

“In the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians the Apostle Paul defines Christlike love. It would be well to print this chapter in small type in every paper issued by our presses. . . .

“This chapter is an expression of the obedience of all who love God and keep His commandments. It is brought into action in the life of every true believer.” Ellen G. White, The Southern Watchman, January 1, 1901.

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