

# *Who Shall Stand?*



by Gordon L. Ziegler  
Blueprint for Revival Series

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## PREFACE

The twentieth century is over, and Jesus has not come. According to Ellen White, Jesus was supposed to come on two occasions in the nineteenth century [after 1844 (GC458; 1SM 68-69) and after 1888]. We all expected Him to come in the twentieth century. But in neither century did Jesus come. Why could Jesus not come in those centuries?

The time of His coming depends not alone on taking the gospel to the world. All the satellite Nets and missionary journeys in the world alone will not fulfill the Plan A Conditions of Christ's coming. His people should accept His help to get over their apostasy, worldliness, and unbelief. They must have a thorough revival and reformation to prepare the way for the latter rain and a fire storm evangelization of the world. On the other hand, how do we know that Jesus does not have a Plan B?—a coming to an unready church (Isaiah 66:15-19)? This is a sobering question.

The greatest need today is a revival and reformation among the people of God. When that happens, the way will be cleared for the abundant outpouring of the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit. When that occurs, the gospel will be proclaimed with astonishing power. The world will be fully warned, and Christ can then come quickly to end the sin problem and take his people home to heaven. How can such a revival and reformation be obtained?

In two remarkable articles in the *Review and Herald* (November 10, 1896 and February 4, 1902), both entitled "A Test of Gratitude and Loyalty," Ellen White outlined a guaranteed blueprint for revival and reformation. The Lord showed her what would be effective in bringing about such an experience. The blueprint called for a study of Daniel in connection with the smaller prophets, especially Malachi,

together with a study of the building of the tabernacle and the temple, and a study of the sacredness of all that appertained to the temple service.

Has such an in-depth study of these related topics ever been presented to Seventh-day Adventists? Apparently not. For years we have tried many different ideas for bringing about a revival and reformation in our churches. But we have never been fully successful. Why don't we now try the guaranteed blueprint for revival and reformation?

This volume covers most of the points in Ellen White's guaranteed blueprint for revival. For other important points in that study, please see: *Key to Revival*; *Daniel Eleven Mysteries*; *Advanced Prophetic Studies*; *The Mystery of the Second Advent*; *Daniel and the Revelation, With Comments and Parallel Applications*; and *Does God Really Love Us?* all by the author.

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## Chapter 1

### MESSAGE THAT WILL BRING REVIVAL

The world is full of problems that cannot be solved until Christ comes, ends the sin nightmare, and re-creates the world more beautiful than it was in the beginning. But Jesus cannot end the world until the work of the gospel has been finished and every one has been given an opportunity to be saved. Matthew 24:14. But the work of the gospel cannot be finished without the powerful agency of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> The latter rain of the Holy Spirit has been postponed, however, because of the condition of God's people.<sup>2</sup> There must come a revival and reformation of primitive godliness among us before God can pour out His Spirit upon us in power.<sup>3</sup> If the solution to all the world's problems depends on the finishing of the gospel work, and the completion of the gospel work depends on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit depends on a revival and reformation among God's people, then we can see the central importance of seeking such an awakening among the people of God.

A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work.<sup>4</sup>

What could bring about a revival and reformation in our time?

If our people were half awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed in the Revelation, a reformation would be wrought in our churches, and many more would believe the message.<sup>5</sup>

When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart.<sup>6</sup>

Those who eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God will bring from the books of Daniel and Revelation truth that is inspired by the Holy Spirit. They will start into action forces that cannot be repressed. The lips of children will be opened to proclaim the mysteries that have been hidden from the minds of men.<sup>7</sup>

Bible prophecy seems to be the answer to our revival and reformation needs at this time! Notice this statement:

Daniel and Revelation must be studied, as well as other prophecies of the Old and New Testaments. Let there be light, yes, light, in your dwellings. For this we need to pray. The Holy Spirit, shining upon the sacred page, will open our understanding, that we may know what is truth.<sup>8</sup>

In many ways the great prophetic movement in the future will parallel the 1844 Advent Movement. Even the message is repeated:

The work in the cities is the essential work for this time, and is now to be taken hold of in faith. When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement, such as we have not yet witnessed. May the Lord give wisdom to our brethren, that they may know how to carry forward

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the work in harmony with His will. *With mighty power the cry is to be sounded in our large centers of population, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him."* (Italics supplied.)<sup>9</sup>

What could catalyze such a revival and reformatory movement? The answer perhaps lies in two obscure and seldom-quoted articles written in the *Review and Herald* by Ellen White (November 10, 1896 and February 4, 1902), both entitled "A Test of Gratitude and Loyalty." While the articles stress the need for faithfulness in tithes and offerings, they present much more. They present a blueprint for revival and reformation among God's people. The two articles are almost word-for-word copies of each other; however there are some differences—particularly in the part that tells the blueprint for revival. Let us contrast the two versions to learn the better what God has in mind for us:

As a people and as individuals we need to have a deeper sense of our duty to God and our responsibility to the world. There should be more earnest study of the Scriptures. I have been deeply impressed with the importance of studying the book of Daniel in connection with the smaller prophets, especially Malachi. And we need to give careful attention also to the lessons taught in the building of the tabernacle and the temple, and in the temple service. Through the prophets God has given a delineation of what will come to pass in the last days of this earth's history, and the Jewish economy is full of instruction for us.

The rivers of blood that flowed at the harvest thanksgiving, when the sacrifices were offered in such large numbers, were meant to teach a great truth. For even the productions of the earth, the bounties provided for man's sustenance, we are

indebted to the offering of Christ upon the cross of Calvary. God teaches us that all we receive from him is the gift of redeeming love. From his instruction to Israel, he would have us learn that he has made ample provision for the poor to receive the comforts of this life, and also for the gospel to be carried to all those who are perishing in their sins. The whole sanctuary service was designed to impress the people with the fact that the things which God has set apart for himself are holy. They were ever to observe the distinction between the sacred and the common. Holy things must be kept holy.

When these things are studied and heeded as the message of God to every soul, we shall see the deep movings of his Spirit among us. Conscience will be aroused. The record of past days will make its disclosure of the vanity of human inventions, by which men have excused themselves for neglecting the claims of God. The Holy Spirit will reveal faults and defects of character that ought to have been discerned and corrected. It will show how, through the grace of Christ, the character might have been transformed. The Lord's servants will see how they should have had the joy of victory where they have known the sorrow of defeat.

The Lord will not only reveal himself as a God of long-suffering mercy, but by terrible things in righteousness he will make it manifest that he is not a man that he should lie. He will have no fellowship with false dealing. He will sanction no pretense. The time is near when the inner life will be fully revealed. All will behold, as if reflected in a mirror, the working of the hidden springs of motive. The Lord would have you now examine your own life, and see how stands your record with him.

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The period of our probation is fast closing. The year 1896 will soon be as a tale that is told. Soon our opportunity to give the last message of mercy to the lost will be forever past. The help of every one that loves Jesus is needed now in the Lord's work. Let there be no idlers in the Master's vineyard. Let there be no robbery of God in tithes and offerings needed to sustain his cause.<sup>10</sup>

That is the way Ellen White wrote the revival blueprint in the 1896 article. Now let us compare the above with the way she wrote the blueprint in the 1902 article:

In the night season I was in my dreams in a large meeting, with ministers, their wives, and their children. I wondered that the company present was mostly made up of ministers and their families. The prophecy of Malachi was brought before them in connection with Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah. The teaching of these books was carefully investigated. The building of the temple, and the temple service were considered. There was close searching of the Scriptures in regard to the sacred character of all that appertained to the temple service. Through the prophets, God has given a delineation of what will come to pass in the last days of this earth's history; and the Jewish economy is full of instruction for us.

The offering of beasts did not cleanse away sin, but was a symbol of the great and complete sacrifice that was to be made for the sins of the whole world. The rivers of blood that flowed at the harvest thanksgiving, when sacrifices were offered in such large numbers, were meant to teach a great truth. For even the productions of the earth, the bounties provided for man's sustenance, we are indebted to the offering of Christ upon the cross of

Calvary. God teaches us that all we receive from Him is the gift of redeeming love. From His instruction to Israel, He would have us learn that He has made ample provision for the poor to receive the comforts of this life, and also for the gospel to be carried to all those who are perishing in their sins.

The whole sanctuary service was designed to impress the people with the fact that the things which God has set apart for Himself are holy. They were ever to observe the distinction between the sacred and the common. Holy things must be kept holy.

All these things were closely studied by the company before me in my dream. Scripture was compared with scripture, and application was made of the word of God to our own time. After a diligent searching of the Scriptures, there was a period of silence. A very solemn impression was made upon the people. The deep moving of the Spirit of God was manifest among us. All were troubled, all seemed to be convicted, burdened, and distressed, as they saw their own life and character represented in the word of God, and the Holy Spirit was making application to their hearts.

Conscience was aroused. The record of past days was making its disclosure of the vanity of human inventions. The Holy Spirit brought all things to their remembrance. As they reviewed their past history there were revealed defects of character that ought to have been discerned and corrected. They saw how through the grace of Christ the character should have been transformed. The workers had known the sorrow of defeat in the work entrusted to their hands, when they should have had victory.

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The Holy Spirit presented before them Him whom they had offended. They saw that God will not only reveal himself as a God of mercy and forgiveness and long forbearance, but by terrible things in righteousness He will make it manifest that He is not a man that He should lie.

Words were spoken by One, saying, "The hidden inner life will be revealed. As if reflected in a mirror, all the inward working of the character will be made manifest. The Lord would have you examine your own lives, and see how vain is human glory." "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life."

The period of our probation is fast closing. Soon our opportunity to give the last message of mercy to the lost will be forever past. The help of every one that loves Jesus is needed now, in the Lord's work. Let there be no idlers in the Master's vineyard. Let there be no robbery of God in tithes and offerings, which are needed to sustain His cause.<sup>11</sup>

The prophesied last-day revival is to be based on all the major Biblical prophetic books, including Daniel and Revelation.<sup>12</sup> But the specific message brought to view in the 1896 and 1902 articles is from Malachi in connection with Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah, together with the study of the building of, and the services of, the tabernacle and temple. In the 1896 article Ellen White said, "When these things are studied and heeded as the message of God to every soul, we shall see the deep movings of his Spirit among us." In the 1902 article she reports an impressive dream she had in which these things were

studied and the Holy Spirit did move deeply among the ministers and their families. Perhaps the message from these books is to start the reformation and pave the way for further prophetic messages from other books.

Actually, the articles do not clearly spell out the prophetic message that brings revival and reformation, but only give clues as to the content. But the clues are enough to indicate this is indeed the type of message needed at this time. Let us consider the clues as to what may be the content of this revival and reformation message:

1. Five Old Testament books are the focus of the study. In the 1896 article Ellen White said, "I have been deeply impressed with the importance of studying the book of Daniel in connection with the smaller prophets, especially Malachi." Now there are a number of smaller prophets, and the full message may contain a little from them all. But in the 1902 article Ellen White mentions specifically Malachi, Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah. Evidently these are the focus of the study. The wording of the 1896 article would imply that Daniel and Malachi predominate in the consideration, however. And the wording in the 1902 article seems to imply that Malachi predominates even over Daniel in the message.

2. How much of Malachi is included in the prophesied revival and reformation message? When the context of these quotations is studied (the articles entitled, "A Test of Gratitude and Loyalty"), the only text from Malachi that can be found to be actually quoted is Malachi 3:10 concerning tithes and offerings. And the majority of the material in the articles is about tithes and offerings. Thus one might suppose that the material from Malachi in the foreseen revival message is limited to the subject of tithes and offerings. However, the clues in the portions of the articles predicting the revival message seem to indicate that more of Malachi is to be a part of that study. The 1902 article said, "The *prophecy of Malachi* was brought before them in connection with Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and

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Zechariah." This evidently means the prophetic portion of Malachi (and Malachi 3, the tithes and offerings chapter, has a most solemn and startling prophecy in the first few verses), or else the entire book of Malachi is to be a part of the reformation study. Both may in fact be true. The prophetic content of Malachi correlates with the prophecies of Daniel and the Minor Prophets, and gives a reason for studying these books together. Such a tie between the books might not be found in the subject area of tithes and offerings alone. In the 1896 article, Ellen White said, "I have been deeply impressed with the importance of studying the book of Daniel in connection with the smaller prophets, especially Malachi." This seems to indicate that the whole books should be studied. This treatise will consider not only the tithe and offering counsel and the prophetic portions, but will also serve as a commentary on the whole book of Malachi. However, the primary emphasis will be upon the prophetic portion of Malachi and its relationship to the prophecies of Daniel and the Minor Prophets.

3. The inquiry is to include lessons from the building of the tabernacle and the temple.

4. The investigation is to include the temple or sanctuary service--particularly "the sacred character of all that appertained to the temple service."

5. The study is to include the subject of tithes and offerings.

6. The distinction between the sacred and the common, and the necessity to keep holy things holy is to be a special part of the particulars.

7. "They saw how through the grace of Christ the character should have been transformed." This probably means not only that the hearers will see that they need their characters transformed, but *how* through the grace of Christ this can be done. Thus righteousness by faith seems to be a part of the reformation study.

8. "They saw that God will not only reveal himself as a God of mercy and forgiveness and long forbearance, but by terrible things in righteousness He will make it manifest that He is not a man that He should lie." What are these terrible things in righteousness God will do to show that He is not a man that He should lie? This is probably an allusion not only to Numbers 23:19 ("God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"), but also to Isaiah 64:3 ("When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for..."). We may expect, then, that this study will bring to light from Bible prophecy events which "we looked not for,"—of which we have had no previous knowledge. And these events will bring out the judgment and justice side of God as well as the mercy and forbearance side.

9. "The record of past days was making its disclosure of the vanity of human inventions." The recent history of Seventh-day Adventists, from the standpoint of some of the unprofitable wrong things we have done seems to also be a part of the study.

An endeavor will be made in this book to reconstruct the full revival and reformation message foreseen by Ellen White in her dreams on this subject. An effort will be made to satisfy each of the above nine requirements as to the content of the message. While there may be more than one legitimate order in which to study these points, one especially presents itself as being both coherent and convenient. The book will start with the study of the sacred and the common—the sacredness of all that appertained to the temple service, case histories of divine retribution for mixing the sacred and the common, the prophetic picture of last day violations of this distinction by God's professed people, warnings from Ellen White to us, and finally how we as Seventh-day Adventists have grossly violated these principles and counsels.

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Since the first two chapters of Malachi seem to largely relate also to this issue and cast some additional light on that subject, the book of Malachi, excluding the prophetic portion, will then be considered. Many different ways we break the law by mixing the sacred and the common will then be brought out, including in the areas of tithes and offerings and marriages and divorces.

Malachi then goes into a prophetic judgment hour message of events which God will do which will come to us suddenly and unexpectedly as God's response to our gross apostasy. The prophecies of Daniel and the other Minor Prophets correlate with this prophetic message of Malachi. A great deal of attention will be given to these prophecies, bringing out a system of revealed truth quite new to us as a people.

Finally the building of the tabernacle and the temple, especially Zerubbabel's temple during the days of Haggai, will be considered. Lessons from the book of Haggai are comforting in that while they confirm the awesome supernatural events "which we looked not for," they also assure God's people that His Spirit is still with them and that He is ready to bless them—much more in the end of their work than in its beginning. Haggai encourages us to be strong and work for God, for God will soon reward us. This is the thrilling close of the study.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book One, p. 411.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book One, p. 121.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 118.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>9</sup>Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 331.

<sup>10</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, November 10, 1896.

<sup>11</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

<sup>12</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 112-118.

<sup>13</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, November 10, 1896.

## PART ONE

### THE SACRED AND THE COMMON

There was close searching of the Scriptures in regard to the sacred character of all that appertained to the temple service. . . .

The whole sanctuary service was designed to impress the people with the fact that the things which God has set apart for Himself are holy. They were ever to observe the distinction between the sacred and the common. Holy things must be kept holy.—E. G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

## Chapter 2

### HOLY AND MOST HOLY THINGS

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Revelation 4:8. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." Isaiah 6:3. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isaiah 33:14. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8.

The God we serve is a holy God. Throughout the scriptures, the LORD tries to impress us with this truth. When Jehovah appeared to Moses in the burning bush, He called to Moses and said, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Why so? Moses and his sheep had undoubtedly trampled over that ground a hundred times before. What was so special about that sand and that sagebrush? They were hallowed by the presence of the holy One. God's presence hallows a thing. Everything that is dedicated to His service is also made sacred and holy.

This lesson was most forcefully taught to the children of Israel in the tabernacle, the temple, and their services. The Lord said of each item used in that worship that it was holy. Wonderful, Counselor could have made one blanket statement to that effect concerning all the appurtenances of the sanctuary. In our human wisdom we might think that would suffice. However He meticulously labeled each separate item as being holy. If this lesson is so important in Jehovah's eyes, then maybe it ought to be important in our eyes also. Perhaps we should see just what God said about His holy things.

Moses was instructed to compound a special anointing oil whereby things were to be specially set apart for God as holy.

Moreover the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,  
Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels,

And of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin:

And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, and ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an *holy anointing oil*. Exodus 30:22-25.

This special compound was to be reserved as holy—used only in the Lord's service. Never was this anointing oil to be used in a common way. The penalty for disobedience of this requirement was severe.

And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations.

Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: *it is holy*, and it shall be holy unto you.

Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people. Exodus 30:31-33.

Moses was to take this holy oil and anoint everything that appertained to the temple service. These then would thereby be set aside as holy unto the Lord.

And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony,

And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense,

And the altar of burnt offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot.

And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be *most holy*: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy.

And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in their priest's office. Exodus 30:26-30.

Moses was instructed to make a holy perfume-incense also.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight:

And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, *pure and holy*:

And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you *most holy*.

And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD.

Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people. Exodus 30:34-38.

Moses obeyed these instructions of the Lord. "And he made the *holy anointing oil*, and the pure incense of sweet

spices, according to the work of the apothecary." Exodus 37:29.

Now let us consider those things which were anointed with the holy oil and were thus set apart as holy unto the Lord. The first part of the tabernacle was called the *holy place*. The inner compartment of the tabernacle was called the *most holy place*. Exodus 28:43; 29:31; 31:11; 26:33, 34; 28:35. When the tabernacle was reared, these apartments were to be anointed with the holy oil, as well as everything in them. Exodus 40:9.

Notice how God meticulously called each item holy:

And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be *an altar most holy*. Exodus 40:10.

The ark of the testimony, the table of showbread and its vessels, the candlestick and its vessels, the altar of incense, and the laver also were anointed with the oil and were called *most holy*. Exodus 30:26-29. The priest and his sons were anointed, and consecrated unto the Lord. Exodus 30:30. The priests were called "hallowed," (Exodus 29:1) "consecrated," (Exodus 29:9) "holy." Leviticus 21:7. The garments worn by the priests were *holy garments*. Exodus 29:29; 31:10; 28:2; 35:21. The mitre and crown worn by the high priest were called *holy*. Exodus 29:6. The high priest was to wear a plate of gold on the front of his mitre on his forehead with the engravings "HOLINESS TO THE LORD." Exodus 28:36-38.

Because the priests were to be holy to the Lord, there were special rules regarding marriage they were to abide by. There were special rules to be followed in the event of deaths, etc.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people:

But for his kin, that is near unto him, that is, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother,

And for his sister a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath no husband; for her may he be defiled.

But he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, *to profane himself*.

They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.

They shall be *holy unto their God*, and *not profane* the name of their God: for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and the bread of their God, they do offer: therefore *they shall be holy*.

They shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he is holy unto his God.

Thou shalt sanctify him therefore; for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy.

And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be burnt with fire.

And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes;

Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother;

Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God, for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD.

And he shall take a wife in her virginity.

A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.

Neither shall he profane his seed among his people: for I the LORD do sanctify him.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, Let him not approach to offer the bread of his God.

For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous,

Or a man that is brokenfooted, or broken handed,

Or crookbackt, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken;

No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.

He shall eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy.

Only he shall not go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not my sanctuaries: for I the LORD do sanctify them.

And Moses told it unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they profane not my holy name in those things which they hallow unto me; I am the LORD.

Say unto them, Whosoever he be of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD.

What man soever of the seed of Aaron is a leper, or hath a running issue; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing that is unclean by the dead, or a man whose seed goeth from him;

Or whosoever toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, or a man of whom he may take uncleanness, whatsoever uncleanness he hath;

The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water.

And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food.

That which dieth of itself, or is torn with beasts, he shall not eat to defile himself therewith: I am the LORD.

They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do sanctify them. Leviticus 21:1-22:9.

See how minutely and meticulously the Lord instructed the priests how they were to retain the distinction between the holy and the profane? If sheer volume of words indicates anything about how important this issue is to God, the length of the above passage ought to tell us something. And of course this is not all the Biblical counsel along these lines.

Everything that is dedicated to God is to be considered holy. The sacrifices brought by the people were called holy. Exodus 29:33. The priests could eat those things, for they were holy. But a common person was forbidden to eat of those things. The time that God reserves to Himself--the seventh day of the week, is called the holy Sabbath--"holy to the LORD." Exodus 31:14, 15. The tithes and offerings are holy to the LORD. We rob God if we use that sacred money for a common purpose.

While the priests were specially set apart as holy unto the Lord, the God of heaven went to great lengths to show that holiness is not alone for the spiritual leaders. God wanted the common people also to be holy unto Him. God said to all the people of Israel, and He says to all of us,

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

And ye shall be unto me *a kingdom of priests and an holy nation*. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. Exodus 19:5, 6.

Not only was the collective nation to be holy, but God wanted each individual common person to be holy. God wants everyone to be the temple of the Spirit of God.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for *the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are*. 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.

What makes things holy? What makes people holy? Certainly it is not anything that man can do of himself. Holiness comes as a result of a relationship with a holy

God. It is dedication or consecration of something to God that makes it holy. This is what made all the appurtenances of the sanctuary holy. It is the presence of God that hallows or sanctifies something or someone and makes it or him or her holy. God said, "the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory." Exodus 29:43. The presence of God is also that which can make us holy and purify us of all our sins. Jesus said:

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, *that he may abide with you for ever;*

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for *he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* John 14:16, 17.

John explained this indwelling of God in man. "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, *God dwelleth in us*, and his love is perfected in us." 1 John 4:12. Paul exulted over the glory of this mystery, and called it the hope of glory. ""Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is *Christ in you*, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:26, 27.

Only Christ can give us this blessing, but He is ever so willing to give it to us. He says,

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. Revelation 3:20, 21.

Haggai has another important lesson regarding holiness. (Haggai was one of the prophets mentioned by Ellen White as being a part of the study which will bring about revival.)

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying,

If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No.

Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.

Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean. Haggai 2:11-14.

Only God can create life, but man can easily destroy it. So it is with holiness. Man can easily become unholy, but it requires a creative act of God to make a human heart holy. David said, "*Create* in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalms 51:10. Another point in the Haggai passage is that sinfulness is easily communicated, but holiness is not easily communicated. How careful, then, we should be not to touch the unclean thing!

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18.

## Chapter 3

### MIXING THE SACRED AND THE COMMON

Not long after God had given these rules regarding the sacred and the common, they were violated. God had instructed that the priests should offer "no strange incense" in the tabernacle. Exodus 30:9. Only incense lit with the original sacred fire kept burning forever was to be presented before the Lord. No incense lit with ordinarily kindled fire was to be offered. However, as the result of drinking alcohol the sons of Aaron carelessly disobeyed the instruction of the Lord.

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.

And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. Leviticus 10:1, 2.

The judgment of God was sudden and severe, yet no more so than He had previously warned. The sudden shock of this judgment, as well as the filial ties between Aaron and his slain sons, put Aaron in danger of expressing his grief contrary to the instructions of God, and further bringing on the judgments of God. Moses arranged for distant relatives of Aaron to carry out the dead sons, that Aaron and his family should not be defiled and violate the commandment of God. Moses further warned Aaron not to express his grief contrary to God's instructions in that regard.

Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them

that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.

And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazer and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.

And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses. Leviticus 10:3-7.

Alcohol was at the root of the tragedy. God then gave instructions to prevent a similar situation arising in the future:

And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying,

Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever through your generations:

And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;

And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses. Leviticus 10:8-11.

God dealt severely not only with His own people when they mixed the sacred and the common, but He dealt

severely also with heathen nations when they profaned his holy things. This can be seen in the case of the Philistines when they captured the ark of God, and in the case of the Babylonians when Belshazzar drank wine out of the holy vessels of the temple. Consider first the case of the Philistines.

When Samuel was young and Eli was very old, the Philistines made war against the Israelites. Israel was apostate at the time largely because Eli had not restrained and disciplined his sons, and his sons had a bad influence upon the nation. Because of Israel's apostasy God could not bless them, and they were smitten in battle before the Philistines. The elders of Israel proposed that they should take the ark of the covenant out with them into the battle so that God would deliver them. However, instead, many more were slain, Hophni and Phinehas the sons of Eli were slain, and the ark of God was taken captive by the Philistines.

The Philistines took the ark of God to Ashdod, and put it by their god Dagon in his temple. But God's judgments upon the Philistines immediately began to fall.

And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him.

Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote

them with emerods, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof.

And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.

They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about thither.

And it was so, that, after they had carried it about, the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts.

Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people.

So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people: for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.

And the men that died not were smitten with emerods, and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

And the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months.

And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place.

And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not empty; but in any wise return him a trespass offering: then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you.

Then said they, What shall be the trespass offering, which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague was on you all, and on your lords.

Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land.

Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?

Now therefore make a new cart and take two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them;

And take the ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the cart; and put the jewels of gold, which ye return him for a trespass offering.

And see, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to Bethshemesh, then he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us.

And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home:

And they laid the ark of the LORD upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods.

And the kine took the straight way to the way of Bethshemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Bethshemesh. 1 Samuel 5:3-6:12.

The men of Bethshemesh rejoiced greatly to see the ark of God come back to Israel. "They clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the LORD." 1 Samuel 6:14. They wanted to make sure, however, that everything was in it that was supposed to be in the ark. They looked inside, just to make sure. That was a fatal mistake. This was a disobedience of the commandment of God, and the retribution was swift and severe.

And he smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter.

And the men of Bethshemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? and to whom shall he go up from us?

And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjathjearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the LORD; come ye down, and fetch it up to you.

And the men of Kirjathjearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazer his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjathjearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD. 1 Samuel 6:19-7:2.

The ark remained in the house of Abinidab unto the days of king David. David desired that the ark should be brought up out of Kirjathjearim to his place.

And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader.

And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul.

And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjathjearim.

And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjathjearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart. 1 Chronicles 13:1-7.

This method of transport of the ark was a grave mistake. God had instructed that the priests should carry it

by staves upon their shoulders. Exodus 25:14. Oxcart was not a divinely ordained means of conveyance for the ark.

While the ark was being moved, David and all the people sang and rejoiced with all their might. But their jubilation was quickly turned to consternation:

And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perezuzza (The breach of Uzza) to this day.

And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?

So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite. And the ark of God remained with the family of Obededom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obededom, and all that he had. 1 Chronicles 13:8-14.

God did not always deal severely with His people regarding the ark. When no disobedience was made, and the people with respect did the best they could, God greatly blessed them, as is evidenced by the case of Obededom. When David again assayed to bring up the ark of God to his place, he decided to do it correctly. He had the Levites carry the ark as God had commanded. 1 Chronicles 15:2,

12-15. Instead of smiting them, God helped them in this project. 1 Chronicles 15:26. The day was a day of great rejoicing and praise to God.

The feast of Belshazzar is another example of divine retribution for profaning of God's holy things. When Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged and overthrew Jerusalem, he not only took many of the royal children captive to Babylon, he took also a part of the vessels of the house of God. Daniel 1:2. These he carried into the house of his god. Nebuchadnezzar's heart was not wholly hardened, however, as had been Pharaoh's. Through divine intervention in the lives of the Hebrews in his care and in his own life (Daniel 1-4), king Nebuchadnezzar was converted to a follower of the God of Israel. Belshazzar his grandson, however did not become so converted. In spite of all the miraculous things God had done in the life of his grandfather, and though he knew all of those things, his heart was not softened. Instead he persisted in his idolatry in a most defiant way.

Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand.

Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father (margin: or grandfather) Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.

Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.

They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. Daniel 5:1-4.

As was always the case, this instance of profaning the LORD's holy things was met with immediate judgment.

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.

Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.

Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed:

There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;

Forasmuch as an excellent spirit and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called and he will shew the interpretation.

Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?

I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.

And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing:

And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts; now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:

And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointed over it whomsoever he will.

And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;

But has lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

Then was the part of the hand sent from him: and this writing was written.

And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old. Daniel 5:5-31.

What is there so evil about mixing the sacred and the common, or profaning holy things that it should result in immediate death, and even the immediate termination of world empires? Which commandment of the ten commandments does this sin fall under? Or is this an extra commandment that God has tacked on that we are supposed to remember? The answer may be surprising. Violating the distinction between the sacred and the common may in a way be seen to be behind the transgression of every commandment! Let us take them one by one and see that this is true.

1. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Exodus 20:3. The Creator is most holy. In comparison, all creation is common. Any material or personal god other than Jehovah is a creation or creature. It is common. Having any other god before Jehovah is placing the common above or in the place of the most sacred.

2. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

"And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Exodus 20:4-6.

Again, to bow down to a graven image is to show reverence for a common thing that is due only to the most holy God. This violates the distinction between the sacred and the common.

3. "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Exodus 20:7. Taking the name of the LORD in vain is using God's sacred and holy name

in a careless or common way. This is a violation of the distinction of the sacred and the common.

4. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

"But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

"For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. Exodus 20:8-11.

The Sabbath hours are holy time. God has reserved them for communion with Him and blessing our fellow man. To use any of this time for routine labor or common matters is using holy time for common purposes. It is violating the distinction between the sacred and the common. To substitute a common work day, Sunday, for the Sabbath, is to violate the distinction between the sacred and the common.

5. "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee." Exodus 20:12. God has made filial ties sacred bonds. Fathers and mothers normally know their young people better than do the youth themselves. And no one on earth will love the children so dearly, usually, as their parents. For this reason, parents are, if they are in the Lord, usually the best counselors. To disregard the counsel and wishes of parents for the flatteries of a stranger is valuing a bond with a common stranger above that sacred bond with one's parents. This is failing to distinguish between the sacred and the common. To neglect parents in their old age and in the time of their need, for common pursuits or selfish interests, is to neglect sacred duties through preoccupation with common interests. The common is put above the sacred.

6. "Thou shalt not kill." Exodus 20:13. Life is sacred, for only God can create it. Murder, or reckless endangerment of human life is placing a low value upon life. It is valuing something common, such as money or personal advantage above another's sacred right to life.; It is putting the common above the sacred.

7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." As part of their rituals at marriage, the Jews say, "Behold you are consecrated to me by this ring according to the law of Moses and Israel." In olden times, the groom wrapped his garment around his bride when he said, "you are consecrated unto me." The marriage partners thus recognize that their marriage relation is sacred. However, relations with any other are common and adulterous.

8. "Thou shalt not steal." Exodus 20:15. God has made property rights sacred. To take what is sacredly another's, and appropriate it for one's use without the owner's permission, is to violate a sacred distinction and make of one's self a common thief. Again, trouble with the sacred and the common.

9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Exodus 20:16. Truth is sacred, and to tell a lie is to adulterate or profane the truth. It is mixing the sacred and the common.

10. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's." Exodus 20:17. Coveting is stealing in one's heart. And if stealing is violating a distinction between the sacred and the common, then coveting is doing it in one's heart. This commandment then prohibits mixing the sacred and the common, preferring the common above the sacred, or failing to distinguish between them in one's heart, in one's secret motives and thoughts.

Mixing the sacred and the common, then, is not merely disobeying an addendum to the ten commandments. And it is not merely violating one commandment. It is breaking

the whole law. Mixing the sacred and the common is not just one aspect of sin. It is sin. But even more. Mixing the sacred and the common is not only sin, sin is mixing the sacred and the common. This is an essence of all sin. In fact, this is how human sin began. Eve was tempted on appetite to be sure. But her real interest was in coveting what had been sacredly reserved for God alone—the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Of every common tree of the garden the holy couple could freely eat except of the one tree sacredly reserved for God alone. Adam and Eve were tempted to violate the distinction between the sacred and the common. Their fall on this point brought on the whole world and even heaven incalculable woe.

## Chapter 4

### WARNINGS TO ADVENTISTS

Ellen White warned Adventists on a number of occasions against mixing the sacred and the common. In 1893 Ellen White pointed out that such a mixing of the sacred and the common, the sublime and the ridiculous was a characteristic of the false visions of Anna Garmire and Anna Phillips. These visions

descended to the most minute and trifling matters, commingled common, cheap things with important subjects. The imagination was largely developed, there was a mingling of the sacred and the common. The truth of God was belittled, and yet some received these pretended revelations, and carried out their teaching. A little party was formed who were apparently inspired by them, and the visions were declared to be more spiritual than the visions of Sister White. . . .

Childish figures and illustrations are employed in describing sacred, heavenly things, and there is a mingling of the sublime and the ridiculous. While the work has an appearance of great sanctity, it is calculated to ensnare and mislead souls. . . .<sup>1</sup>

In 1895 Ellen White explained that harsh, unsympathetic words are strange fire, and this is another way that we can mingle the sacred and the common.

I am urged by the Spirit of God to say to you who have a connection with the Lord's work, Never forget that you are wholly dependent upon God; and if you pass one hour or one moment without relying upon His grace, without keeping the heart open to

receive the wisdom that is not earthborn, being sure that without Christ ye can do nothing, you will be unable to distinguish between the common and the sacred fire. Words of a very forbidden character will flash from your lips to destroy hope and courage and faith. . . .

You need to offer always the sacred fire; for then Christ's works, His love, His mercy, His righteousness, will ascend before God, as a cloud of holy, fragrant incense, wholly acceptable.

But strange fire has been offered in the use of harsh words, in self-importance, in self-exaltation, in self-righteousness, in arbitrary authority, in domineering, in oppression, in restricting the liberty of God's people, binding them about by your plans and rules, which God has not framed, neither have they come into His mind. All these things are strange fire, unacknowledged by God, and are a continual misrepresentation of His character. . . .

The holy principles that God has given are represented as the sacred fire, but common fire has been used in place of the sacred. Plans contrary to truth and righteousness are introduced in a subtle manner on the plea that this must be done, and that must be done, "because it is for the advancement of the cause of God." But it is the devising of men that leads to oppression, injustice, and wickedness. The cause of God is free from every taint of injustice. It can gain no advantage by robbing the members of the family of God of their individuality or their rights. All such practices are abhorrent to God.<sup>2</sup>

Another way to mingle the common fire with the sacred is to talk politics from the pulpit. We have also been warned against this.

When the speaker shall, in a haphazard way, strike in anywhere, as the fancy takes him, when he talks politics to the people he is mingling the common fire with the sacred. He dishonours God. He does his hearers a grievous wrong. He may plant seeds which may strike their fibrous roots deep, and they spring up and bear poisonous fruit. How dare men do this? How dare they advance ideas when they do not know certainly whence they came, or that they are the truth?<sup>3</sup>

In 1909 Ellen White said,

for one to mix the sacred and the common is a great mistake. In a tendency to do this we may see the working of the enemy to destroy souls.

To every soul whom God has created He has given capabilities to serve Him, but Satan seeks to make this work of service hard by his constant temptation to mislead souls. He works to dim the spiritual perceptions that men may not distinguish between that which is common and that which is holy.<sup>4</sup>

In 1911 Ellen White said she was charged of God to keep ever before our people and ministers the danger of marring the sacredness of God's work by allowing a cheap interpretation of the way that God desires His work to be done.<sup>5</sup> In *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, Ellen White warned against cheap methods of presenting the gospel in the publishing work:

Pictures to represent Bible scenes must be no cheap designs. . . . The knowledge which God imparts is not of a character to belittle our ideas of sacred things. The glory of God must be kept before the mind's eye, not the cheap, earthly

representations that imprint in the memory scenes which give a false conception of Christ and heavenly things. A proper illustration of Bible scenes requires talent of a superior quality. With these cheap, common productions, the sacred lessons of the Bible disdain comparison. . . . God forbid that we should please the devil by lowering the standard of eternal truth by using illustrations that men, women, and children will make sport of.<sup>6</sup>

Would not the mind have clearer, more perfect ideas of angels, of Christ, of all spiritual things, if no pictures were made to represent heavenly things? Many of the pictures made are grossly false as far as truth is concerned. Do not pictures so far removed from the truth give voice to falsehoods? We want to be true in all our representations of Jesus Christ. *But many of the miserable daubs put into our books and papers are an imposition on the public.*<sup>7</sup> (Italics added.)

The ideas of many in reference to the matters pertaining to God's work are too cheap. In the selection of pictures to illustrate holy things, a deficiency of wisdom has been shown that God cannot approve.<sup>8</sup>

I am troubled in regard to the use of pictures in our publications. Some of our papers seem bent on using them in season and out of season. And some of the cuts used are very inferior, and poorly illustrate the subjects represented. *I hope our publications will not come to resemble a comic almanac.*<sup>9</sup> (Italics added.)

My brethren, will you not give the flock of God bread, and not a stone? Never print in our papers a

*word* that will lower the standard that God expects His people to meet.<sup>10</sup> (Italics added.)

Ellen White counseled that we should never let our words become coarse and rude.

I have been shown that the Lord is reviving the living, pointed testimony, which will develop character and purify the church. But while we are commanded to separate from the world, *it is not necessary that we become coarse and rough, and descend to common expressions, and make our remarks as rude as possible.* The truth is designed to elevate the receiver, to refine his taste and sanctify his judgment. There should be a continual effort to imitate the society we expect soon to join; namely, angels of God who have never fallen by sin. The character should be holy, the manners comely, *the words without guile*, and thus should we follow on step by step until we are fitted for translation.<sup>11</sup> (Italics added.)

God is not pleased with jargon and discord. Right is always more pleasing to him than wrong.<sup>12</sup>

The Saviour of the world would have His colaborers represent Him; and the more closely a man walks with God, the more faultless will be his *manner of address, his deportment, his attitude, and his gestures.* Coarse and uncouth manners were never seen in our Pattern, Christ Jesus. He was a representative of heaven, and His followers must be like Him.<sup>13</sup> (Italics added.)

Every Christian is called to make known to others the unsearchable riches of Christ; therefore he should seek for perfection in speech. He should

present the word of God in a way that will commend it to the hearers. God does not design that His human channels shall be uncouth. It is not His will that man shall belittle or degrade the heavenly current that flows through him to the world.<sup>14</sup>

There is a danger of mixing the sacred and the common in music also. Ellen White predicted that Satan would make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted.

Those things which have been in the past will be in the future. Satan will make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted. God calls upon His people, who have the light before them in the Word and in the Testimonies, to read and consider, and to take heed. Clear and definite instruction has been given in order that all may understand.<sup>15</sup>

Mixing the sacred and the common, the holy and the profane in the work of the gospel is the error that Ellen White said was studied in connection with the sanctuary service in the special study that brought about revival and reformation in the last days.<sup>16</sup> In this chapter we have seen a number of warnings to Adventists not to do this. In the next chapter we shall see how unfortunately we Adventists have disregarded and violated these counsels.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 350, 357-360.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 337.

<sup>4</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book One, pp. 38, 39.

<sup>5</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 28.

<sup>6</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 167, 168.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 171. (*Italics added.*)

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.* p. 172.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>11</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 216.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>13</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 405.

<sup>14</sup>Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 336.

<sup>15</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 38.

<sup>16</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

## Chapter 5

### ADVENTIST PROFANITY

And the word of the Lord came unto me saying,  
Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that  
is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of  
indignation.

There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the  
midst thereof. . . .

Her priests have violated my law, and have  
profaned mine holy things: they have put no  
difference between the holy and the profane, neither  
have they shewed difference between the unclean  
and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my  
sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Ezekiel  
22:23-26.

Profaning the holiness of the Lord, or profaning God's  
holy things, is the sense in which the title is meant, rather  
than common swearing. Since violating the distinction  
between the sacred and the common is part of so many sins,  
and since individual Adventists are in so many different  
levels of Christian growth and Christian experience, it is  
inevitable that some Adventists would violate some  
distinction between the sacred and the common. For  
instance, improperly observing the Sabbath hours is mixing  
the sacred and the common. Many Seventh-day Adventists  
may be guilty of this sin. However, many Adventists do  
correctly observe the Sabbath. And since it is the teaching  
of the Seventh-day Adventist church that we must be  
careful how we observe the Sabbath, the fault of some  
individuals cannot be charged upon the church organization  
and upon church leaders. Similarly with tithes and  
offerings. Using tithe monies for common things is mixing  
the sacred and the common. Some Adventists do this;

many do not. We are taught to keep the tithe monies sacred, however. Thus the fault of some individual Adventists cannot be charged upon the whole church organization and upon church leadership. However, the text in Ezekiel brings out that church leaders are guilty of putting no difference between the holy and the profane, and in profaning the Lord. There is an area in which this is true in the Seventh-day Adventist church. While there may be other areas, it is specially true in the publishing work.

It is a solemn and tragic fact of recent Adventist history that church leaders have sponsored certain youth for the purpose of preparing and promulgating psychedelic and vulgar material in such church programs as the *Wayout* youth outreach, *Insight* magazine, etc. The psychedelic and profane have contaminated to varying degrees other church papers and programs as well—*Liberty Magazine*, *Listen*, *Signs of the Times*, etc. In many local churches such profane-type presentations have been advanced. Families have cast their weight behind the promulgation of psychedelic and profane material with the argument that "times have changed," and that the church must use such methods if it is to reach the unchurched. But the word of God stands in condemnation of such a lowering of the standards of the church.

When *Insight* first replaced the *Youth's Instructor* in 1970, the contrast was violent and shocking. In many ways the early *Insight* was a profane magazine. There were so many objections raised over it that at the Autumn Council in 1973 it was voted that the *Insight* should be cleaned up. Reforms were made in the paper. However, consciences were by this time partially seared in the area of what was in poor taste, and little by little these objectionable features began to creep back in. Today our spiritually jaded eyes can hardly sense anything amiss in the way our literature is prepared.

A large part of the problem is in the art work. Inferior art is used—what Ellen White called "miserable daubs."<sup>1</sup>

Many drawings take on a cartoonish appearance. Ellen White said, "I hope our publications will not come to resemble a comic almanac."<sup>2</sup> Some of the art is surrealistic. But look at God's handiwork in nature. God is not a surrealist.

Some of the art work is profane in attitudes portrayed in the faces of young people. Some cartoons are funny, but not spiritually uplifting. To include such material in a paper dedicated to present the truths of the gospel to our youth is to offer strange fire. It is mixing the sacred and the common.

Advertising disco culture in our publications (November 6, 1979 *Insight*) is also not the part of wisdom. Many young people who have never been to such places, and would otherwise not go, may be thus interested in going to a modern discothèque to see for themselves what it is like. Notice that the psychedelic portrayal of disco was what was featured on the front cover. We are advertising the negative instead of the positive. It is a law of the human mind that by beholding we become changed. If we look at psychedelic disco, then we shall become like it even if we say why it is wrong and why we should not become like it. What we need in our publications as well as personally is to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and heavenly things. We need to look at realistic uplifting religious art--beautiful things. If we do not have sufficient talent to produce these, then we ought to feature beautiful scenes from nature. Even realistic black and white scenes are far more uplifting than black and white cartoons.

Almost every conceivable gross thing has been portrayed at one time or another in the *Insight* magazine. At one time a human head was portrayed, open at the top like a vase, in which were an assortment of vegetables such as celery and carrots. The obvious reference was to "vege-head,"—a term making fun of vegetarianism. Rather than uplifting vegetarianism, we poke fun at it and depreciate it,-

-no matter how we may uplift it with words in an inside article.

An issue of *Insight* in the later part of 1979 featured, on the cover and in an article, Mork of television's Mork and Mindy program. The article concluded that God was like Mork. What an insult to an omniscient and holy God! Mork has been portrayed as a virtual idiot, when it comes to understanding human ways. And he has many bizarre quirks. The article caused at least one person who had never watched Mork and Mindy before to tune in to that program. Why should we thus draw attention to secular T.V. programs in our religious papers? These things are all mixing the sacred and the common.

Mixing the sacred and the common in our youth papers was not alone done in the 1970s. It is still done in the 1990s, especially in youth temperance papers. Instead of saturating the children with cartoons, why not show the children realistic views of Jesus and heavenly things? The leaven of godliness has not entirely lost its power. Those things have an abiding appeal to sin sick souls.

Some of our youth outreach papers have stooped to using jargon and vulgar language in presenting the gospel. But such vulgar jargon is not pleasing to God. "God is not pleased with jargon and discord. Right is always more pleasing to him than wrong."<sup>3</sup>

In the area of music we have also in many ways followed the example of the worldly churches in incorporating soft rock music with gospel lyrics to produce religious music. The swiny music is presented in camp meetings—especially in the youth tents—and in evangelistic meetings. This is another way to mix the sacred and the common to lower the standards of piety.

Do not the words of Ezekiel 22:23-26 (quoted at the beginning of the chapter) apply with peculiar force to Seventh-day Adventists at this time? We have in many ways profaned God's holy things. What is the consequence for this course of action?

And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

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, saith the Lord God. Ezekiel 22:30, 31.

Severe and sudden judgments of God have always been the lot of those that profaned God's holy things—whether those who did so were God's professed people or heathen nations. Unless we repent of this evil, we cannot hope to escape the judgments of God.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 146.

## PART TWO

### THE MALACHI REPROOFS

I have been deeply impressed with the importance of studying the book of Daniel in connection with the smaller prophets, especially *Malachi*.—E. G. White, *Review and Herald*, November 10, 1896.

## Chapter 6

### INTRODUCTION TO MALACHI

The important distinction between the sacred and the common is brought out not only in the ancient Jewish sanctuary service, it is taught also in the book of Malachi. This book employs many different object lessons to show the error of profaning God's holy things. Since we have already demonstrated quite clearly that it is very important to keep holy things holy, and since we have already shown that Seventh-day Adventists have fallen short in this area, we will not need to prove these things for the first time from the texts of Malachi. The Malachi counsels, however, can broaden and deepen our insights in this field of Bible truth.

The subject of the intensive study of the group presented before Ellen White in her dream (recorded in the February 4, 1902 *Review and Herald* article) was Malachi in connection with other prophets. "Through the prophets," Ellen White explained, "God has given a delineation of what will come to pass in the last days of this earth's history; and the Jewish economy is full of instruction for us."<sup>1</sup> How can the Malachi message have such a profound meaning to last day Christians when it is "the burden of the word of the Lord to *Israel*?" Malachi 1:1.

The Apostle Paul explains the truth that in the Christian era Gentile Christians are, as it were, Abraham's seed, or Israelites; and they are heirs of the covenant promises made to Israel.

And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:29.

Peter speaks of the New Testament Christian Church as "an holy nation." 1 Peter 2:9. Paul calls it "the Israel of God." Galatians 6:15, 16. We often speak of the Christian Church as "spiritual Israel."

That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today. He has "let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen," even to His covenant-keeping people, who faithfully "render Him the fruits in their season." Never has the Lord been without true representatives on this earth who have made His interest their own. These witnesses for God are numbered among *spiritual Israel*, and to them will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people.<sup>2</sup> (Italics supplied.)

The reason the Malachi message can have a profound application to Seventh-day Adventists today is that the church now faces similar problems as did ancient Israel. The Lord has "let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen," and today is "the burden of the word of the Lord" addressed to *spiritual* "Israel by Malachi." Malachi 1:1.

"I have loved you, saith the Lord." Malachi 1:2.

This prelude to the Lord's remarks as spoken through Malachi is very important. In Malachi, the Lord has some very strong things to say to His people. There are strong rebukes and severe chastening. Lest His people should become discouraged, the first communication He has for them expresses His love to them. "I have loved you, saith the Lord." Zechariah amplifies the thought: "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." Zechariah 2:8. Through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord says, "Yea, I have

loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3. Ellen White expresses this beautiful truth as follows:

The Father loves His people today as He loves His own Son. Someday it will be our privilege to see Him face to face.—Manuscript 103, 1903. (Written Sept. 15, 1902.)

We should remember that the church, enfeebled and defective though it be, is the only object on earth on which Christ bestows His supreme regard. He is constantly watching it with solicitude, and is strengthening it by His Holy Spirit.—Manuscript 155, 1902. (Nov. 22, 1902.)<sup>3</sup>

The Apostle Paul has some words of counsel for those who feel themselves to be chastened by the Lord. These words of counsel would of course be applicable to those of us to whom the Malachi message is addressed.

My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Hebrews 12:5, 6.

Jesus Himself said in His message to the church of the Laodiceans, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Revelation 3:19.

I have loved you, saith, the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Malachi 1:2.

The word "wherein," in "Wherein hast thou loved us?" connotes, perhaps, a number of things. The question could mean, "How hast thou loved us?" (RSV), that is, "In what way have you loved us?" (LAMSA) Or the question could

mean, "How do we know that You have loved us?—what is there to prove it?" Or, again, "In what have you loved us?" (Amplified), that is, "What is there about us that you have loved as distinguished from what you may have seen in other people?" Most noticeable, however, the word "wherein," in various questions by the people in Malachi's book, epitomizes the self-justifying attitude of the people of Malachi's day.<sup>4</sup> If we apply this question to our own time, as Ellen White said was done in her dream, then we see that in God's estimation we also are prone to self-justification as a people.

God's condescension is amazing! Instead of condemning the ancient Jews and the modern spiritual Jews for being self-justifying, and dismissing the case at once, God patiently answers each one of our objections and disclaimers with clear proof of our condition. He does so in easy to understand illustrations, as we shall see in the remaining chapters in this section.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 713, 714.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 396.

<sup>4</sup>*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 4, p. 1124.

## Chapter 7

### THE JACOB-ESAU ILLUSTRATION

Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Malachi 1:2, 3.

God "hated Esau" is undoubtedly a typical oriental hyperbole, or exaggeration.<sup>1</sup> "Christ. . . . as the mind of God," "wept at Satan's woe," after Satan was ousted from heaven.<sup>2</sup> Jesus lovingly washed the feet of Judas on the night of the arrest, though He knew throughout His ministry that Judas would betray Him. (John 17:12.) Thus we can hardly imagine the God of love hating Esau in the strictest, severest sense of the word. God has ever demonstrated the amazing capacity for hating the sin, but loving the sinner. However, we should not take Malachi 1:2, 3 lightly. By contrasting love and hate, God shows a great difference in His attitude toward Jacob and Esau.

How is it that the Lord "loved Jacob" but "hated Esau"? Does God show unfair favoritism? This is not a new question. Paul writes:

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. Romans 9:13, 14.

Peter said: "God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Acts 10:34, 35.

The fault was Esau's, not God's. Esau was a "profane person." Hebrews 12:16. The erring, yet earnest and

penitent Jacob was infinitely more acceptable to God than was the profane and rebellious Esau. Note their contrast:

Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac, present a striking contrast, both in character and in life. . .

Esau grew up loving self-gratification and centering all his interest in the present. Impatient of restraint, he delighted in the wild freedom of the chase, and early chose the life of a hunter. Yet he was the father's favorite. The quiet, peace-loving shepherd was attracted by the daring and vigor of this elder son, who fearlessly ranged over mountain and desert, returning home with game for his father and with exciting accounts of his adventurous life. Jacob, thoughtful, diligent, and care-taking, ever thinking more of the future than the present, was content to dwell at home, occupied in the care of the flocks and the tillage of the soil. His patient perseverance, thrift, and foresight were valued by the mother. His affections were deep and strong, and his gentle, unremitting attentions added far more to her happiness than did the boisterous and occasional kindnesses of Esau. To Rebekah, Jacob was the dearer son.

The story of Esau and Jacob, Isaac and Rebekah is a tragic one. Yet the first allusion of the Malachi message (which brought repentance and revival to ministerial families in Ellen White's dream) is to Esau and Jacob. Is there something in this ensample (1 Corinthians. 10:11) applicable to the cases of present-day Seventh-day Adventists and their leaders?

Two sons were in line for the birthright. One, Esau, thought by Isaac to be the son eligible for the blessing, lightly esteemed the honor. The spiritual requirements of the birthright blessing were an unwelcome and even hateful restraint to him. Esau had no love of devotion, no

inclination to a religious life. "The law of God, which was the condition of the divine covenant with Abraham, was regarded by Esau as a yoke of bondage. Bent on self indulgence, he desired nothing so much as liberty to do as he pleased. To him power and riches, feasting and reveling, were happiness."<sup>4</sup> He centered all his interest in the present, the "now," so to speak, without a thought for eternal things.

Jacob's thoughts, on the other hand, were predominantly centered in the future. He was earnestly desirous of the birthright blessing—not for the material benefits, but for the close communion with God. With secret longing he listened to the stories of God's covenant with Abraham and God's dealings with his own father. Jacob coveted for himself the opportunity of being the family priest, of offering the family sacrifices. He longed for the birthright privilege of being a progenitor of Christ and a guardian of blessings vouchsafed for future generations. Though not completely converted during his youth, Jacob's earnest desire for spiritual things made him best suited for the blessing.

Yet, incredibly, Isaac was not interested in giving the birthright to Jacob. Cognizant of the angel's prophecy that the blessing should go to the younger son (Genesis 25:22, 23), importuned by his wife Rebekah to bless Jacob, the father nonetheless determined that Esau should be the one to be blessed. That was because Esau brought him wild game (Genesis 25:28). Year after year he held to his course. Even after Esau violated the covenant provisions by marrying two heathen women, Isaac resolutely maintained his purpose of blessing his favorite son Esau.

Inspiration records that "Isaac was in danger of incurring the divine displeasure and of debarring his younger son from the position to which God had called him."<sup>5</sup> Sensing this, and upon divining Isaac's plan to bless Esau in secret, Rebekah warned Jacob of his father's plan. She proposed a means of deception whereby the blind

patriarch Isaac would mistake Jacob for Esau, and pronounce the coveted blessing upon Jacob.

The subsequent events in the story are so familiar—Jacob's decision to obey his mother, the blessing received by fraud, the bitter anguish and murderous rage of Esau, the flight of Jacob to his uncle's home in Syria, etc. What heartache resulted! Rebekah never saw her son Jacob again. Isaac, brought to his senses too late to be of much blessing to his son Jacob, spent most of his declining years sorrowing for his error, vexed in spirit for the course of Esau, his heathen wives, and their children. Jacob, in one hour, had made cause for a life-long work of repentance.

Whose fault was it? Was Rebekah at fault? Yes. Had Rebekah had faith in God's promise to her—faith in God to work things out in His own way and time—she would not have recommended deception to Jacob as the means for securing his right. How differently might the story be written! Isaac might have been constrained by God to bless Jacob rather than Esau, just as years later God spoke blessings for Israel through the lips of Balaam when he sought to curse Israel. Numbers 22-24.

Was Jacob at fault? Yes. Had he a mature faith in God, he would not have spent years scheming how to secure the spiritual birthright his brother held so lightly. Neither would he have accepted his mother's suggestion of securing the birthright by deception. He would have waited patiently for God to work out His plan. He might have had many years by the side of his mother and father learning more of the things of God. The birthright would have come to him in due time, for God had so promised. What God promises, men are powerless to disannul.

Was the fault Esau's? Yes. Had Esau the character of Jacob, the birthright would have been his by right. Or, if he had told his father Isaac that he had sold his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage, and that he had confirmed the transaction with an oath, the father might have been turned from his mistaken purpose. Yes, the fault was Esau's, for

had it not been for his murderous rage, Jacob would not have had to flee to a distant land, never again to see his mother.

What about Isaac? Was the fault Isaac's? Yes. The fault was predominantly Isaac's. We often think of Esau and Jacob and forget that it was the father's life-long stubborn purpose, irrespective of prophecy, to bless the elder son that formed the framework for the whole tale of woe. How differently might history have been written had Isaac perceived the true characters of his two sons—had he valued and cultivated the graces found in Jacob's character, and faithfully dealt with Jacob's faults, pointing him to his high destiny! With a foreknowledge of the future of his sons, Isaac might have eased the way for Esau's acceptance of his station in life. There might have been no murderous rage with plans for revenge. In fact, there might have been more hope for Esau's eventual conversion. Isaac's plan to bless the unworthy son while excluding the worthy one from his due was no way of being a blessing to either. Isaac succeeded only in creating a severe generation gap in the line of succession of the spiritual heritage. He denied Jacob the fatherly confidences that might have helped him to prepare to be the priest of the family.

"The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi" today is this: "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." Malachi 1:1-3. It is not enough to be the son of Abraham, nor yet the son of Isaac (who was the son of promise). Romans 9:6-13. It is not enough to be of Adventist parentage, nor yet the son of a Seventh-day Adventist minister. The blessing of the Lord is only to those who, like Jacob, earnestly seek and long after righteousness. The Lord today, as in Isaac's day, can bless no profane person.

Youth of today, do you find yourself more closely resembling Esau in character than Jacob? Do you admit to being a member of the "Now" generation? That is, do you

center more of your attention in the present than in the future—in eternal things? Do you find the Bible standards to be a grievous yoke? Do you long, most of all, for freedom to do as you please? Do you enjoy the wild chase for pleasure? Or are you sober and thoughtful, industrious and patient. The "burden of the word of the Lord" is for you. You can be blessed of God, but not until you are willing to surrender any Esau disposition. God can accept no profane person. If you persist in maintaining a profane disposition, you must meet the continued resistance of God. This is implied by the next text in Malachi.

Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever. Malachi 1:4.

Edom, or the descendants of Esau, in our day represents all those who pattern themselves after the character of Esau. The decree of the Lord is that such persons may build, but God will throw down. The profane cannot truly succeed in this life, nor will they be admitted to the next.

No one needs to be an Esau. There is no hereditary or cultivated tendency to profaneness that the grace of Christ cannot change. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 3:7. It is true that "it is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.' Job 14:4."<sup>6</sup>

No man can of himself cast out the evil throngs that have taken possession of the heart. Only Christ can cleanse the soul temple. But He will not force an entrance. He comes not into the heart as to the

temple of old; but He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him" Rev. 3:20. He will come, not for one day merely; for He says, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; . . . and they shall be My people." "He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." 2 Cor. 6:16; Micah 7:19. His presence will cleanse and sanctify the soul, so that it may be a holy temple unto the Lord, and "an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2:21, 22.<sup>7</sup>

Young person, God is calling to you. Will you give Him your heart? God can transform an Esau into a Jacob, and He can change a Jacob into an Israel (a prince with God). But this grace of Christ we must earnestly desire. God will not force it upon us against our will. He stands longingly at our heart's door and knocks.

Why is the Esau-Jacob allusion included in the Malachi message? Is it predominantly for modern-day Esau's and Jacob's? Or is it included also for modern-day Isaac's? Family heads, ministers, church leaders: have you acted the part of Isaac in the recent past? Have you caused, or been party to, the creation of a break in the line of succession of a pure truth? That is, have you at all contributed to the adulteration of truth and the lowering of standards in seeking to bridge a "generation gap" with modern-day Esau's among your youth? Have you elevated unconsecrated persons in your families and churches, or in the church at large, to responsible positions? Have you been at all responsible for the introduction of profane and vulgar methods of witnessing and worship into the work of the church?

It is a solemn and tragic fact that such things have occurred in the Adventist church in recent years. Profane art and wording was a prominent part of the *Wayout*

material of the Voice of Prophecy, and plagued *Insight* magazine, *Liberty* and *Listen* magazines, and other journals.

How did this come about? Certain influential Adventist young people became intrigued with non-Adventist international campus revival movements. They openly advocated these movements on Adventist college campuses. Many young people and even a number of Adventist ministers and educators went to receive training from the movement headquarters. Several young people actually became staff workers in the movements. (This certainly should be sufficient to warn us of the error of this policy because of the following inspired statement: "We cannot now step off the foundation that God has established. We cannot now enter into any new organization; for this would mean apostasy from the truth."<sup>8</sup>) The Adventist church leaders, desirous of a revival and reformation in the Adventist church—one that would appeal to young people—sought out these young people, concluding they had best learned how to devise evangelistic methods for reaching the unchurched youth, especially on university campuses. These young people, trained in worldly methods of presenting the gospel, were set to work in the very heart of the Adventist church composing cartoon and psychedelic-color illustrated, jargon filled papers for youth. These young persons also recorded contemporary music, and took to the Adventist camp meeting stages.

Did we not already see how grossly evil is cartoonish and psychedelic art in religious media, we could see no wrong done in employing young people for the preparation of such outreach literature. We would think such was an honorable thing. However, such profane art and literature *is* evil. And the selection and elevation of such youth to originate that kind of material is therefore also evil. This is quite like the course that Isaac tried to pursue. We have passed by consecrated, godly youth (because they did not

fit into our plans of producing psychedelic and cartoonish literature), and advanced profane Esau-like youth who were eager to do such a work. This was blessing the profane, and withholding the birthright blessing from the more consecrated youth. God will hold some Isaac's responsible.

The Lord has been insulted. The standard of truth, of the first, second, and third angel's messages has been left to trail in the dust. If the watchmen are left to mislead the people in this fashion, God will hold some souls responsible for a lack of keen discernment to discover what kind of provender was being given to His flock.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 4, p. 1124.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Story of Redemption*, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 177.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>6</sup>Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 161, 162.

<sup>8</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 390.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 394.



## Chapter 8

### POLLUTED BREAD, BLIND SACRIFICES

We should remind ourselves periodically of two things as we consider God's reproofs for His people in Malachi: (1) The study which brought revival and reformation to the ministerial families in Ellen White's dream (recorded in February 4, 1902 *Review and Herald*), she said, was "Malachi, in connection with Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah." "Through the prophets, God has given a delineation of what will come to pass in the last days of this earth's history; and the Jewish economy is full of instruction for us."<sup>1</sup> As little as we may wish to admit it, the reproofs in Malachi appear to be applicable to us.

(2) The second point we must always bear in mind while we study these reproofs is that God said at the outset: "I have loved you, saith the LORD." Malachi 1:2. God speaks strong things to us, not because He has no use for us and doesn't care about us, but because He loves us and longs for us to make the necessary changes so that He can pour out His abundant blessings upon us. He wounds only that He may heal. He tears when necessary, only so that He can bind us up. Hosea 6:1. Let us continue receiving the chastening of the Lord in the right spirit.

A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master. If then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of host unto you, O priests, that despise my name. Malachi 1:6.

Our disregarding of the standards set forth by God regarding the sacred and the common is an insult to God. We are not showing Him due honor even as an earthly father, let alone "the everlasting Father" from heaven, the

Creator of all life (Isaiah 9:6; Genesis 1:1). We show much more deference for earthly rulers than for the Majesty of heaven. But this is not the fault merely of Seventh-day Adventist laity. The Lord is now addressing the clergy—"O priests, that despise my name."

And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar. . . .  
Malachi 1:6, 7.

Today ministers do not offer animal sacrifices and bread and wine upon an altar of burnt offering. Yet ministers still offer bread upon God's altar—spiritual bread. The spiritual application is so natural we often use this metaphor without explanation. The bread is the word of God. Polluted bread, then, must be religious teaching mixed with some error, or also the gospel in a profane media. Recall the collection of statements from Ellen White's writings quoted in Chapter 4 warning Adventists against the adoption of such practices in the publishing work. Consider also the record of the past and present in which we Adventists have violated these counsels (see Chapter 5). We know we are guilty. We have offered "polluted bread" upon God's altar. God says that this is evidence that we "despise" His name. Malachi 1:6.

Ellen White counsels, "My brethren, will you not give the flock of God *bread*, and not a stone? Never print in our papers *a word* that will lower the standard that God expects His people to meet."<sup>2</sup> (Italics added.) We should not consent to pollute the bread of God even with a single offensive word.

One of the most shocking pieces of reasoning that has been advanced in behalf of the psychedelic and vulgar *Wayout* material is this: It has been claimed that the material was not for Seventh-day Adventist consumption, as such, but for the folk that are on the campuses of worldly universities. Because it was not written specifically for the

Seventh-day Adventist youth, leading Adventist theologians were quite willing to go along with the wording—with the use of jargon in the papers. The idea is that the material is too vulgar for our own youth, but all right to win proselytes. Paul and Jesus condemned such evil reasoning.

"Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just." Romans 3:8.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Matthew 23:15.

If we use methods contrary to our consciences to win converts, the converts won by such methods will have no such qualms regarding the corrupt methods of presenting the gospel. To them, these methods will be the very power of God. And if baptized, these youth then become our youth, no longer of the refined class. We succeed only in polluting the church and in making converts worse than ourselves. This is how the great apostasy in the early Christian church occurred—lowering the standards of admission to church fellowship.

While we may not try the long hair approach as much, or find such novelty in sensational youth materials as we did in the early 1970s, and while some of our journals may have a much better style of art than during our most profane epoch (1970-1973), the phenomenon of "polluted bread" is not dead among us. It is growing back into prominence. Our eyes have beheld enough of the objectionable so that we do not need that pointed out to us. Our eyes need to be accustomed to heaven. The partial reformation that has taken place in recent years has not

been enough. God wants real purity in His work. May He help us to make every necessary change!

Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible. . . .

But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible.

Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts. . . .  
Malachi 1:7, 12, 13.

Have we ever said that the table of the Lord is contemptible? Have we ever said, "Behold, what a weariness is it!" Have we ever snuffed at it?

One could perhaps get more than one idea from the terminology "the table of the Lord." One could think of literal food and drink God would have His people partake of. Or we might get from these words the idea of spiritual fare—those agencies God has provided for our spiritual sustenance, such as Bible study and prayer.

Have we as a people ever been guilty of despising and ignoring the health counsels the Lord has given us in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy? We know we have. The health reform message is given to us by God.<sup>3</sup> God expects all Seventh-day Adventists to respect and obey this light.<sup>4</sup> These principles are not given to us in order that we may disregard them.<sup>5</sup> And yet how many of us do just that! So many of us have an alarming indifference regarding health principles.<sup>6</sup> Many offer flimsy excuses for neglecting the health reform.<sup>7</sup> Some even make health reform the subject of jest.<sup>8</sup> All this offends the Lord. He cannot pour out His richest blessings upon us until we make a thorough reformation in this area of our lives.

From the terminology "the table of the Lord," one could also get the idea of spiritual fare—those agencies God has

provided for our spiritual sustenance, such as Bible study and prayer. Have we ever in our history snuffed at (or despised) these, and called them a weariness? What about the following quotation from one issue of the *Insight* magazine?

IF PRAYER is a pleasure to you, don't read any further. If you love to ignore your friends, the stereo, shopping, homework, the TV, or your job and escape to your closet to talk to God, please stop reading. You don't need this article. Just go to your closet and pray for me and the people like me who need your prayers. We think prayer is a drag.<sup>9</sup>

"We think prayer is a drag." While one publicly admitted it in print, how many thought it and felt it? God said, "Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it." Malachi 1:13. What more perfect definition could there be of the modern slang expression, "drag"? "Drag," while literally meaning an impediment or hindrance, has been given the connotation of weariness, and is said as slang with a show of contempt.

What is the effect of calling prayer a "drag"? "But ye have profaned it." Malachi 1:12. Over, and over, and over again, in many different illustrations and ways, God reiterates His charge that we have profaned His holy things. God singles out this error above all other errors in His reproofs for His people in Malachi. Why? Is this the most offensive sin to God? Are we guilty of this sin more than any other? Or is this just the sin that self-righteous Laodicea, blind to its imperfections, can be convinced that it is guilty of? Whatever the reason, God continues to press this point home upon our consciences.

And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased

with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts. . . .

. . . and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.

But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen. Malachi 1:8, 13, 14.

What is meant by these words? The application of these phrases to the ancient Jews is more obvious than the application to us. In the time of Malachi animal sacrifices were offered, pointing forward to the coming "Lamb of God," the Messiah, which would take away the sin of the world. The ancient Jews were guilty of literally offering defective sacrifices.

Why should this be so offensive to God? Couldn't God be sympathetic with the people's need to retain a healthy breeding stock for their flocks? Why was God so insistent that only the best animals should be sacrificed? Ah!—because these animals represented Jesus. A corrupt sacrifice would signify a corrupt, defective Jesus, an imperfect Sacrifice. There would be no hope of salvation should any corruption or defect be found in the Messiah to come!

But what could these words mean to us? We do not, and are not required to, offer animal sacrifices today. Again we recall the clue in the February 4, 1902 *Review and Herald* article. "Scripture was compared with scripture, and application was made of the word of God to our own time." Let us compare scripture with scripture to see if there is any application of these verses in Malachi to our own time. What kind of sacrifices does God require of us today?

I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12:1, 2.

Today God wants us to offer unto Him ourselves, not to be burned on an altar, but to live and witness for Him. And he wants holy sacrifices! Obviously we are all sinners. This does not mean that we are to live before Him in this life with perfection of the flesh. But we need the perfection of Christ's righteousness imputed and imparted to us. We need to be obedient children of God, striving with all our God-given energies against the evils of the flesh and the world.

What does it mean when it says, "ye offer the blind for sacrifice"? God says this is evil. Obviously God is not offended when the physically blind, lame, sick, and torn come or are brought to the Great Physician. Our High Priest knows how to sympathize with, and strengthen and heal those with infirmities.

No, something else is here meant by blind sacrifices.

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; *and knowest*

*not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Revelation 3:14-19. (Emphasis added.)

Here we see that the blindness spoken of is spiritual blindness—thinking and feeling that we are quite all right when we are really blind, sick, and destitute. But again, God does not turn away from Him those spiritually blind who come to Him for eyesalve—correction. Something more offensive is meant by offering the blind for sacrifices. Maybe we can get a clue in this text:

But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing. . . . Malachi 1:14.

If the sacrifice represents an individual believer, then the flock represents a body of believers; and he who selects from the flock a sacrifice cannot be the individual layman believer, but must be the shepherd, the husbandman, the spiritual leader.

This clarification of the symbol puts a whole new light on the subject. "But cursed be the deceiver [the spiritual leader], which hath in his flock [his congregation] a male [an upright representative individual], and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord [sets apart for service] a corrupt thing [a profane, corrupt individual]." Malachi 1:14.

This is just the lesson that was taught before in the Jacob-Esau illustration! Isaac, the spiritual leader, was

determined to bless the unworthy son, Esau, and reject the worthy son, Jacob.

"But cursed be the deceiver. . . ." Malachi 1:14. God did not say, "cursed be the blind shepherd who ignorantly offereth unto the Lord a defective sacrifice." Neither did God bring a curse upon the shepherd for offering defective sacrifices when that is all he had to offer. No. "But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing." God is here speaking of deliberate deception—of knowing the existence of those that should be set apart for the gospel work, rejecting them because they are too strait-laced and conservative to fit into the planned development of profane gospel media, and selecting corrupt individuals, and setting them to work in the very heart of Adventism developing sensational witnessing materials. This is the charge that God levels at some Adventist leaders!

In a chapter of the Psalms that Ellen White said Adventists should read at least once a week in order to avoid the same mistakes that the ancient Israelites made,<sup>10</sup> is this remarkable passage:

They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them:

*But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.*

And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them.

*Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,*

And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.

Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.

And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.

Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand. Psalms 106:34-42. (Emphasis added.)

Adventist leaders obtaining advanced degrees from non-Adventist institutions mingled among the heathen and learned their works. Adventist youth attending and joining non-Adventist revival movements mingled among those who do not uphold God's holy law, nor keep God's seventh-day Sabbath. They mingled with those who teach the immortality of the soul and other kindred errors. They mingled among those whom the book of Revelation calls fallen Babylon, and they learned their works and their techniques. These profane, sacrilegious, and idolatrous techniques of presenting the gospel were then brought into the very heart of the Adventist youth work by church leaders sponsoring the work of these apostate Adventist youth.

While this course seemed right and was praised by many, there was a class of Adventist youth as well as older persons who were greatly grieved by this practice. This policy brought great mental and emotional suffering to some. There were those who would read their Bibles by the hour and pray and dream of having the opportunity to stand before their fellow Adventists and preach, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." 1 Kings 18:21. These youth dreamed of a great reformatory movement among Seventh-day Adventists, with real heart searching, and putting away of sins—with a real rebirth of spiritual life and zeal among God's people. These dreamed, but were not invited to speak. Those given prominence and speaking

opportunities were those who advocated the use of jargon, commercial art, vernacular music, and a religion in which one could be a Christian without trying.

Those leaders who worked to bring in these objectionable non-Adventist techniques into the Adventist youth work, and those leaders who could have raised a voice to stop this abomination, but didn't, did truly sacrifice their sons and their daughters unto devils. (Psalm 106:37.) They did not, of course, destroy their mortal lives on flaming altars to heathen deities. But they corrupted their own youth and placed their chances of eternal life in real jeopardy. Thousands of Adventist youth may be lost by espousing a corrupt, profane religion. Some may return before it is too late. But many will not. These have been truly sacrificed to devils! What a high crime against heaven! This is murder!

And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts. Malachi 1:9.

As serious as the matter is, as grievous as is the apostasy of God's people and their leaders, the prophet does not cast off all hope. Ellen White said of the Malachi message:

This failure to fulfill the divine purpose was very apparent in Malachi's day. Sternly the Lord's messenger dealt with the evils that were robbing Israel of temporal prosperity and spiritual power. In his rebuke against transgressors the prophet spared neither priests nor people. "The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel" through Malachi was that the lessons of the past be not forgotten and that the covenant made by Jehovah with the house of Israel be kept with fidelity. Only by heartfelt repentance

could the blessing of God be realized. "I pray you," the prophet pleaded, "beseech God that He will be gracious unto us." Malachi 1:1, 9.<sup>11</sup>

Thank God for the glimmer of hope we find in these passages! But the prophet pleads with the people to plead with God for forgiveness.

Some Adventist leaders have labored under the opinion that the laity are to be blamed for their failure to accept and practice the truth expounded correctly by the ministry. They seem to find in the laity some "scapegoat" to account for the long delay in the finishing of the church's gospel commission. Notice the following statement:

*Many Seventh-day Adventists* still seem ignorant of this all-important doctrine [righteousness by faith]. Much of this lack of awareness results from *their* failure to read Adventist books and periodicals presenting the gospel in clear, forceful language. . . .

We fear that to many *church members* the message of righteousness by faith has become a dry theory instead of a living reality in *their* daily experience.

*They* have neglected the light that God in His love and mercy has caused to shine upon them. *They* have failed to exchange the worthless garments of *their own* self-righteousness for the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness. In the sight of God *their* poor souls are naked and destitute. Unless *they* heed the counsel of the True Witness to buy of Him the white raiment, that the shame of *their* nakedness may not appear, *they* will soon be rejected by their Lord.<sup>12</sup>

The Lord through the prophet Malachi brings the charge closer to home. Addressing the ministry He says, "*Ye* offer polluted bread upon mine altar. . . . *Ye* say, The

table of the LORD is contemptible. . . . *Ye* offer the blind for sacrifice. . . . This hath been by *your* means (margin: from your hand)." Malachi 1:7-9. Ellen White said, "the members of our churches are not incorrigible; the fault is not so much to be charged upon them as upon their teachers. Their ministers do not feed them."<sup>13</sup>

The Lord probes even deeper the conscience of the ministry and their sense of security in their course of action. The Lord questions, "will He regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts." Malachi 1:9. The answer is obviously no.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Acts 10:34, 35.

Bible history makes plain that God does not pass over the sins of His chosen messengers, but exacts of them a closer account than of the common people. As an example on this point, consider the case of Moses. Burdened with the grumbling and rebellion of the Jewish people for 40 years, he made one slip of the tongue in anger and one disobedience of the command of God on the borders of Canaan. Numbers 20:7-12. As a consequence, God did not permit him to lead the children of Israel into Canaan. God's original plan was that Moses should be translated without seeing death after leading Israel into Canaan.<sup>14</sup> But as a result of his disobedience, Moses had to die alone on Mount Nebo before Israel entered Canaan.

Never, till exemplified in the sacrifice of Christ, were the justice and the love of God more strikingly displayed than in His dealings with Moses. God shut Moses out of Canaan, to teach a lesson which should never be forgotten—that He requires exact

obedience, and that men are to beware of taking to themselves the glory which is due to their Maker. He could not grant the prayer of Moses that he might share the inheritance of Israel, but He did not forget or forsake His servant. The God of heaven understood the suffering that Moses had endured; He had noted every act of faithful service through those long years of conflict and trial. On the top of Pisgah, God called Moses to an inheritance infinitely more glorious than the earthly Canaan. [Christ resurrected Moses and took him to heaven shortly after his death on Mount Nebo and his burial by angels.]<sup>15</sup>

Addressing the ministry the Lord again questions,

Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. Malachi 1:10.

The Lord does not want his workers to be mercenary. True, they must eat and be clothed and have housing and transportation for themselves and their families, but they should not expect a compensation for every act of service. They should have the spirit of self-sacrifice and commitment to their work—a compassion on the people—a willingness to serve the poor and the insignificant, as counted by men, without hope of reward or recognition.

*Do Not Hire Every Errand Done.*—Today, as in the days of Malachi, there are ministers who labor, not because they dare not do otherwise, not because the woe is upon them, but for the wages they are to receive. It is entirely wrong to hire every errand that is done for the Lord. The treasury of the Lord

has been drained by those who have been only an injury to the cause. If ministers give themselves wholly to the work of God, and devote all their energies to building up His cause, they will have no lack. As regards temporal things, they have a better portion than their Lord, and better than His chosen disciples, whom He sent forth (SW Jan. 3, 1905).<sup>16</sup>

The Lord desires us to rest in Him without a question as to our measure of reward. When Christ abides in the soul, the thought of reward is not uppermost. This is not the motive that actuates our service. It is true that in a subordinate sense we should have respect to the recompense of reward. God desires us to appreciate His promised blessings. But He would not have us eager for rewards nor feel that for every duty we must receive compensation. We should not be so anxious to gain the reward as to do what is right, irrespective of all gain. Love to God and to our fellow men should be our motive.<sup>17</sup>

In this chapter we have seen how offensive it is to the Lord to offer blind sacrifices unto God—that is, to set apart spiritually blind persons for a special work in the church. Not all youth set apart for service in the Adventist church in recent years have been profane like Esau, by any means. Hundreds of sincere godly youth have labored for the Master as student missionaries in foreign lands, and have done difficult door to door work in large American cities. Many fine youth have dedicated themselves to the gospel ministry, others to teaching, and others to medical work. But the blight that has come upon Adventism through the offering of blind sacrifices—spiritually blind persons—for work in preparing church papers and witnessing materials has brought a disastrous effect upon the work of Adventism. God does not reprimand us lightly for this

crime against heaven. It has gone beyond that. God has brought a curse upon us for doing this dreadful thing. "But cursed by the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen." Malachi 1:14.

Great as has been our sin, however, God has not wholly cast us off. He mercifully offers to renew His covenant with us, and restore us as His special people. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts." Malachi 3:7.

It seems as if every heart must respond to such an invitation. The God of heaven is pleading with His erring children to return to Him, that they may again co-operate with Him in carrying forward His work in the earth. The Lord holds out His hand to take the hand of Israel and to help them to the narrow path of self-denial and self-sacrifice, to share with Him the heirship as sons of God. Will they be entreated?<sup>18</sup>

God wills that a great reformation occur in His church—in Seventh-day Adventism—greater than any seen before. A reformation must come that will sweep not only the believers in one nation, but in every nation on earth, and will reach forth to affect all those also that have never heard the truths for this hour. God must have a pure people to carry the last warning message to every nation and kindred and tongue and people. The sanctity of God's holy name must be honored in every land. "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts." Malachi 1:11. There must be a great work of purification and putting away of sin among God's

people, so that they can offer unto the Lord "a pure offering,"—themselves, their children, and the members of their congregation, as well as their new converts they bring to the Lord.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 175.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diets and Foods*, p. 493.

<sup>4</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 311.

<sup>5</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diets and Foods*, p. 294.

<sup>6</sup>Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 195.

<sup>7</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 486.

<sup>8</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diets and Foods*, p. 400.

<sup>9</sup>"A Flowering Orange Tree in the Closet," *Insight*, July 4, 1972, p. 3 (author not credited to save embarrassment).

<sup>10</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 98, 99.

<sup>11</sup>Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 705.

<sup>12</sup>A. V. Olson, *Through Crisis to Victory, 1888-1901* (Wash. D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1966), pp. 233-239.

<sup>13</sup>Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, No. 10, November, 1890.

<sup>14</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 478.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.* p. 479.

<sup>16</sup>Ellen G. White, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1180.

<sup>17</sup>Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 398, 399.

<sup>18</sup>Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 706, 707.

## Chapter 9

### CURSED MEN AND CURSED MEETINGS

And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you.

If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

Behold, I will reprove your seed [marginal reading], and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts, and one shall take you away with it. Malachi 2:1-3.

When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Isaiah 1:12-15.

The lights of the packed coliseum were dimmed. On the left a large Olympic style flaming torch cast a flickering light. Robed choir members filed down the aisle on the floor of the coliseum on their way up to the platform. They sang softly in unison, a capella, an introit in a minor key. The scene seemed already foreign to Adventists, giving

some viewers the sensation of witnessing the chanting of an eerie medieval procession. Bass timpani, trumpets and cymbals manned by youth began a heart thumping fanfare, announcing, **PRAISE IN THE 150TH DIMENSION!** This was the closing service of the Portland Youth's Congress in April, 1969.

The service was structured on the order of Psalm 150, which reads:

PRAISE ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.

Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

The young stage crew dramatized this psalm before an incredulous audience. The narrator read a portion of his script. The youth on the stage played the music called for and acted out the psalm. The public address system played sound effects, and the audience was instructed to respond at intervals with a fervent, Praise God! When the script called for the sound of the trumpet, a real trumpet sounded. When the script called for a harp, a young person played a harp. And, astonishingly, when the script called for a dance, a young couple danced—not the holy kind of dance as was known in Old Testament times (but is wholly unknown today),<sup>1</sup>—but the revolting ballet and gymnastics spectacle of a shapely young woman in very tight, revealing, white leotards chased by a muscular oriental young man in black leotards. The woman in white was

supposed to represent Miriam; the man in black, Pharaoh, with secondary application being the Adventist church and Satan.

The man chased the woman up successive tiered levels of the platform, a brilliant spotlight following them, until the woman in ballet form and grace turned around, kneeled down, stretched out wide her arms, put her head and neck back, arching forward her torso in a manner that exaggerated her ample bosom. For many seconds, a seeming eternity, the spotlight focused on that semi-exposed female form. (The television equipment simultaneously enlarging the spectacle on a huge screen was unable to distinguish the white skinned girl from the white leotards, and the shocking appearance was as though the girl had walked nude out onto the huge screen). To the sound effects of the crashing of great waters the man in black somersaulted, spun and crashed down the tiered levels of the platform, until he flopped prostrate. Then the woman in triumph danced down the levels of the platform shaking her tambourine. The scene was supposed to symbolize the triumph of Miriam and Israel over Pharaoh and his armies, with a secondary glimpse of the triumph of the Adventist church over Satan.

In a bizarre bedlam of noise, the program also featured the tape recorded sound effects of the bleating of sheep, while the narrator said, "the sheep in the pastures praise the Lord." Then came a cacophony of blaring horns and traffic noise in the city, as the narrator said, "the cars in the city praise the Lord. Everything on earth praises the Lord."

A young man stood in the rear of the auditorium, taking in the scene. He had never in his life had such a feeling of the oppressive presence of Satan in any meeting, Adventist or otherwise. Grief and righteous indignation flooded through his breast. He had the sensation of walking down from the mountain of God with Moses, from holy communion with God, to behold the licentious dancing of the children of Israel before the golden calf; and also of

walking beside Jesus as He entered the precincts of the court of the Jewish temple to hear and behold a bedlam of the bleating of sheep and the lowing of frightened and hungry cattle as they were being bought and sold for sacrifices by exacting money changers. The young man had an overpowering impulse to make his way to the stage of the auditorium, and, in the name of the Lord, demand that this abomination be immediately stopped. His heart raced as the adrenalin poured through his veins as he contemplated the move. The Bible heroes of old would have done such a thing. He ought to do it. He wanted to do it. But he could not bring himself to move. His courage failed him as he considered what would be thought of him and what would be done to him if he were to disrupt such a service that the church leadership had been so bent on carrying through.

His mind raced over the events of the past week. Only last Sunday night he had learned from a fellow student, who was to be in the choir, that Elder D was in charge of, and was to be the narrator of, the final service at the Youth's Congress. "Oh no!" the young man had thought. "Not Elder D!"

The young man had reasons for considering Elder D the worst possible man to be in charge of the closing service of the Youth's Congress. In a required attendance chapel service, the young man had heard this very theology professor say: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers...." (Ephesians 4:11) Today we have many evangelists and pastors and teachers in the church. But sometimes we need the voice of a prophet. Today I come to you in the role of a prophet, saying, 'Campus Crusade for Christ is the right revolution [which term the speaker had earlier equated with revival and reformatory movements]. And if you do not believe it, I **DARE** you to go out and try it and **see** for yourself!' Since Ellen White said, "We cannot now enter any new organization; for this would

mean apostasy from the truth,"<sup>2</sup> the youth considered this dare to be satanic and pure heresy. And since the minister made the unusual claim that he was then speaking in the role of a prophet, the young man had concluded that this theology professor was a false prophet. Thus when he learned the Sunday evening prior to the Youth's Congress that this minister was in charge of the closing service, he was greatly alarmed.

That young man did not sleep well that Sunday night. About 4:00 A.M. Monday morning he arose and walked four miles to Whitman National Monument. There, as the first light of dawn began to appear, he kneeled in the dewy grass of the graveyard. He poured out his concern to God regarding the potential spiritual disaster that could occur that weekend at the closing service of the Youth's Congress at Portland, Oregon. He pleaded with God for guidance. "God, what do you want me to do?"

A sudden strong impression and conviction came to him. He remembered the JMV law: "Go on God's errands." He was impressed to hurry back to his room in the village, borrow money from the folks he was staying with, skip classes at the college, and fly to Portland that very day to seek an appointment with the General Conference representative, whoever he might be, that had undoubtedly come early to prepare for the ensuing Youth's Congress. He was impressed that the General Conference youth leader would be at the Union Conference office at Portland, and that he would be able to see him prior to the Youth's Congress, but that the leader would be too busy to talk to him during the Congress. The youth hastily retraced his steps, and did fly that very morning to Portland.

That evening he had a short interview with the General Conference leader, who had indeed come early to Portland. The youth secured an appointment to see the leader the following morning at the Union Conference office. The next morning, when the appointment time came, he was ushered into the Union Conference President's office, then

being temporarily used by the General Conference youth leader.

The youth presented his strange request—that the false prophet theology professor not be allowed to have the closing service as planned. The youth told the story of the professor's dare in a required chapel at college. He told how the audience clapped as that theology professor finished his sermon. He told how that he had approached the Vice President of the college and showed him the statements from the Spirit of Prophecy that proved the dare was satanic. The youth shared these same statements with the General Conference leader. He also told how that he had confronted the false prophet himself in his own office with these same statements from the Spirit of Prophecy. He described the professor's reaction.

The professor had first tried to sway the youth with philosophy. He tried to undermine the youth's confidence in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy by citing so-called contradictions in them. The youth was not impressed. He challenged the professor, "Show me from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy that you are right and I am wrong and I will be your first disciple, and I will champion your cause. But you cannot do it, and you know you cannot do it."

At this the professor became angry and a strange look came into his eyes. The youth had the sensation of looking into the eyes of another being. The professor said, "I have taken my position. I'm taking my stand on the side of Campus Crusade for Christ."

The youth countered, "Aren't you gambling with eternity? We shouldn't gamble with eternity!"

The professor said, "I am gambling with eternity. I know I am gambling with eternity. But whether I am saved or lost, I have made my decision."

The youth explained to the General Conference leader that any one that had so fully sold himself to the side of apostasy was not a safe individual to entrust with the final

service of a Youth's Congress—the service that everyone will remember more than any other service at the Congress.

The youth was astonished by the General Conference leader's answers. The leader said, "Ernie (that was not his real name), we at the General Conference know all about Dr. D and his problems. We have already heard all about this. For that reason we have not permitted him to preach a sermon. He is only going to have a musical, and he can't do any harm with a musical."

The youth urged that one so fully surrendered to Satan might indeed do harm with a musical. He pleaded, "Please, let any one have the closing service, but not Dr. D."

When every other excuse was exhausted, the General Conference leader finally said, "Ernie, This program has been planned right down to the minute. I don't care if the General Conference President were here in person, he could not stop it now."

The youth was stunned. He thought to himself, "If Jesus were here, I wonder if He could stop it now?"

All these thoughts raced through his mind as the youth stood at the rear of the coliseum watching the debacle. The closing service was even worse than he had feared it would be. The prophecy of Ellen White was then fulfilled to the letter:

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*.

The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a *bedlam of noise*. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere,

elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into *our camp meetings*. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working.<sup>3</sup> (Italics added.)

The oppressive sense of the presence of demonic powers at the meeting that many people felt was also in accordance with the prophecy of Ellen White:

I was instructed to say that at these demonstrations demons in the form of men are present, working with all the ingenuity that Satan can employ to make the truth disgusting to sensible people; that the enemy was trying to arrange matters so that the camp meetings, which have been the means of bringing the truth of the third angel's message before multitudes, should lose their force and influence.<sup>4</sup>

The author knows of only one such fulfillment of this dramatic prediction of Ellen White so far—the Youth's Congress in Portland, Oregon in April of 1969. Yet the modern Celebration Church Movement is training the Adventist people in the Pentecostal style of worship, a step at a time, so that religious rock music, jazz, and religious dancing become not only tolerated, but regarded as the deep working of the Holy Spirit among us. God says such meetings are cursed, and the men who present them are

cursed—cursed with a curse that will not be lifted until and unless they truly repent and have a change of heart.

. . . the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Isaiah 1:13.

And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you.

If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

Behold, I will reprove your seed [marginal reading], and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts, and one shall take you away with it. Malachi 2:1-3.

In a lesser sense corruption has afflicted many camp meetings. The words of Ellen White have been fulfilled: "Satan will make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted."<sup>5</sup> Some of our beloved radio and television singers, who have sung for the Lord for years, have turned to singing the modern jazzy gospel music. For several years they tried singing this newer class of music to everyone at the camp meetings. But there arose a storm of opposition from the adults. Some singers then sang the non-objectionable music in the adult auditoriums, and reserved the swinging, jazzy music for the youth, with the apology that the youth appreciate it, even though the adults are not "with it." This inconsistent, deceptive course has angered many parents and has disgusted even worldly Adventist youth. Young people have questioned why they should even try to be Christians when the respected leaders of the church compromise their standards so. Who will

ever be able to measure the negative impact of such inconsistencies until the judgment?

Much of the youth work in the church is diseased and polluted. Abominations that are not tolerated in the adult materials are the common fare of the youth programs. God says,

Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. .

..

Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah. Isaiah 1:4-6, 9.

The Lord pleads with His people:

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Isaiah 1:16-18.

The Lord then warns:

If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. Isaiah 1:19, 20.

The apostasy amid God's true people is hard to fathom. It is incredible. The Lord laments,

How is the faithful city become an harlot: it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. Isaiah 1:21-23.

Adventism has warned the world of the whoredoms of Babylon. Adventism is not now, nor ever will be Babylon, but Adventism has also been unfaithful to her Lord. "How is the faithful city become an harlot!" is the exclamation of the Lord. How far have we fallen in our recent apostasy! The Lord has given us solemn written notice as to what shall take place if we do not repent:

Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed. Isaiah 1:25-28.

The Lord will not utterly destroy us as He will apostate Babylon, but He will cleanse the church by the destruction of the revolters within her. It seems from the writings of Ellen White that this destruction will be quite literal. And from this text in Isaiah, this appears to take place prior to the close of probation of the world at large for God will "restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city." Isaiah 1:26.

God is about to cleanse His church. The church needs it. As we see the day fast approaching when the abominations and the abominable will be swept out, our hearts are filled with hope. Yet with great urgency and desire of heart we yearn after the souls of those who are now partaking in the general apostasy. We do not wish to see any lost. May God help the sinners in Zion to awaken to their true peril!

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 707.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 390.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 36. (Italics added.)

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 38.

## Chapter 10

### COVENANT OF LEVI CORRUPTED

. . . And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.

Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers? Malachi 2:4-10.

Meetings in which there are music and dancing and a bedlam of noise in worshipping God are reminiscent of the dancing around the golden calf at the foot of Mount Sinai by the children of Israel. The heroes at that occasion were the children of Levi. God reminds His church leaders of this fact in the next object window showing the evils of profaning the holiness of the Lord.

Shortly after God declared the Ten Commandment Law from Mount Sinai in glory and majesty, and while the cloud of the divine presence was still hovering over Sinai, the Lord called Moses up into the Mount. During the 40 days that Moses and Joshua were in the mount, God gave Moses statutes and judgments, instructions regarding the erection of a tabernacle sanctuary, explanation regarding its services, and a written transcript of the Ten Commandments, engraved in stone by the finger of God.

The people waiting in the camp for Moses' return were quite unprepared for such a long delay. They began to fear that Moses had been slain by the glory of God in the mount, and that they were without a leader. But whether Moses was living or dead, the children of Israel were tired of waiting for him. They were impatient to be on their way to the Promised Land—the land flowing with milk and honey. Some suggested a return to Egypt, but whether forward to Canaan or backward to Egypt, the masses of people were determined to wait no longer for Moses.

Accustomed as they were to the idolatry of Egypt, the Jews, but especially the mixed multitude, had difficulty worshipping and following an invisible God. They had come to rely heavily upon their visible leader Moses. Now that he was gone from them, they felt helpless and confused. Returning to their old superstitions, they clamored for a visible representation of the Deity to go before them in the place of Moses.

The judicial authority had been delegated by God to Aaron during the interval of Moses' absence. Therefore the people came to Aaron with their proposition. A vast and tumultuous crowd gathered about his tent, demanding, "Make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." Exodus 32:1.

Such a crisis demanded a man of firmness, decision, and unflinching courage; one who held the

honor of God above popular favor, personal safety, or life itself. But the present leader of Israel was not of this character. Aaron feebly remonstrated with the people, but his wavering and timidity at the critical moment only rendered them the more determined. The tumult increased. A blind, unreasoning frenzy seemed to take possession of the multitude. There were some who remained true to their covenant with God, but the greater part of the people joined in the apostasy. A few who ventured to denounce the proposed image making as idolatry, were set upon and roughly treated, and in the confusion and excitement they finally lost their lives.

Aaron feared for his own safety; and instead of nobly standing up for the honor of God, he yielded to the demands of the multitude. His first act was to direct that the golden earrings be collected from all the people and brought to him, hoping that pride would lead them to refuse such a sacrifice. But they willingly yielded up their ornaments; and from these he made a molten calf, in imitation of the gods of Egypt. The people proclaimed, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And Aaron basely permitted this insult to Jehovah. He did more. Seeing with what satisfaction the golden god was received, he built an altar before it, and made proclamation, "Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord." The announcement was heralded by trumpeters from company to company throughout the camp. "And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." Under the pretense of holding "a feast to the Lord," they gave themselves up to gluttony and licentious reveling.<sup>1</sup>

Ellen White declares that modern humanity is guilty of similar sins:

How often, in our own day, is the love of pleasure disguised by a "form of godliness"! A religion that permits men, while observing the rites of worship, to devote themselves to selfish or sensual gratification, is as pleasing to the multitudes now as in the days of Israel. And there are still pliant Aarons, who, while holding the positions of authority in the church, will yield to the desires of the unconverted, and thus encourage them in sin.<sup>2</sup>

At first glance, the idolatry at Sinai and psychedelic, comic, and vulgar gospel outreach literature, religious rock and jazz and religious dancing seem to be completely dissimilar and unrelated things. What does bowing down to a golden calf have in common with preparing Bible course materials? Were there nothing wrong with the materials there would be nothing in common between the two. However, the psychedelic and vulgar materials profane the holiness of the Lord. The golden calf at Sinai did the same. The idolatry at Sinai was a form of worship that God could not accept. Thus it was a worship of a false god. The use of profane media in the gospel outreach is a form of religious worship that God cannot accept. Therefore it is the worship of a false god. It was the common people that demanded of pliant Aaron that the golden calf be made. And it was lay people that demanded of obliging church leaders that we should use contemporary jargon, vernacular music, and commercial art in presenting the gospel. Popular youth from Adventist campuses approached Adventist leaders with the claim:

We have become stereotyped in our techniques of presentation. We are afraid to speak the contemporary mind in a contemporary way, lest we

should become worldly, and "drag God down to our own level."

Unless we radically change our methods in relation to evangelism, we are through: This includes such things as using contemporary jargon, vernacular music, commercial art, motion pictures, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Like Aaron of old, church leaders basely complied with the demand, and set youth to work in devising the *Wayout* materials, and in replacing the *Youth's Instructor* with a contemporary styled journal, *Insight*.

Only a few days had passed since the Hebrews had made a solemn covenant with God to obey His voice. They had stood trembling with terror before the mount, listening to the words of the Lord, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." The glory of God still hovered above Sinai in the sight of the congregation; but they turned away, and asked for other gods. "They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox." Psalm 106:19, 20. How could greater ingratitude have been shown, or more daring insult offered, to Him who had revealed Himself to them as a tender father and an all-powerful king!<sup>4</sup>

Our sin in mixing the vulgar with the sacred in presenting the gospel also comes in the category of acts prohibited by the first table of the Decalogue—commandments defining love to God. Mixing the vulgar with the sacred in the gospel presentation is profaning the holiness of the Lord. Profanity is the broader sin that is prohibited in the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Exodus

20:7. How can we Seventh-day Adventists defend the claims of the fourth commandment before the world, and thoughtlessly trample under foot the third commandment? "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

Moses was warned by God of the apostasy in Israel, and was instructed to return to the camp without delay.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:

They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:

Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. Exodus 32:7-10.

The people had broken the covenant they had made with God, and justice demanded they should be destroyed. The Lord therefore proposed to destroy them and make of Moses a great nation.

"Let Me alone, . . . that I may consume them," were the words of God. If God had purposed to destroy Israel, who could plead for them? How few but would have left the sinners to their fate! How few but would have gladly exchanged a lot of toil

and burden and sacrifice, repaid with ingratitude and murmuring, for a position of ease and honor, when it was God Himself that offered the release.

But Moses discerned ground for hope where there appeared only discouragement and wrath. The words of God, "Let Me alone," he understood not to forbid but to encourage intercession, implying that nothing but the prayers of Moses could save Israel, but that if thus entreated, God would spare His people. He "besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against Thy people, which Thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?"

God had signified that He disowned His people. He had spoken of them to Moses as "*thy* people, which *thou* broughtest out of Egypt." But Moses humbly disclaimed the leadership of Israel. They were not his, but God's—"Thy people, which *Thou* hast brought forth . . . with great power, and with a mighty hand. Wherefore," he urged, "should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did He bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?"

During the few months since Israel left Egypt, the report of their wonderful deliverance had spread to all the surrounding nations. Fear and terrible foreboding rested upon the heathen. All were watching to see what the God of Israel would do for His people. Should they now be destroyed, their enemies would triumph, and God would be dishonored. The Egyptians would claim that their accusations were true—instead of leading His people into the wilderness to sacrifice, He had caused them to be sacrificed. They would not consider the sins of Israel; the destruction of the people whom He had so signally honored, would

bring reproach upon His name. How great the responsibility resting upon those whom God has highly honored, to make His name a praise in the earth! With what care should they guard against committing sin, to call down His judgments and cause His name to be reproached by the ungodly!<sup>5</sup>

Have we not, like Israel of old, put God in a difficult spot? Have we not also sinned grievously against our Lord by corrupting portions of our literature with psychedelic and comic art? Have we not profaned the holiness of the Lord which we loved by using vulgar and slang jargon in presenting the gospel? Are we not guilty of permitting and even sanctioning swing music and gospel rock in many of our evangelistic meetings and camp meetings? Have not a great number of us lowered our standards of dress and deportment, including the wearing of jewelry? Have we not in these and other similar ways retreated spiritually toward Egypt? The most amazing thing is that this idolatry and sacrilege has gone virtually unrebuked for years. We are deserving of the strictest punishment and retribution from God. But what if God should give us exactly what we deserved? What if God would destroy the Seventh-day Adventist church and begin again with a small remnant? We may not realize it, but the world has been watching to see what would become of Seventh-day Adventists. We have claimed to be God's true last-day remnant church. Providence has interposed marvelously for us. Our message has gone nearly to all the world. God has promised that this church will go through to the end.<sup>6</sup> There is to be no new organization.<sup>7</sup> If, because of our heinous apostasy on the borders of the heavenly Canaan God should abolish this church and start over with a small remnant, God would be made a liar! Love to God should lead us to repent of our wicked ways and cease being a reproach to our God.

God's commandment-keeping people are described by the prophet as "men wondered at." We are to be a people distinct from the world. The eyes of the world are upon us, and we are observed by many of whom we have no knowledge. There are those who know something of the doctrines we claim to believe, and they are noting the effect of our faith upon our characters. They are waiting to see what kind of influence we exert, and how we carry ourselves before a faithless world. The angels of heaven are looking upon us. "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men" (1 Cor. 4:9).<sup>8</sup>

God says to His people, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. . . ."

Leaving the first love is represented as a spiritual fall. Many have fallen thus. In every church in our land, there is needed confessions, repentance, and reconversion. The disappointment of Christ is beyond description.... Christ is humiliated in His people. . . .

My brethren and sisters, humble your hearts before the Lord. . . . I cannot fail to see that the light which God has given to me is not favorable to our ministers or our churches. . . . The message to the Laodicean church reveals our condition as a people.<sup>9</sup>

Brethren, there is that fearful word also that touches that very thought, that came to us from Australia by Ellen G. White. It is the testimony entitled, "The Crisis Imminent." What does that say?—"Something great and decisive is to take place, and that right early. If any delay, the character of God and His throne will be

compromised." Brethren, by our careless, indifferent attitude, we are putting God's throne into jeopardy. Why cannot He work? God is ready. Are not God's workmen ready? But if there is any delay, "the character of God and His throne is jeopardized." Is it possible that we are about to risk the honor of God's throne? Brethren, for the Lord's sake, and for His throne's sake, let us get out of the way.<sup>10</sup>

What we need as a people is just one glimpse of Jesus. We need to see the sorrow and hurt in His eyes as He views our condition. In love and pity for the Saviour, we would repent, and repent in a hurry!

As Moses interceded for Israel, his timidity was lost in his deep interest and love for those for whom he had, in the hands of God, been the means of doing so much. The Lord listened to his pleadings, and granted his unselfish prayer. God had proved His servant; He had tested his faithfulness and his love for that erring, ungrateful people, and nobly had Moses endured the trial. His interest in Israel sprang from no selfish motive. The prosperity of God's chosen people was dearer to him than personal honor, dearer than the privilege of becoming the father of a mighty nation. God was pleased with his faithfulness, his simplicity of heart, and his integrity, and He committed to him, as a faithful shepherd, the great charge of leading Israel to the Promised Land.

As Moses and Joshua came down from the mount, the former bearing the "tables of the testimony," they heard the shouts and outcries of the excited multitude, evidently in a state of wild uproar. To Joshua the soldier, the first thought was of an attack from their enemies. "There is a noise

of war in the camp," he said. But Moses judged more truly the nature of the commotion. The sound was not that of combat, but of revelry. "It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome; but the noise of them that sing do I hear."<sup>11</sup>

As they drew near the camp, they saw the people shouting and dancing around their idol. How unlike the solemn and reverent worship of God was this! The scene was no different than the idolatrous feasts of Egypt. "It was a scene of heathen riot."<sup>12</sup>

Moses was overwhelmed. He had just come from the presence of God's glory, and though he had been warned of what was taking place, he was unprepared for that dreadful exhibition of the degradation of Israel. His anger was hot. To show his abhorrence of their crime, he threw down the tables of stone, and they were broken in the sight of all the people, thus signifying that as they had broken their covenant with God, so God had broken His covenant with them.

Entering the camp, Moses passed through the crowds of revelers, and seizing upon the idol, cast it into the fire. He afterward ground it to powder, and having strewed it upon the stream that descended from the mount, he made the people drink of it. Thus was shown the utter worthlessness of the god which they had been worshipping

The great leader summoned his guilty brother and sternly demanded, "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" Aaron endeavored to shield himself by relating the clamors of the people; that if he had not complied with their wishes, he would have been put to death. "Let not the anger of my lord wax hot," he

said; "thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf." He would lead Moses to believe that a miracle had been wrought—that the gold had been cast into the fire, and by supernatural power changed to a calf. But his excuses and prevarications were of no avail. He was justly dealt with as the chief offender.

The fact that Aaron had been blessed and honored so far above the people was what made his sin so heinous. It was Aaron "the saint of the Lord" (Psalm 106:16), that had made the idol and announced the feast. It was he who had been appointed as spokesman for Moses, and concerning whom God Himself had testified, "I know that he can speak well" (Exodus 4:14), that had failed to check the idolaters in their heaven-daring purpose. He by whom God had wrought in bringing judgments both upon the Egyptians and upon their gods, had heard unmoved the proclamation before the molten image, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." It was he who had been with Moses on the mount, and had there beheld the glory of the Lord, who had seen that in the manifestation of that glory there was nothing of which an image could be made—it was he who had changed that glory into the similitude of an ox. He to whom God had committed the government of the people in the absence of Moses, was found sanctioning their rebellion. "The Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him." Deuteronomy 9:20. But in answer to the earnest

intercession of Moses, his life was spared; and in penitence and humiliation for his great sin, he was restored to the favor of God.

If Aaron had had courage to stand for the right, irrespective of consequences, he could have prevented that apostasy. If he had unswervingly maintained his own allegiance to God, if he had cited the people to the perils of Sinai, and had reminded them of their solemn covenant with God to obey His law, the evil would have been checked. But his compliance with the desires of the people and the calm assurance with which he proceeded to carry out their plans, emboldened them to go to greater lengths in sin than had before entered their minds.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, could not our current apostasy have been prevented if our church leaders had maintained unswerving allegiance to God, irrespective of consequences? The clamors of Esau-like Adventist youth for vulgar literature could have been denied. Only the highest quality of religious art might have flowed from our denominational presses. The demands of the people may have been strong, but it would seem that earnest admonition from the word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy could have closed the door on this abomination. But instead the leaders sponsored these profane materials. Now, when some are reprovved for this work, they with pleasant speech and dignified assurance maintain the position they have taken.

When Moses, on returning to the camp, confronted the rebels, his severe rebukes and the indignation he displayed in breaking the sacred tables of the law were contrasted by the people with his brother's pleasant speech and dignified demeanor, and their sympathies were with Aaron. To justify himself, Aaron endeavored to make the

people responsible for his weakness in yielding to their demand; but notwithstanding this, they were filled with admiration of his gentleness and patience. But God seeth not as man sees. Aaron's yielding spirit and his desire to please had blinded his eyes to the enormity of the crime he was sanctioning. His course in giving his influence to sin in Israel cost the life of thousands. In what contrast with this was the course of Moses, who, while faithfully executing God's judgments, showed that the welfare of Israel was dearer to him than prosperity or honor or life.

Of all the sins that God will punish, none are more grievous in His sight than those that encourage others to do evil. God would have His servants prove their loyalty by faithfully rebuking transgression, however painful the act may be. Those who are honored with a divine commission are not to be weak, pliant time-servers. They are not to aim at self-exaltation, or to shun disagreeable duties, but to perform God's work with unswerving fidelity.<sup>14</sup>

God granted the prayer of Moses, and spared Israel from destruction. However, their apostasy was to be signally punished. If the lawlessness and insubordination were not crushed speedily, the whole nation would be involved in irretrievable ruin. "By terrible severity the evil must be put away."<sup>15</sup>

Standing in the gate of the camp, Moses called to the people, "Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me." Those who had not joined in the apostasy were to take their position at the right of Moses; those who were guilty but repentant, at the left. The command was obeyed. It was found that the tribe of Levi had taken no part in the idolatrous

worship. From among other tribes there were great numbers who, although they had sinned, now signified their repentance. But a large company, mostly of the mixed multitude that instigated the making of the calf, stubbornly persisted in their rebellion. In the name of "the Lord God of Israel," Moses now commanded those upon his right hand, who had kept themselves clear of idolatry, to gird on their swords and slay all who persisted in rebellion. "And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." Without regard to position, kindred, or friendship, the ringleaders in wickedness were cut off; but all who repented and humbled themselves were spared.

Those who performed this terrible work of judgment were acting by divine authority, executing the sentence of the King of heaven. Men are to beware how they, in their human blindness, judge and condemn their fellow men; but when God commands them to execute His sentence upon iniquity, He is to be obeyed. Those who performed this painful act, thus manifested their abhorrence of rebellion and idolatry, and consecrated themselves more fully to the service of the true God. The Lord honored their faithfulness by bestowing special distinction upon the tribe of Levi.<sup>16</sup>

Here is where the tribe of Levi comes into the story. Levi, their father, had originally lost his inheritance among his brethren because of his part in the cruelty that Simeon and he perpetrated toward the Shechemites, and also for his guilt in being largely responsible for the selling of Joseph. Concerning Simeon and Levi, the dying Jacob prophesied—

"I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." Genesis 49:7.

Now this curse upon Levi was to be turned into a blessing. Of all the tribes of Israel, Levi alone refrained from the idolatry at Sinai. God therefore pronounced a special blessing upon the tribe of Levi, and entered into a covenant with them.

My covenant was with him of life and peace;  
and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he  
feared me, and was afraid before my name.  
Malachi 2:5.

God gave the tribe of Levi life and peace because of their fidelity to God.

The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity  
was not found in his lips: he walked with me in  
peace and equity, and did turn many away from  
iniquity. Malachi 2:6.

The dispersion of the tribe of Levi among the other tribes was turned into a blessing. The Levites were to be priests and teachers over the people—instructors in every city. They were to minister in the tabernacle sanctuary, and later in the permanent temple. They were to represent the interests of God to the people. Theirs was a holy and sacred calling.

Unfortunately, the solemn and holy covenant between God and the tribe of Levi was corrupted. The priests did not retain the truths of God. They presumed upon their high station to teach tradition and precepts of men. They became cruel and blind in their administration. They caused many to stumble in the way, for they applied the law of God in the wrong manner. In the time of Malachi the Lord protested,

For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my way, but have been partial in the law.

Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers? Malachi 2:7-10.

In the *Review and Herald* article of February 4, 1902, Ellen White gives evidence that these scriptures are applicable to the ministers in our own time. In that article Ellen White said in part,

In the night season I was in my dreams in a large meeting, with ministers, their wives, and their children. I wondered that the company present was mostly made up of ministers and their families. The prophecy of Malachi was brought before them in connection with Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah. The teaching of these books was carefully investigated. The building of the temple, and the temple service were considered. There was close searching of all that appertained to the temple service. Through the prophets, God has given a delineation of what will come to pass in the last days of this earth's history; and the Jewish economy is full of instruction for us. . . .

The whole sanctuary service was designed to impress the people with the fact that the things which God has set apart for Himself are holy. They

were ever to observe the distinction between the sacred and the common. Holy things must be kept holy.

All these things were closely studied by the company before me in my dream. Scripture was compared with scripture, and application was made of the word of God to our own time. After a diligent searching of the Scriptures, there was a period of silence. A very solemn impression was made upon the people. The deep moving of the Spirit of God was manifest among us. All were troubled, all seemed to be convicted, burdened, and distressed, as they saw their own life and character represented in the word of God, and the Holy Spirit was making application to their hearts.

Conscience was aroused. . . .

The Holy Spirit presented before them Him whom they had offended. They saw that God will not only reveal Himself as a God of mercy and forgiveness and long forbearance, but by terrible things in righteousness He will make it manifest that He is not a man that He should lie.<sup>17</sup>

Those most closely paralleling the Old Testament priests and Levites today are the gospel ministers. They have taken the covenant of Levi upon them, to fear God, to keep the law of truth in their mouth, to be the messenger of the Lord of hosts, and to turn many away from iniquity. At their ordination they receive the solemn charge to

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 2 Timothy 4:2-5.

In standing by and permitting profane literature, religious rock music, and jewelry to slip into the church without raising their voice in reproof, many ministers have violated their oath. As they have permitted their own speech habits and illustrations to become corrupted, they have corrupted the covenant of Levi.

In repeating this lesson over and over again, we might seem to be overdoing it. Many may consider this a minor trespass—this profaning the holiness of the Lord. Not so. The most severe threatenings and warnings in the Bible are written against those who are involved in this offense. Notice what Malachi says next:

Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts. Malachi 2:11, 12.

It is a treacherous thing that we have done—bringing such an abomination into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We have married the daughter of a strange god—we have adopted the techniques and practices of Campus Crusade for Christ, International, and other modern revival movements. In so doing, we have profaned the holiness of the Lord which we loved; for these popular revival movements are not being led by the same spirit that

founded our movement. Said our prophet: "not one ray of light . . . from Jesus" has passed upon these organizations since 1844. "They were left in perfect darkness." "Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy and peace. Satan's object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God's children."<sup>18</sup> This may sound harsh and unreasonable, but it is the truth. If we want a revival and a reformation, all we have to do is to search the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to see how we may be able to obtain one. If we want to learn how we may be more successful in evangelism, all we have to do is study these sources to see how God Himself teaches that we should labor. We did not need to turn to these non-Adventist sources and copy worldly movements to learn the truth. We can only become deceived by such a course.

Church administrators and editors may have led in this apostasy by causing this abomination to be brought into the Adventist Church. But the youth and Sabbath School scholars have followed. They have partaken of this baleful influence, and have become largely contaminated. God warns that not only guilty church leaders will be purged from His church for this offense, but all who cling to this abomination—even the scholars—even the youth and children:

The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this,  
the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of  
Jacob. . . . Malachi 2:12.

It is critical that not only the mature men, but the women, youth and little children be warned to repent of this evil. Those who cherish this evil will be "cut off." Malachi 2:12

The ancient men, those to whom God had given  
great light and who had stood as guardians of the  
spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their

trust. They had taken the position that we need not look for miracles and the marked manifestation of God's power as in former days. Times have changed. These words strengthen their unbelief, and they say: The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil. He is too merciful to visit His people in judgment. Thus "Peace and safety" is the cry from men who will never again lift up their voice like a trumpet to show God's people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins. These dumb dogs that would not bark are the ones who feel the just vengeance of an offended God. Men, maidens, and little children all perish together.<sup>19</sup>

Yet none need perish. God gives all the opportunity to repent. He will not destroy a person merely because he may have sinned, but only if that person refuses to repent. The Lord earnestly pleads, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts." Malachi 3:7.

As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Ezekiel 33:11.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 316, 317.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 317.

<sup>3</sup>*Collegian* (Walla Walla College student paper), November 2, 1967 (author not credited to save embarrassment).

<sup>4</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 317.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 318, 319.

<sup>6</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 397.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 390.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 386.

<sup>9</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, December 15, 1904.

<sup>10</sup>A. T. Jones, *General Conference Bulletin*, 1893, pages 73, 74.

<sup>11</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 319.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 320.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 320-323.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 323, 324.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 324.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

<sup>18</sup>Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 54-56.

<sup>19</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 211.

## Chapter 11

### CAUSING MANY TO STUMBLE AT THE LAW

There is an aspect in the verses treated in the last chapter that needs to be enlarged upon. It is this: God says of the ministry, "But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; . . . ye . . . have been partial in the law." Malachi 2:8, 9. What do these words mean?

There are at least three ways that Satan has caused God's people in former ages to stumble at the law. One way is to preach and enforce some laws, but not another—such as, upholding the fourth commandment, but trampling on the third as shown in earlier chapters of this book. Another way is legalism. The other is antinomianism. Seventh-day Adventists have at one time or another stumbled all three ways. The problem has not been the fault merely of the laity, but as the scripture in Malachi brings out, the problem has been in a large degree caused by the ministry: "ye have *caused* many to stumble at the law." Malachi 2:8. Many in the ministry have been guilty of preaching an incorrect theology, and thereby deceiving the people, causing them to stumble.

The nation of Israel was noted for stumbling at the law from the standpoint of legalism. Paul said,

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone. Romans 9:30-32.

The problem with legalism is not with the law of God, for "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Romans 7:12. The problem with legalism is not in giving special emphasis to the law of God in a revival and reformation; for some notable revivals and reformations in history, such as in the time of Ezra and in the time of James White and Joseph Bates, have been based primarily upon the law of God. Ellen White said of Ezra,

Above all else, Ezra was a teacher of the law; and as he gave personal attention to the examination of every case, he sought to impress the people with the holiness of this law and the blessings to be gained through obedience.<sup>1</sup>

Ellen White also observed that the revival and reformation in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah was a true revival and reformation, so great, in fact, that it is used as a symbol of the final great reformation to be effected in the end of time.<sup>2</sup> History proves that, contrary to popular opinion, the law of God can bring about a revival and reformation, for "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7.

So then, what is the problem with legalism? For one thing, legalism is presenting the law of God in the wrong spirit. Ezra presented the law "with infinite patience and tact, and with a careful consideration for the rights and welfare of every individual concerned."<sup>3</sup> "Ezra's motives were high and holy; in all that he did he was actuated by a deep love for souls."<sup>4</sup> In contrast, Jesus said of the legalistic scribes and Pharisees in His day,

For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. Matthew 23:4.

Ellen White said of legalism, "a legal religion can never lead souls to Christ: for it is a loveless, Christless religion."<sup>5</sup> Legalism is Satan's counterfeit law-emphasis reformation in which rigorous observance of forms is supposed to have merit with God. Through tradition men devise minute and burdensome exactions which become practically impossible to obey.<sup>6</sup> Legalism is the belief that man can save himself by his own works.

Through heathenism, Satan had for ages turned men away from God; but he won his great triumph in perverting the faith of Israel. . . . The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin. . . .

They [the Jews] robbed God of His glory, and defrauded the world by a counterfeit of the gospel.<sup>7</sup>

Thus the Jewish leaders "cause many to stumble at the law." Malachi 2:8. They were partial in the law also. Malachi 2:9.

They set aside the fifth commandment as of no consequence, but were very exact in carrying out the traditions of the elders. They taught the people that the devotion of their property to the temple was a duty more sacred than even the support of their parents; and that, however great the necessity, it was sacrilege to impart to father or mother any part of what had been thus consecrated. An undutiful

child had only to pronounce the word "Corban" over his property, thus devoting it to God, and he could retain it for his own use during his lifetime, and after his death it was to be appropriated to the temple service. Thus he was at liberty, both in life and death, to dishonor and defraud his parents, under cover of a pretended devotion to God.<sup>8</sup>

Like the Jews of old, Seventh-day Adventists had a true revival and reformation based on the law. Those Adventists who did not give up their faith at the disappointment in 1844, but clung to their belief in the accuracy of the prophetic time periods and recognized the nature of their error as misunderstanding the subject of the sanctuary, followed on step by step until they saw the binding claims of the seventh-day Sabbath. They saw that they had heretofore been ignorantly transgressing God's holy law. Sorrow filled their hearts. A new reformation began. God's people began to manifest their loyalty to Him by keeping His eternal seventh-day Sabbath.

The Spirit of God impressed the hearts of those students of His word. The conviction was urged upon them that they had ignorantly transgressed this precept by disregarding the Creator's rest day.... They had been honestly seeking to know and to do God's will; now, as they saw themselves transgressors of His law, sorrow filled their hearts, and they manifested their loyalty to God by keeping His Sabbath holy.

Those who received the light concerning the sanctuary and the immutability of the law of God were filled with joy and wonder as they saw the beauty and harmony of the system of truth that opened to their understanding. They desired that the light which appeared to them so precious might

be imparted to all Christians; and they could not but believe that it would be joyfully accepted.<sup>10</sup>

The discovery of the perpetuity of the seventh-day Sabbath brought about a revival and reformation in the ranks of early Advent believers. But, like the Jews of old, Seventh-day Adventists slipped into legalism. "Between the 1860s and the 1880s the Seventh-day Adventist Church was permeated by a legalistic, self-centered spirit that made the finishing of the gospel commission impossible in that generation."<sup>11</sup> A. W. Spalding said of that time period, "The trend was to legalism."<sup>12</sup> Spalding further wrote:

Men rested from sunset to sunset on Saturday, and claimed credit for keeping the Sabbath; they declared that Christ was quickly coming, but in their conduct hardly revealed that He had come to them; they assented that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, yet on one point and another defiled it; they preached that the judgment is in the future, yet judged and criticized their fellow men; they paid tithes and gave offerings and felt merit therein, yet apparently forgot that the poor widow cast in more than they all. Thus they clothed themselves with imperfect works, filthy rags, and failed, each for himself, to search the Scriptures on his knees and find the heavenly eyesalve and the white raiment of Christ's righteousness.<sup>13</sup>

Ellen White explained the reason for this poor spiritual condition:

In presenting the binding claims of the law, many have failed to portray the infinite love of Christ. Those who have so great truths, so weighty reforms to present to the people, have not had a realization of the value of the atoning Sacrifice as

an expression of God's great love to man. Love for Jesus, and Jesus' love for sinners, have been dropped out of the religious experience of those who have been commissioned to preach the gospel, and self has been exalted instead of the Redeemer of mankind. . . .

Many sermons preached upon the claims of the law have been without Christ, and this lack has made the truth inefficient in converting souls.<sup>14</sup>

Referring several years later to the situation that had developed, Mrs. White showed how serious it was:

As a people, we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain.<sup>15</sup>

By the above Spirit of Prophecy quotations, we can see that the problem of legalism in Adventism arose through a *faulty presentation* of the Adventist message. By stressing the law to the neglect of Christ, Adventist ministers thereby "caused many to stumble at the law." Malachi 2:8. Ellen White further stated:

The trouble with our work has been that we have been content to present a cold theory of the truth.<sup>16</sup>

Spiritual things have not been discerned. Appearance and machinery have been exalted as of power, while the virtue of true goodness, noble piety, and heart-holiness, have been made a secondary consideration. That which should have been first has been made last and of least importance.<sup>17</sup>

The true role of the law is as a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Failure to accept this truth caused those at the 1888 General Conference Session to shut out the power of the Holy Spirit from the Adventist Church. Said Ellen White:

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.<sup>18</sup>

This resistance of the truth regarding the relationship of the law in the Galatians to righteousness by faith was most certainly "stumbling at the law." Yes, it was "*causing many* to stumble at the law." Malachi 2:8. This was legalism.

Today the mistake of the delegates to the 1888 General Conference Session is well publicized. Adventists have been urged to accept "righteousness by faith" and to avoid legalism. But it appears that in our zeal to avoid legalism, we have to a great degree gone to the opposite extreme—to subtle forms of antinomianism. The early Christian church also had this problem. We can better understand the dangers of this opposite method of "stumbling at the law" by considering the struggle the apostolic church had with this heresy, and then seeing the similarities in our own movement to the problems of that past era.

Christ in His ministry worked to restore the law to its rightful place and to tear down the mass of traditions and human enactments that obscured the principles of the divine law. He also presented a preview of the thrilling truths of the gospel to Nicodemus in the nighttime interview. John 3:1-21. But the gospel, or the Christ Our Righteousness message of salvation through faith in Christ, burst forth in its clearest light following the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

The disciples learned that:

Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. "With His stripes we are healed."<sup>19</sup>

The consciousness of these thrilling facts brought a new experience to the disciples and the people. They could not contain their joy. "The record says that they were 'continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.' Luke 24:53."<sup>20</sup> Mysteries which had been hidden from generations were made known to God's people.

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is *Christ in you, the hope of glory*.  
Colossians 1:26, 27.

God utilized this aspect of new, fresh gripping interest of the truths to inspire His people with a holy zeal.

More clearly than had those in any previous age, New Testament Christians came to understand the science of salvation. The emphasis of the apostles' teaching was righteousness through faith in Christ, justification, sanctification, and the indwelling of Christ in the life by the Holy Spirit. With a new and holy boldness, the disciples went to the uttermost parts of the earth with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Satan first warred against the gospel with legalism. Satan quickly put forth a counter argument to the gospel. It had two parts: (1) a masterly misrepresentation of the gospel—the claim that the teaching of salvation through faith in Christ did away with the law and the necessity of law keeping; (2) the conclusion that this alleged doing away with the law was bad.

Paul protested against this misunderstanding of the gospel. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31. Obedience to the law in the gospel era is just as important as it was in Old Testament times. The apostle James urged, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. . . . Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." James 2:10, 17. Far from doing away with the law of God, the death of Christ proved the law immutable, for could God have at all altered the law to meet fallen man, Christ need not have died.<sup>21</sup>

Despite all the clarifying speeches and letters by the apostles this argument of Satan was not easily silenced. The repeated use of this argument by the external foes of the church led to the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6:11, 13, 14), the persecution of Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:13), and his later arrest in the temple in Jerusalem (which led to his long imprisonment and death in Rome). (Acts 21:28).

By confusing the minds of the people over the difference between the ceremonial and moral laws, Satan was able to bring this legalistic counter argument of the gospel into the Christian church itself. "Certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed" (Acts 15:5) "were slow to discern that all the sacrificial offerings had but prefigured the death of the Son of God, in which type met antitype, and after which the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation were no longer binding."<sup>22</sup> So these converted Pharisees zealously undertook missionary journeys preaching to the Gentile Christian converts, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Acts 15:1. They taught that all the law of Moses must be kept with the rites and sacrifices, which was contrary to the teaching of the apostles. They did not totally comprehend and accept God's plan of saving men by means of faith in the Son of God. They still supposed that salvation was earned by means of the rigorous observance of certain rites and ceremonies.

A council of the apostles in Jerusalem was required to settle this issue, and yet the issue cropped up again in the churches of Galatia. Here again "false teachers were mingling Jewish traditions with the truths of the gospel. Ignoring the decision of the general council at Jerusalem, they urged upon the Gentile converts the observance of the ceremonial law."<sup>23</sup> These false teachers led many converts in an open apostasy, which threatened to destroy the Christian churches in Galatia. Paul was obliged to strongly rebuke this apostasy. His epistle to the Galatians is to this day the classic refutation of legalism.

Satan's efforts to combat the gospel with legalism was not as successful as he might have hoped. The gospel would know no bounds. "The Jews which believed not" complained that the Christians had "turned the world upside down." Acts 17:6. Before the destruction of Jerusalem, Paul told the Colossian believers that "the gospel . . . was preached to every creature which is under heaven." Colossians 1:23. That was quite an accomplishment for but one generation of time.

Satan needed a new tactic. He needed a counterfeit that more closely resembled the gospel. He needed a cross-centered, Christ-centered, imputed righteousness message purporting to be the gospel, but which would lead people deeper into sin. Satan's ingenious answer was antinomianism. ("Antinomian"—a member of a Christian sect which held that faith alone, not obedience to the moral law, is necessary for salvation."<sup>24</sup>)

Near the close of the apostolic period, John, the beloved apostle, encountered the beginnings of out-and-out antinomianism. In his time "some who professed Christ claimed that His love released them from obedience to the law of God. . . . Some who pretended to be true to the cause of God were deceivers, and in practice they denied Christ and His gospel. Living themselves in transgression, they were bringing heresies into the church."<sup>25</sup>

We can learn a lot about late apostolic era antinomianism by observing what John wrote to refute it.

God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. 1 John 1:5, 6.

Apparently then, as now, many were confidently living in sin while claiming a special love relationship with God. John said this boasted relationship with God, while paying little heed to the obligations of the law, is a lie.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:7.

In combating the counterfeit "Christ Our Righteousness" message, John solidly maintained the blessed truths of the real Christ Our Righteousness message. He did not combat antinomianism with legalism. While maintaining the necessity of obedience, he did not preach that men are saved by their works, or that obedience can atone for past transgression. No. John affirms, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7.

John continues:

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8.

One of the fearful deceptions of antinomianism is the delusion of sinlessness. This is quite natural. If one believes the law has been abrogated, and obedience to the law is no longer necessary, he stops looking in the mirror (law), and soon detects no dirt on his face (sin in his life). However, on the authority of the scriptures and the apostleship of John, we may know of a certainty that anyone who claims to be sinless is deceived, and the truth is not in him.

The antinomians "assert that Christ by His death abolished the law, and men are henceforth free from its requirements. There are some who represent it as a grievous yoke; and in contrast to the bondage of the law, they present the liberty to be enjoyed under the gospel."<sup>26</sup>

John clearly answered this by saying, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3. Peter also warned against those which "while they promise liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." 2 Peter 2:19-22.

Associated with this anti-law form of "righteousness" are false theories of sanctification.

Its advocates teach that sanctification is an instantaneous work, by which, through faith alone, they attain to perfect holiness. "Only believe," say they, "and the blessing is yours." No further effort on the part of the receiver is supposed to be required. At the same time they deny the authority of the law of God, urging that they are released from obligation to keep the commandments.<sup>27</sup>

This idea of effortless, no works, by-faith-alone Christianity was met by the apostle James. He responded, "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" James 2:20.

By means of direct dictation to John on the Isle of Patmos, Jesus Himself went on record as being against the counterfeit gospel of righteousness by faith without obedience—antinomianism. In the messages to the seven churches, Jesus commended the Ephesian believers: "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." Revelation 2:6. Jesus reprobated the church in Pergamos for having those there that held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. (Revelation 2:14-16). From Ellen White's writings we can see that the doctrine of the Nicolaitans is antinomianism:

*Doctrine of the Nicolaitans.*

—The doctrine is now largely taught that the gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by "believing" we are released from the necessity of being doers of the Word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned (*ST* Jan. 2, 1912).<sup>28</sup>

We notice that antinomianism is just the reverse side of the first argument Satan used against the gospel. Satan first argued that the death and teachings of Christ did away with the law of God (which is not true), and argued that this doing away with the law is *bad*. Antinomianism teaches that Christ had done away with the law, and that this is *good*! This is by far the worst error. Legalists can never succeed at being over comers, but antinomians don't even try!

For about three centuries Satan tried legalism, antinomianism, and various heresies on the divinity and the humanity of Christ, etc., as well as increasingly severe persecution to overthrow Christianity and the gospel. But the more the Christians were slaughtered, the more in number they grew. So in spite of every hardship, God's cause and His people were triumphing.

The futility of persecution disturbed Satan greatly. He realized that he needed a new and better tactic. He made an abrupt change in his methods.

The great adversary now endeavored to gain by artifice what he failed to secure by force. Persecution ceased, and in its stead were substituted the dangerous allurements of temporal prosperity and worldly honor. Idolaters were led to receive a part of the Christian faith, while they rejected other essential truths. They professed to accept Jesus as the Son of God and to believe in His death and resurrection, but they had no conviction of sin and

felt no need of repentance or of a change of heart. With some concessions on their part they proposed that Christians should make concessions, that all might unite on the platform of belief in Christ.<sup>29</sup>

While there may have been little or no preaching then that the law had been done away, yet the "up with Jesus, down with doctrines and standards" policy that was advocated had a definite ring of antinomianism to it. This form of antinomianism was more subtle, however, than that encountered in apostolic times. It was further disguised by unprecedented success in converting masses of pagans and rulers of the empire. But the purity of the church was compromised by the lowering of the standards of admission to church membership.

Now the church was in fearful peril. Prison, torture, fire, and sword were blessings in comparison with this. Some of the Christians stood firm, declaring that they could make no compromise. Others were in favor of yielding or modifying some features of their faith and uniting with those who had accepted a part of Christianity, urging that this might be the means of their full conversion. That was a time of deep anguish to the faithful followers of Christ. Under a cloak of pretended Christianity, Satan was insinuating himself into the church, to corrupt their faith and turn their minds from the word of truth.

Most of the Christians at last consented to lower their standard, and a union was formed between Christianity and paganism.<sup>30</sup>

As the result of this compromise with paganism, the Christian church rapidly degenerated into popery. The papal religion stands as a tragic monument to the success of Satan's "up with Jesus, down with doctrines and standards"

ploy, which he used in the fourth and succeeding centuries. Notice the changes in Christian doctrines and standards that were made by this gigantic system through this form of antinomianism: Whereas in apostolic Christianity there were 1. safeguards against idolatry (1 John 5:21), 2. the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11; Luke 4:16; 23:56; Acts 18:4), 3. a belief in man's total unconsciousness in death (Eccles. 9:5; John 11:11-14), 4. prohibition against creature, angel, or human worship (Ex. 20:3; Luke 4:8; Rom. 1:25; Rev. 19:10), 5. admonition to "search the scriptures," (John 5:39), 6. the celebration of the Lord's supper (1 Corinth. 11:23-26), 7. confession of sins to Christ (1 John 1:9), 8. the doctrine of religious liberty (Gal. 5:1; Acts 4:19; 5:29), and 9. the spirit of loving service (Matt. 20:27); in the papacy there came to be 1. the adoration of relics and images, and a change in the ten commandment law to permit this,<sup>31</sup> 2. the substitution of the "venerable day of the sun" for the ancient Sabbath, and curses pronounced on Sabbath keepers,<sup>32</sup> 3. belief in man's natural immortality and consciousness in death, which led to the invocation of saints and adoration of Virgin Mary, as well as the heresy of eternal torment for the lost,<sup>33</sup> 4. the deification of the pope,<sup>34</sup> 5. the prohibition against owning or reading the scriptures,<sup>35</sup> 6. the idolatrous and blasphemous mass, in which men claim to have power to create the actual blood and body of their Creator,<sup>36</sup> 7. the doctrine of indulgences, by which men were taught that they can be released from sins, past, present, and future, and all penalties incurred by the payment of money to the church,<sup>37</sup> and bestowal of power upon priests and monks to hear confessions and to grant pardon,<sup>38</sup> 8. great religious intolerance—the doctrine of religious freedom being termed heresy, and its upholders proscribed<sup>39</sup>—and 9. overbearing prelate pomp, power, and pride.<sup>40</sup>

In summary, the "up with Jesus, down with doctrines and standards" form of "righteousness" brought the world into the church. "The work of corruption rapidly

progressed. Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Her spirit controlled the church. Her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ."<sup>41</sup>

Even today, there is a tremendous lure in the idea of uplifting Jesus and minimizing doctrine. The human mind has difficulty in conceiving how such a policy can be destructive of good. The concept seems so pure and uplifting. After all, isn't Jesus the center of every correct doctrine? If one has Jesus, wouldn't he automatically have all truth? In reality, however, history proves that if one disregards Christ's doctrines, he does not really have Christ, no matter how much he may boast of a love relation with Jesus. Jesus queried,

And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Luke 6:46.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matthew 7:21-23.

The secret of the up with Jesus, down with doctrines and standards theology is that it leads to iniquity rather than purity. A study of the great apostasy leading to the Dark Ages should prove this point to us.

Antinomianism did not long supersede legalism as Satan's tool. While Satan gave the people enough of a dose of the "up with Jesus, down with doctrines and standards" sentiment to separate the Christians from the law of God and the seventh-day Sabbath, he immediately plunged the

people into a new religion of works complete with the Sunday Sabbath. Legalism again became entrenched in the very concepts of the plan of salvation.

The gospel was lost sight of, but the forms of religion were multiplied, and the people were burdened with rigorous exactions.

They were taught not only to look to the pope as their mediator, but to trust to works of their own to atone for sin. Long pilgrimages, acts of penance, the worship of relics, the erection of churches, shrines, and altars, the payment of large sums to the church—these and many similar acts were enjoined to appease the wrath of God or to secure His favor; as if God were like men, to be angered at trifles, or pacified by gifts or acts of penance!<sup>42</sup>

It is a very great paradoxical mystery—the mystery of iniquity—how that oppressive legalism and antinomianism (contradictory opposites) can be blended in one great monolithic religion. But this has been accomplished in the papacy. Ellen White comments on this:

The papacy is well adapted to meet the wants of all these [those who desire a method of forgetting God which shall pass as a method of remembering Him]. It is prepared for two classes of mankind, embracing nearly the whole world—those who would be saved by their merits, and those who would be saved in their sins. Here is the secret of its power.<sup>43</sup>

There is a remarkable parallel between the religious history just rehearsed from the beginning portion of the Christian era and developments in the Adventist church at and following 1888. As the Christ Our Righteousness emphasis in the apostolic era followed a long period of

legalism in the Jewish church, just so in 1888 the Christ Our Righteousness message was presented in the Seventh-day Adventist Church by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner after a period of legalism in the Adventist church. As Satan first used legalism to war against the gospel in the Christian church, just so Satan succeeded in getting conservative Adventist leaders to resist the 1888 Christ Our Righteousness message initially from the standpoint of legalism. These facts are well known to most Adventists as well as many non-Adventist scholars.

Adventists are also aware that there has been a great deal of disagreement among Adventist theologians and writers over such a basic issue as to whether the 1888 Christ Our Righteousness message was ever truly and wholly accepted by the Seventh-day Adventist church. Some have argued that if it had, God would have poured out upon it the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit as He promised. These writers have used the very fact that we have not received this promised blessing as an evidence that the 1888 message was not fully accepted. Other Adventist writers have published books presenting their arguments that though there was resistance to the 1888 message for a number of years, this was overcome, and the church has by now fully accepted these truths. The church is left with an unresolved mystery. How could so many apparently sincere, honest, and knowledgeable Adventist leaders believe the 1888 Christ Our Righteousness Message was truly accepted, say that it was, and still the Church fail to receive the outpouring of the Latter Rain and enter upon the Loud Cry of the third angel's message, which Ellen White said began with the presentation of the Christ Our Righteousness message?<sup>44</sup> For some reason, the Latter Rain has been postponed.<sup>45</sup>

A lucid answer to this mystery can come from the parallel we have observed between Adventist history and the early Christian history. There are two questions which we can ask the precedent-making early Christian history,

which both have the same answer. (1) What could pass for acceptance of the Christ Our Righteousness message, but really be rejection of the true Christ Our Righteousness message? (2) What is the next logical tactic of Satan after the presentation of righteousness by faith in 1888 and the initial reaction from legalism? The answer to both questions is counterfeit Christ Our Righteousness—antinomianism. We know that this type of counterfeit could accomplish this result, because it did so once before in just this parallel position in religious history in the early Christian church apostasy. Thus our attention is alerted to the possibility that our real problem today is no longer so much Christ Our Righteousness versus legalism, but Christ Our Righteousness versus various subtle forms of antinomianism.

We have seemingly been completely blind to the possibility that Satan can palm off on us a form of antinomianism to be accepted as the true Christ Our Righteousness message, while we blindly war at the straw man legalism. Thus, all the while we may think that we are accepting the true, we may actually be accepting the counterfeit and thus rejecting the true Christ Our Righteousness message. This is what our historical parallel suggests is the next step to be expected in the conflict between Christ and Satan after the 1888 presentation of the Christ Our Righteousness message to Adventism.

There is evidence that a great deal of antinomianism has slipped into Adventism since 1888. Consider just a few of Ellen White's statements:

My soul is made very sad to see how quickly some who have had light and truth will accept the deceptions of Satan, and be charmed with a spurious holiness. . . . And if the men and women who have the knowledge of the truth are so far separated from their great Leader that they will take the great leader of apostasy and name him Christ

Our Righteousness, it is because they have not sunk deep into the mines of the truth. They are not able to distinguish the precious ore from the base material.<sup>46</sup>

Taking "the great leader of apostasy and name[ing] him Christ Our Righteousness" is not legalism. Legalism is "self my righteousness." This must be a theory of an outside righteousness imputed to the believer by faith that sounds almost like the true righteousness by faith. It must be a cross-centered teaching, claiming to give righteousness, but in reality giving men a false security to go on sinning. The only thing that answers to these features is a heresy of the antinomian family (there are a great number of variations on the basic antinomian heresy). Again Ellen White said:

Some will not make a right use of the doctrine of justification by faith. They will present it in a one-sided manner.

Others will seize the ideas that have not been correctly presented, and will go clear over the mark, ignoring works altogether.—*Manuscript* 16, 1890.<sup>47</sup>

We hear a great deal about faith, but we need to hear a great deal more about works. Many are deceiving their own souls by living an easy-going, accommodating, crossless religion. But Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."—*The Signs of the Times*, June 16, 1890.<sup>48</sup>

Presenting justification by faith in a one-sided manner and ignoring works altogether, preaching faith, faith, but neglecting works is another form of antinomianism. Remember, the definition of antinomianism is, "antinomian"—"a member of a Christian sect which held

that faith alone, not obedience to the moral law, is necessary for salvation."<sup>49</sup> This definition of antinomianism applies to a one-sided presentation of justification in which works are ignored, because good works are obedience to the moral law, nothing more. There is no good work we can offer to God above what we are duty bound by the moral law to give, for the law says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Matthew 21:37-39. When we give our best, do our best, we are only rendering obedience. Thus works and obedience are really the same, and the different words should not confuse us. With this in mind, we see that ignoring works altogether is failing to obey the moral law. It is expecting salvation by faith alone without the necessity of obedience. This is the dictionary definition of antinomianism.

We notice by the dates on the last two quotations from Ellen White that this problem had begun in Adventism as early as 1890, during the foremost presentation of the 1888 Christ Our Righteousness message. How soon Satan had introduced his counterfeit!

Antinomian justification teaching in Adventism was not confined to the 1890s. There has been a great shaking of Adventism in the 1970s and 1980s by this heresy, and a large number of laymen and ministers and even several prominent theologians took sides with former Adventists and non-Adventists on this issue.

Several other features of antinomianism in Adventism in recent years we cannot so fully blame on off-shoots and off-shoot sympathizers. There are other features of this religious cancer that have been prominent in mainline Adventism. Perhaps the most unintentional aspect of this heresy in Adventism is the following problem referred to by Ellen White.

A new order of things has come into the ministry. There is a desire to pattern after other churches, and simplicity and humility are almost unknown. The young ministers seek to be original, and to introduce new ideas and new plans for labor. Some open revival meetings, and by this means call large numbers into the church. But when the excitement is over, where are the converted ones? Repentance and confession of sin are not seen. The sinner is entreated to believe in Christ and accept Him, without regard to his past life of sin and rebellion. The heart is not broken. There is no contrition of souls. The supposed converted ones have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus.<sup>50</sup>

This problem may be deliberate. Ministers may intentionally present such a one-sided appeal to sinners. But more often this is probably unintentional. The ministers are zealous to witness for Christ and have evangelistic meetings. They do the best they know how. But they fail to understand the proper method of bringing souls to Christ. The result is antinomian in practice, though not in intent.

The Old and New Testament Scriptures show us the only way in which this work should be done. Repent, repent, repent, was the message rung out by John the Baptist in the wilderness. Christ's message to the people was "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5). And the apostles were commanded to preach everywhere that men should repent.

The Lord desires His servants today to preach the old gospel doctrine, sorrow for sin, repentance, and confession. We want old-fashioned sermons, old-fashioned customs, old-fashioned fathers and mothers in Israel. The sinner must be labored for,

perseveringly, earnestly, wisely, until he shall see that he is a transgressor of God's law, and shall exercise repentance toward God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.—Undated manuscript 111, but undoubtedly from the era 1888-1908, as are surrounding statements.<sup>51</sup>

The above quotations from the same source are together an evidence of antinomianism within Adventism shortly after 1888. Young ministers were catching the "Christ Our Righteousness" fervor, and with enthusiasm were preaching faith, faith, but were not adequately presenting and enforcing the law of God. They were patterning their revivals after the worldly revivals which were antinomian in character. In effect, they were preaching "up with Jesus, down with the law (though the ministers undoubtedly had nothing against the law and did not intend to down the law, but neglecting the law had the same effect). This we recognized from early Christian history as antinomianism.

The pendulum had swung quickly. Before 1888 Adventists were preaching law and works and were ignoring Christ and faith. By 1890, already, many were preaching Christ and faith and ignoring law and works. The young evangelists imperfectly grasped the idea of Christ's righteousness. They were ready to cast aside works and only believe. But that was not the truth of God. That in reality was "causing many to stumble at the law" from the antinomian standpoint. Malachi 2:8.

Let us also consider that the young ministers of that era became the seasoned evangelists and workers in the cause, took over positions of highest leadership, retired, and were finally laid to rest. Unless they discerned and corrected the errors in their methods of evangelism, these errors would be carried forward with them into prominence in the Seventh-day Adventist work. Remember also, that Ellen White was laid to rest shortly after this development, and her voice could no longer reprove such creeping

antinomianism in Adventism. If one could not detect such errors by the counsels she had written during her lifetime, these errors could remain undetected for years after her death.

For many years we have had trouble with the "swinging back door of the church." Evangelists bring in many souls through baptism which immediately go out of the church nearly as soon as the evangelist is gone. Could it be that the problem is largely an improper presentation of the Christ Our Righteousness message, presenting Christ without properly presenting the law, teaching faith without works? More than we realize, our problem may be subtle forms of antinomianism.

Perhaps the most dramatic and offensive form of antinomianism that has slipped into the Adventist Church in recent years is the "up with Jesus, down with standards" policy that has permitted the production of the "Wayout" material from the Voice of Prophecy, the profane *Insight Magazine*, and many other similar programs. Crusading youth claimed that vulgar jargon must be used to reach the unchurched. And church leaders believed them and harkened to their counsel. Crude cartoon caricatures were presented as illustrating spiritual truths, often in a joking manner. Flashy, psychedelic colors were used—all to shock the senses, catch the eye—in an effort to gain the attention of the public for the purpose of presenting to them the message of Christ. But this lowering of the standards in the methods of presenting the gospel is far more disturbing than even the lowering of standards in the personal life. This is mixing the sacred and the common in the presentation of the gospel. This is profaning the holiness of the Lord. But this is also a practical form of *antinomianism*—up with Jesus, down with doctrines and standards. Thus this abomination, besides everything else it is, is "causing many to stumble at the law" from the standpoint of antinomianism. Malachi 2:8. It is also being "partial in the law." Malachi 2:9. Psychedelic gospel

media may try to present the truths of the law of God, but in the process it violates the commandment against all forms of profanity—the third commandment. We must remember that "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law. Malachi 2:7-9.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 705.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 677.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 622.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 623.

<sup>5</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 280.

<sup>6</sup>Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 705, 708, 709.

<sup>7</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 35, 36.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 396, 397.

<sup>9</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 434, 435.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 454.

<sup>11</sup>Robert J. Wieland and D. K. Short, "*An Explicit Confession ... Due the Church*", (Printed in U.S.A., 1972), p. 4.

<sup>12</sup>Arthur Whitefield Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Wash. D.C.: Review and Herald, 1962), Volume 2, p. 286.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 301.

<sup>14</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book One, pp. 371, 372.

<sup>15</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, May 28, 1889.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, February 27, 1894.

<sup>18</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book One, pp. 234, 235.

<sup>19</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

<sup>20</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 35, 36.

<sup>21</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 762, 763.

<sup>22</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 189.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 383.

<sup>24</sup>*Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged, Second Edition* (N.Y.: World Pub. Co., 1968).

<sup>25</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 553.

<sup>26</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 466.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 471.

<sup>28</sup>Ellen G. White, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 957.

<sup>29</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 42.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 42, 43.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 55, 56.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 572.

<sup>44</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892.

<sup>45</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 52.

<sup>46</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 393.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, Book One, p. 382.

<sup>49</sup>*Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged*, Second Edition (N.Y.: World Pub. Co., 1968).

<sup>50</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, pp. 18, 19.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*

## Chapter 12

### COVERING THE ALTAR WITH WEEPING

And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand. Malachi 2:13.

Why should God not be willing to accept the prayer of His people when they earnestly weep before Him? Doesn't He regard earnestness, perseverance, and heart-felt anguish in prayer? Is it because God can't stand tears? Jesus Himself prayed with earnestness and tears. When he was baptized of John in the river Jordan, He then knelt upon the bank of the river in prayer. With deep earnestness He pleaded with His Father for power to break through the unbelief of the people. And Jesus wept. "John had been deeply moved as he saw Jesus bowed as a suppliant, pleading with tears for the approval of the Father."<sup>1</sup> God the Father also was moved as He beheld His Son pleading so earnestly for power to save souls. The Father restrained the angels who were eager to respond to this prayer, and Himself responded to Christ's petition. Beams of glory direct from the throne of God shone upon the Savior, and the Father's own voice was heard saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

And the word that was spoken to Jesus at the Jordan, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," embraces humanity. God spoke to Jesus as our representative. With all our sins and weaknesses, we are not cast aside as worthless. "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Eph. 1:6. The glory that rested upon Christ is a pledge of the

love of God for us. It tells us of the power of prayer,—how the human voice may reach the ear of God, and our petitions find acceptance in the courts of heaven. . . . The light which fell from the open portals upon the head of our Saviour will fall upon us as we pray for help to resist temptation. The voice which spoke to Jesus says to every believing soul, This is My beloved child, in whom I am well pleased.<sup>2</sup>

The scriptures record several occasions when Jesus wept. And yet God was not displeased with Christ. God sympathizes with human tears. The Psalmist David said, "Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?" Psalm 56:8.

So then why should God in Malachi record His displeasure with His people when they cover "the altar of the LORD with tears"? The answer is in the next verse.

Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. Malachi 2:14.

David said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Psalm 66:18. The problem with the people in Malachi's day was that they were pleading with earnestness, anguish, and tears for God's promised blessings, but were not fulfilling the conditions necessary to receive the promises. They were making a big scene and fuss, but were an unrepentant, unreformed, unholy people. God could not answer such prayers, and such prayers were displeasing and offensive to Him.

It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions on which

mercy is to be granted. . . . Presumption is Satan's counterfeit of faith. Faith claims God's promises, and brings forth fruit in obedience. Presumption also claims the promises, but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression. Faith would have led our first parents to trust the love of God, and to obey His commands. Presumption led them to transgress His law, believing that His great love would save them from the consequence of their sin.<sup>3</sup>

Pleading for divine favor without complying with the conditions is presumption. Presumption is another one of the problems with the "up with Jesus, down with standards" form of antinomianism that has crept into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in recent years. It is presumptuous to ask the Lord to bless us and the church endeavors when we mistreat our spouses or commit any other sin. For instance, it is presumption to ask the Lord to bless the church endeavors when we profane the holiness of the Lord by means of our literature or music. God will hear and answer our denominational prayers when we make a decided reform in all the areas of our lives. God says,

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you,

And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18.

God's displeasure with pleading prayers where there is not also a corresponding fulfilling of the conditions for answered prayer is also presented in Isaiah 58. Here again is dialogue between sinners and God.

Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul,

and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward.

Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of

many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thing own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. Isaiah 58:3-14.

Seventh-day Adventists have had many days of fasting and prayer since 1888, but we have never received the outpouring of the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit. Yet if we would have had a thorough practical revival and reformation such as is brought to view in this chapter of Isaiah, we would have experienced this blessing a long time ago. A few drops of the Latter Rain started to be poured out in 1888, and God was ready to bestow the Holy Spirit upon His people in power,<sup>4, 5</sup> but God had to postpone the outpouring of the Latter Rain because of our condition as a people. We cannot have this blessing until we overcome our selfishness and uncaring attitude toward other people.

*Latter Rain Postponed.* The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church

are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out the Spirit when selfishness and selfindulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words would express that answer of Cain,—"Am I my brother's keeper?"—*R. & H.*, July 21, 1896.<sup>6</sup>

For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.—*Manuscript 4*, 1883.

*Charge It Not to God.*—We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.—*Letter 184*, 1901.<sup>7</sup>

How important, then, is the kind of fast that God has chosen! We need to "loose the bands of wickedness;" we need to "undo the heavy burdens." Far more than we do, we need individually to "deal" our "bread to the hungry, and . . . bring the poor that are cast out to . . . [our] house." We need to clothe the naked. We need to find pleasure in God's holy Sabbath day.

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward.

Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.

If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. Isaiah 58:8-11.

Fasting and weeping at God's altar are not wrong, in and of themselves. In fact, God's word urges that we do these very things.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Joel 2:15-18.

God's word also says that those that receive the mark of salvation will be those that sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in the land. Ezekiel 9:3-7. Every true revival and reformation has been characterized by heartfelt mourning for sin. Believers have looked on Him whom they have pierced, and have mourned for Him.

Zechariah 12:10. They have mourned the sins that crucified their Maker.

No, weeping at God's altar is not wrong, in and of itself. There needs to be much more of it. But what God wants to see is action to go along with it. He wants a decided reformation—a change about from our evil ways.

A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of the mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.—*Review and Herald*, Feb. 25, 1902.<sup>8</sup>

Let us determine to have a reformation as well as a revival. Let us become an obedient people. Let us determine to fulfill the necessary conditions as we earnestly weep before the Lord for the fulfillment of His promises.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892.

<sup>5</sup>Ellen G. White, *General Conference Bulletin*, 1893, p. 419.

<sup>6</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 52.

<sup>7</sup>Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 696.

<sup>8</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book One, p. 128.

## Chapter 13

### DEALING TREACHEROUSLY AGAINST THY COMPANION

And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away; for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously. Malachi 2:13-16.

Most of the early reproofs in the book of Malachi were addressed specifically to the ministry. Some referred to institutionalized denominational errors the laity could do little or nothing about. But now we begin to come to more generally applicable reproofs. Here are solemn warnings that individuals need to heed.

In the beginning of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, divorce among the members was a comparatively rare thing. That is no longer true. There seems to be an epidemic of marital unfaithfulness and

broken homes among church members and ministers alike. More Adventist ministers are lost to denominational employment because of marital problems than for any other reason. Seemingly the majority of the young people in our schools come from broken homes.

Why? Why should the marriage covenant have so little power these days to preserve the family? The answer may be surprising. Marriage infidelity is a product of the prevalent antinomianism that has not only swept the world, but infiltrated the Adventist church. Both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy writings link moral laxness to antinomianism. Notice what the Bible and Ellen White said of the Nicolaitans:

*The Sin of the Nicolaitans.*

—Is it [our sin] the sin of the Nicolaitans, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness (Jude 4, *RH* June 7, 1887)?

*Doctrine of the Nicolaitans.*

—The doctrine is now largely taught that the gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by "believing" we are released from the necessity of being doers of the Word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned (*ST* Jan. 2, 1912).<sup>1</sup>

The doctrine of the Nicolaitans was that by "believing" we are released from the requirement of obedience to the law of God. This doctrine led to the most notable sin of the Nicolaitans—"turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." Jude 4. If antinomianism were the truth, that is, if righteous living were automatic to anyone who "believed," then there would be a power to preserve such persons from moral corruption. But antinomianism is not the truth. God does not supply antinomians power for victorious living anymore than He would legalists. Thus

antinomians are defenseless against one of the strongest, if not the strongest temptations known to mankind—lust.

An antinomian may regard virtue as better than vice. But he has no just sense of the majesty and awful purity of the law of God, nor the enormity of guilt incurred through the disobedience of a single commandment. He underrates the evil of sin, the extent of it, and the demerit of it. He underestimates the justice of God in dealing with sin, and underestimates the grace of God which has provided an atonement. He therefore may come to consider adultery as merely an indiscretion, rather than a grievous sin. The antinomian is confident that God's grace will compensate for his little indiscretion. Thus the antinomian turns the grace of God into lasciviousness.

When the law of God is low and small in the eyes of the people, then offenders pass over the moral barricade with but a little stumble of the foot. But when the law of God is exalted and looms high on the horizon, then the would-be offender comes face to face with the imposing barrier, and fears to pass beyond. We need those today who would exalt the statutes of Jehovah, as did Ezra of old, and cause many to tremble at the law.

In this age of the world, when Satan is seeking, through manifold agencies, to blind the eyes of men and women to the binding claims of the law of God, there is need of men who can cause many to "tremble at the commandment of our God." Ezra 10:3. There is need of true reformers, who will point transgressors to the great Lawgiver and teach them that "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7. There is need of men mighty in the Scriptures, men whose every word and act exalts the statutes of Jehovah, men who seek to strengthen faith. Teachers are needed, oh, so much, who will inspire hearts with reverence and love for the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup>

While the Nicolaitans taught that works and obedience to the moral law were unnecessary to salvation, they did have works and deeds. They had lewd sensuous deeds. Jesus commended the Ephesians, "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." Revelation 2:6. The deeds of the Nicolaitans were detestable. Jude more fully describes these deeds:

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, *turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness*, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the Land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them *in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh*, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Likewise also *these filthy dreamers defile the flesh*, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

...

But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, *as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.*

Woe unto them: for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after *the error of Balaam* for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

These are murmurers, complainers, *walking after their own lusts*; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should *walk after their own ungodly lusts.*

These be they who separate themselves, *sensual*, having not the Spirit. Jude 3-8, 10-19.

In Jude's description of the deeds of the Nicolaitans and the modern antinomians, the licentious acts were italicized

as being particularly relevant to the subject matter of this chapter. Notice that "the error of Balaam" was also italicized. Jesus, in dictation to John the beloved in the Revelation, told what the error of Balaam was and linked it to the Nicolaitans, or antinomians.

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. Revelation 2:14-16.

Balaam, who was formerly a true prophet of God, had apostatized, and agreed to try to curse Israel for Balak, the Moabite king. But each time Balaam attempted to curse Israel, God only put blessings in Balaam's mouth for Israel. Balaam and Balak learned why. God did not find iniquity or perverseness in Israel at that time. Balaam was unable to curse Israel because of their innocence.

Disappointed in his hopes for wealth and promotion, Balaam returned to his homeland. There the controlling power of the Spirit of God left him. His covetousness previously held in check then prevailed. He was ready to resort to any means to secure the rewards offered by Balak. He immediately returned to Moab to convince the Moabites that God would become the enemy of Israel if they could first be induced to sin. Balaam proposed that the Moabites should quietly seduce the Israelites into the licentious worship of Baal and Ashtaroth. This plan was readily accepted.

Midianitish women stealing in the camp of Israel seduced the Israelites into transgression of the law of God.

Many Israelites were induced to attend a grand festival put on by the Moabite King. Israelites ventured upon the forbidden ground. They were beguiled by the music and dancing and drink. They participated in the licentious rites.

Moses had to put this apostasy away with severity. The leaders in this apostasy were slain and hung up in the sight of the people. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the high priest slew the boldest offenders, Zimri, one of the nobles of Israel, and a Midianitish harlot, a princess "of a chief house in Midian."

Phinehas "hath turned My wrath away from the children of Israel," was the divine message; "wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him My covenant of peace: and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for His God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel."<sup>3</sup>

At the foot of Mount Sinai, God had made a covenant of peace with the tribe of Levi, because of all the people, they alone had not participated in the licentious rites in the worship of the golden calf, and because they obeyed God in executing the divine sentence against the impenitent transgressors. Now again a Levite obtained a like blessing for himself and his children for a similar demonstration of loyalty and zeal for God. Jehovah never changes. He will today specially bless all those who amid scenes of apostasy maintain their loyalty to Him.

Seventh-day Adventists need to be specially wary of worldly Balaams today who would seduce them into fornication, and thus cut off their souls from Christ. There have been instances in which Seventh-day Adventists have attended office Christmas parties in worldly places of business and have been induced to participate in the merriment. In one such instance, the worldlings cajoled the Seventh-day Adventist into drinking some of the punch,

insisting, of course, that it was not spiked with alcohol, when it was. The punch did taste good, and soon the Seventh-day Adventist was silly under the influence of the alcohol. The worldlings had great sport deceiving the Christian into the violation of Bible standards. Glass after glass was urged upon the Adventist, until the person was thoroughly intoxicated—so much so, in fact, the individual was not able to drive all the way home that evening, but was forced to spend the night with a friend of the opposite sex. Satan took advantage of the situation and induced the Adventist, while still under the influence of the alcohol, into the violation of the seventh commandment—something the Adventist would never have contemplated under ordinary circumstances. While the names and locations are omitted, the incident is true, proving the accuracy of Ellen White's words. Let others beware of a similar trap that Satan someday may set for them.

He [Satan] lays his snares for every soul. It is not the ignorant and uncultured merely that need to be guarded; he will prepare his temptations for those in the highest positions, in the most holy office; if he can lead them to pollute their souls, he can through them destroy many. And he employs the same agents now as he employed three thousand years ago. By worldly friendships, by the charms of beauty, by pleasure seeking, mirth, feasting, or the wine cup, he tempts to the violation of the seventh commandment.<sup>4</sup>

Balaams, however, are not alone to be found in the world. In the time of the apostle John, Jesus said they existed in the Christian church. There were professed Christians in his day who taught fellow believers to commit fornication. Revelation 2:14. Similarly, there are Balaams today not only in the world and in nominal Protestant churches, but also in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The same night that the PRAISE IN THE 150TH DIMENSION abomination was acted out in Portland, Oregon in April of 1969, in the same city, some Seventh-day Adventist adults had a party for Seventh-day Adventist young people. There was rock and roll music and dancing. There was smoking of cigarettes and the drinking of alcoholic beverages. Before the evening was over, some young couples went to the bedrooms, and several young women lost their virginity that night. That night a number of young people made shipwreck of faith. But it was a Balaam that led them into sin.

Seventh-day Adventists have not been totally exempt from key-club spouse swapping parties. The husbands throw their car and house keys into a circle and the wives draw out a set of keys at random. Matches are thus made for the grossest fornication and adultery. Some of our academy and college faculties have entered into this vice, and thereby have broken the seventh commandment. They have sacrificed their integrity and their careers in Christian education for a little illicit pleasure. How great the cost of this sin!

But there are prominent Balaams in our ranks who teach our people to commit fornication—not premarital or extramarital sex, perhaps, but a form of fornication nonetheless. This word "fornication" does not mean premarital sex alone. According to the Bible definition, it includes a broad spectrum of sexual perversions. Notice the use Jude gives the word:

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Jude 7.

The fornication thus described was not intercourse between men and women primarily, but intercourse

between men and men—homosexuality. When angels came in the form of men unto Lot and his family to warn them to flee from Sodom before they consumed it, all the men of the city assembled at Lot's door demanding that the "men" be delivered unto them "that we may know them" (that is, have intercourse with them). Genesis 19:4-11. Now obviously men could not have intercourse with men in the same manner as with women. They had to invent alternative methods of intercourse. Paul speaks plainly of this:

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: . . .

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, . . . Romans 1:24, 26-29.

Plainly speaking, these alternate forms of intercourse, called sodomy, are oral and rectal sex. Not only can homosexuals practice these unnatural perversions, married couples can also, and some do practice these vices. This animal licking of one another's genitals demeans the noble being created in God's own image. And, oral and rectal sex carried to their conclusion are perversions beneath all of the brute creation. The animals instinctively obey a higher law in their mating. Man alone, of all God's creation, lacks the

natural inhibitions in this area. Paul called such perversions, "inconvenient," "unseemly," "unnatural," "unclean," "dishonorable." He also called such things "vile," "reprobate," "unrighteous," and "wicked." He along with Jude defined such things as "fornication." Romans 1:24, 26-29.

There are in our denomination authors, psychiatrists, doctors, even chaplains and pastors who think "that occasional oral stimulation as a part of foreplay is in keeping with an Adventist philosophy of sex."<sup>5</sup> Others take a neutral position, being equally comfortable with those who are in favor of oral sex with those who appose it. But are not such persons Balaams, teaching our people that it is all right to commit fornication? The Bible condemns oral and rectal sex. It condemns intercourse during menstruation. Leviticus 20:18. How dare, then, anyone say, "It's O.K."<sup>6</sup>

There are other ways to deal treacherously against your companion. One way is to force your mate to have sex. Another way is to cajole your mate into having oral or rectal sex against his or her will.

There is a false teaching in the field of marriage and divorce come from Roman Catholicism which has caused problems in a number of Adventist homes in recent years. While the Catholics condemn divorce, they sponsor a loophole to the Bible's prohibition of putting spouses away for grounds other than adultery. The papacy allows for annulments of marriages—even years after the marriages had been contracted and consummated. An annulment may be obtained through the hierarchy for any one of quite a number of different reasons—many of which would be grounds for divorce by Bible standards, such as adultery, or homosexuality, of sexual perversions, but some also that are non-Biblical, such as incompatibility between believers and non-believers. One such one that has been adopted by many states for annulments is that of annulment on the grounds of "mental incompetency or fraud." While there

certainly may be instances where such a provision could relieve a great deal of suffering, this loophole has become increasingly abused lately, even in the Adventist Church.

As an excuse to follow such a course, some Adventists, including church administrators, have cited one case written about by Ellen White. A man's wife became insane and had to be committed to an asylum, with no apparent hope of recovery. The man had children and wanted a wife to help raise his children. So he divorced his first wife and remarried. Ellen White cautioned those who would rebuke him that they should leave the poor man alone, that he needed a wife and mother for his children. This extreme case has been used as a pretext for annulments from persons who simply have had nervous breakdowns, but lead normal lives by taking a minimal dose of daily medication. The so-called "mentally incompetent" individual may be a highly intelligent, talented, contributing member of society, but is ruthlessly cast aside merely because he or she is not able to carry on without a minimal amount of medication. Ironically such a one may be considered too "mentally incompetent" to be a marriage partner, but not too "mentally incompetent" to be required to pay child support for an adopted child.

There have been other cases in which persons, even Adventist ministers, have obtained annulments on the grounds of "fraud"—that their spouses did not turn out to be the spiritual persons they seemed to be prior to marriage. Thus an annulment is obtained for false representation or fraud. If ever there were a case of marital fraud, it was the case of Jacob and Leah. Yet the Bible does not supply us with a precedent for annulment on the grounds of fraud. Instead, Ellen White says, "Nothing but the violation of the marriage bed can either break *or annul* the marriage vow."<sup>7</sup> Such annulments are non-Biblical, and contrary to the Spirit of Prophecy.

While "fraud" is not a good grounds for an annulment of marriage, it is one terrible way to "deal treacherously

against thy companion." Malachi 2:14-16. This God cannot approve. Before marriage is contracted, lovers should share with each other personal drawbacks that may affect the other's happiness in a future marriage, such as doctrinal differences, serious illnesses or handicaps, significant indebtedness, former marriages, etc.

For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously. Malachi 2:16.

God hates divorces and annulments. He hates "putting away." Why? Such experiences are life-long and heart-felt sores. Such separations affect the children as well as the marriage partners. God made man and wife "one," "that he might seek a godly seed." Malachi 2:15. Only in a loving, stable, Christian home are the influences conducive to the rearing of godly children.

God's word defines as "fraud" the unilateral withholding of legitimate sexual favors from one's spouse. 1 Corinthians 7:5. Thus when one separates from his or her mate without the ground of adultery, the mate is defrauded of a legitimate sexual outlet. Satan can thus tempt such a one for his "incontinency." 1 Corinthians 7:5. Thus it is that "whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, *causeth her* to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Matthew 5:32.

Compounding this problem is the new fashion in Adventist circles of mocking at the so-called "waiting game"—the waiting of the put-away ones for their spouses either to be willing to go back together again or to remarry, and thus freeing them to be remarried. Some Adventist psychiatrists, physicians, pastors, and counselors, as well as laymen have argued that certainly God could not require

such a waiting and watching period after a divorce. But God's word provides no other grounds for remarriage for the innocent party than adultery on the part of the offending party. In some cases this may not occur for some time. In fact, in some cases this may never occur. The one who put his mate away may choose never to remarry, and thereby maintain his church standing. This is indeed a cruel bondage to the other party, but the fault is not with God, but with the hardness of the heart of the one that will not be reconciled. Such hardness of heart and treacherous dealing interferes with our prayers:

And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that He regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. . . .

. . . therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously. Malachi 2:13, 14, 16.

God wants His people to have happy homes where love prevails. He wants us to keep up the little attentions and affections that make the home a delight. He wants us to be faithful to our spouses and to our children. We need to practice courtesy in the home, gentleness, kindness, politeness, and Christian regard.

Our marriages are what we make them. Grating criticism kills affection. We should learn to overcome that. Keeping promises and appointments helps.

Let us have a genuine revival and reformation in the area of marital relationships and the home life. Let us lay aside the prevalent antinomianism and permissiveness that

have broken down the barriers safeguarding the home. Let us come to Jesus for healing. He can comfort and heal in all these areas of life. No matter what may be our past, let us come in faith to Jesus. He has said, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 957.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 623, 624.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 456.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 458.

<sup>5</sup>Anonymous Adventist psychiatrist, quoted by Charles E. Wittschiebe, *God Invented Sex* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assoc., 1974), p. 145.

<sup>6</sup>Anonymous college co-ed, quoted by Wittschiebe, *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>7</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 341.

## Chapter 14

### ROBBING GOD

Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me, But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts. Malachi 3:7-12.

In the earlier Malachi reproofs, there were pointed out institutionalized denominational errors that the laity could do little if anything about except to write letters to church leaders pleading for a change. Now we come to a Malachi reproof that points out an error that the denominational leaders can do little about except to plead with the laity for a change. Keeping God's treasury replenished requires the faithfulness of every professed Christian in the laying aside

of the tithes and offerings. Souls are perishing every day around us and in foreign fields because there are not sufficient funds to send the necessary workers to instruct them. But there would be money and to spare if everyone only gave that small percentage of his increase that God claims as His.

We have studied a number of reproofs in Malachi, so far, but this is the first reproof in that book that comes with a promise. God asks us to experiment—to put Him to the test: "prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes. . . ." Malachi 3:10, 11. God stakes His word and His throne upon this pledge. He pledges that our money minus our tithes and offerings will go further than would the entire amount. What is more, God pledges that we will receive such blessings that there will not be room enough to receive them.

God's mathematics is different than ours. The testimony sounds strange to human ears, but eighty dollars can go farther than one hundred when God stretches them. Many who have been in debt all their lives discovered that they got out of debt for the first time when they gave God His portion first of all.

Giving God His portion *first* is important, however. This point is plainly stated in both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. "Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits." Exodus 22:29. "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Proverbs 3:9, 10.

Not only does the Lord claim the tithe as His own, but He tells us *how* it should be reserved for Him. He says, "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the *first fruits* of all thine increase." This

does not teach that we are to spend our means on ourselves, and bring to the Lord the remnant, even though it should be otherwise an honest tithe. Let God's portion be first set apart.—*R. & H.*, Feb. 4, 1902. (Italics in the original.)<sup>1</sup>

We are not to consecrate to Him what remains of our income after all our real or imaginary wants are satisfied; but before any portion is consumed, we should set apart that which God has specified as His.

Many persons will meet all inferior demands and dues, and leave to God only the last gleanings, if there be any. If not, His cause must wait till a more convenient season.—*R. & H.*, May 16, 1882.<sup>2</sup>

God wants cheerful givers, and He wants us to set apart His portion first. These are two lessons that are taught in the recorded experiences of the ancient Israelites as they constructed the tabernacle structure, Solomon's temple, and afterward, Zerubbabel's temple. In preparing for the construction of the tabernacle sanctuary, the Israelites gave to God immense quantities of the most costly items, and they did so with a willing heart and with cheerfulness. The record of this is most touching.

For the building of the sanctuary great and expensive preparations were necessary; a large amount of the most precious and costly material was required; yet the Lord accepted only freewill offerings. "Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering" was the divine command repeated by Moses to the congregation. Devotion to God and a spirit of sacrifice were the first requisites in preparing a dwelling place for the Most High.

All the people responded with one accord. "They came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all His service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto the Lord."

"And every man with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, brought them. Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought the Lord's offering: and every man, with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought it.

"And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, the blue, and the purple, the scarlet, and the fine linen,

And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun the goats' hair.

"And the rulers brought the onyx stones, and the stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate; and the spice, and the oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense." Exodus 35:23-28, R.V.

While the building of the sanctuary was in progress the people, old and young—men, women, and children—continued to bring their offerings, until those in charge of the work found that they had enough, and even more than could be used. And Moses caused to be proclaimed throughout the camp, "Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the

people were restrained from bringing." The murmurings of the Israelites and the visitations of God's judgments because of their sins are recorded as a warning to after generations. And their devotion, their zeal and liberality, are an example worthy of imitation. All who love the worship of God and prize the blessing of His sacred presence will manifest the same spirit of sacrifice in preparing a house where He may meet with them. They will desire to bring to the Lord an offering of the very best that they possess. A house built for God should not be left in debt, for He is thereby dishonored. An amount sufficient to accomplish the work should be freely given, that the workmen may be able to say, as did the builders of the tabernacle, "Bring no more offerings."<sup>3</sup>

When the tabernacle sanctuary was being prepared, the people responded with their whole hearts in bringing costly offerings to the Lord's workmen. There was also another time in history when such a thing occurred—in the preparation for the building of Solomon's temple.

After David had been made king, and had established his capital city in Jerusalem, he mused regarding what seemed to him as an injustice to God. David's palace had been established—"an house of cedars." But the "ark of the covenant of the LORD" still remained "under curtains." 1 Chronicles 17:1. David proposed to Nathan the prophet that he should build a house for God. The thought seemed good to Nathan the prophet, and he immediately said, "Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee." 1 Chronicles 17:2.

However, that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan the prophet, saying, "Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in." 1 Chronicles 17:4.

The reason why David was not to build the temple was declared: "Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto My name. . . . Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies. . . : for his name shall be Solomon [peaceable], and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build a house for My name." 1 Chronicles 22:8-10.<sup>4</sup>

Though God did not permit David to build the temple himself, He approved of David's desire to do so, and promised that his son would have the honor of doing this work. Still God permitted David to draw the plans for the building, and to gather treasures for the building of the temple. David also composed songs to be sung in the temple services and by the common people as they journeyed across the land to the yearly feasts at the temple.

David did gather vast quantities of materials for the work of building the temple. He donated from his own store gold, silver, and other precious things. At the close of his life, when he abdicated the throne in favor of Solomon his son, he appealed to the people to help also in this project.

Again David appealed to the congregation: "Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God." He said, "I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God," and he went on to enumerate the materials he had gathered. More than this, he said, "I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy

house, even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal." "Who then," he asked of the assembled multitude that had brought their liberal gifts—"who then is willing to consecrate his *service* this day unto the Lord?"

There was a ready response from the assembly. "The chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly, and gave, for the service of the house of God, of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord. . . . Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord; and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.<sup>5</sup>

The utter willingness and liberality of the people was something David could scarcely comprehend. He knew such righteousness could not be attributed to human causes alone. David rightly gave the glory to God for this magnanimous human response.

Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of

Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee. 1 Chronicles 29:10-14.

Because of the apostasy of Israel, the glorious temple that Solomon, David's son, built was reduced to ruins by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. After the 70 years of captivity, the children of Israel were again restored to Jerusalem and instructed by God to rebuild the temple. However these Israelites were not as eager, willing, and zealous for their Lord as their forefathers had been. This can be seen in their course of action. They allowed the temple to lie in ruins quite awhile while they built their own houses, and busied themselves with their own crops and interests. The Lord was displeased by this selfishness. Through the prophet Haggai, the Lord reproved the people.

In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying,

Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built.

Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,

Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?

Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.

Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit.

And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands. Haggai 1:1-11.

The people had made their own interests first and the Lord's interests second. They were just giving God the leftovers. But this violated the spirit of the commandment they had received centuries before, that they should give to the Lord the first fruits of all their increase. They were to give the Lord the first portion, and they were to take the leftovers. Instead of becoming deprived by such a course of action, the people had the pledge of Jehovah that they would be richly blessed should they do this and they would become prosperous. But the Jews had violated this principle after their return to Jerusalem in that they allowed

God's house to lie desolate while they built their own houses. God spoke His displeasure for this course of action both by circumstances—lack of prosperity—and by the voice of the prophet. God's willingness to bless, however, was quickly pointed out, and the people were encouraged to work for God and observe the difference in their circumstances. The people did then immediately go to work for God. The Lord blessed their endeavors. Words of encouragement from God were spoken to them by the prophets.

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the LORD.

Then spake Haggai the LORD's messenger in the LORD's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the LORD.

And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,

In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king. Haggai 1:12-15.

God made plain His pledge that there would be a marked difference in their prosperity from that very day forward:

And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD:

Since those days were, when one came to an heap of twenty measures, there were but ten: when one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty.

I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the LORD.

Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider it.

Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: *from this day will I bless you.* Haggai 2:15-19. (Italics added.)

Perhaps one of the most dramatic instances in Bible history of God's insistence that His work and His workers have the first portion is the story of Elijah and the widow of Zerephath. Elijah had told king Ahab that there would be neither dew nor rain except by his word. The Lord had decreed that a famine should come upon the land to awaken the people to see their evil course in their idolatrous apostasy from the truth. During the first part of the drought, while waters still flowed in some of the creeks, Elijah had hid in the mountains by the brook Cherith. There he had been miraculously provided with food. But when the brook dried up, God instructed Elijah to go to a heathen land, to Zarephath, to be sustained by a widow woman there.

This woman was not an Israelite. She had never had the privileges and blessings that the chosen people of God had enjoyed; but she was a believer in the true God and had walked in all the light that was shining on her pathway. And now, when there was no safety for Elijah in the land of Israel, God

sent him to this woman to find an asylum in her home.

"So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand."

In this poverty-stricken home the famine pressed sore, and the pitifully meager fare seemed about to fail. The coming of Elijah on the very day when the widow feared that she must give up the struggle to maintain life tested to the utmost her faith in the power of the living God to provide for her necessities. But even in her dire extremity she bore witness to her faith by a compliance with the request of the stranger who was asking her to share her last morsel with him.

In response to Elijah's request for food and drink, the widow said, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die." Elijah said to her, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."<sup>6</sup>

The woman obeyed the request of God's servant. And she was richly rewarded. The meal and oil never ran out, but continued to be replenished in the barrel and the cruse during the rest of the drought. She and her son had plenty

to eat, and she had plenty also for Elijah. A greater blessing came to her as a reward for her faith. When her son grew sick and died, Elijah prayed for him and stretched forth himself upon the child three times and cried unto the Lord. The Lord heard Elijah's prayer, and the boy came back to life again. How richly does God reward us when we put His interests first!

God did not will that the church finances be dependent upon pressure appeals from the pulpit during our large meetings. While some who have been withholding their offerings might give what they otherwise would not give, there will be other faithful souls who have already given more than God demands who would feel the urgency of the call and make pledges which would cause suffering and want to their families to fulfill. This is not in God's order. God is not a taskmaster. He has placed an abundance of means in our ranks. If our wealthy members as well as our poorer ones gave faithfully of their tithes and offerings, there would be no lack for funds in the Lord's work, and there would be no need for repeated calls for offerings.

The idea of systematic benevolence has slowly evolved in the Adventist church. At first Seventh-day Adventists did not know that God requires a tenth of our increase to be sacredly set aside for the support of the gospel ministers. A smaller amount was set aside at first, such as one or two percent. God blessed even this amount, and it went a long way toward freeing the ministry from financial embarrassment and putting the church finances on a secure basis. Later Adventists discovered through Bible research that God requires a tenth of our increase, besides freewill offerings, for the maintenance of His work. For many years this program has been a blessing to God's people and has sustained the work of God. In recent years, however, the leaders have noticed that our tithes have gone up proportional to the increase of wages and the increase of membership, but that the freewill offerings have stayed nearly the same. This is perhaps because people are

accustomed to putting a dollar bill in the offering plate as their freewill offering. But a dollar bill is not worth nearly as much today as it once was. Increased attention has been directed to the need of having some sort of systematic benevolence for the non-tithe offerings so that there may be adequate non-tithe funds to carry on the non-ministerial aspects of the work of the church.

Some local conferences are experimenting with a new plan that shows great promise. It is called the 10 plus 10+ plan. Ten percent is set aside as the tithe for the support of the ministry as before, and another 10 or more percent is set aside and divided into three general areas of the world budget: the largest percentage goes to local church budget, and two smaller amounts go to world missions and conference advancement. The exact percentages of how the money is divided is left with the individual, but the recommendation is made that ten or more percent be given for the offerings in addition to the sacred tithe. This world budget plan eliminates the need for repeated calls for offerings for many different projects. More comes into God's treasury this way than from the many urgent appeals from the pulpit for individual projects, and yet none of God's people are impoverished by this plan. It is a good plan, and we as God's people ought to rally around it. God promises to abundantly bless us if we do.

If all the tithes of our people flowed into the treasury of the Lord as they should, such blessings would be received that gifts and offerings for sacred purposes would be multiplied tenfold, and thus the channel between God and man would be kept open.<sup>7</sup>

Tithes and offerings are still a test of gratitude and loyalty for us. How much do we value the Lord's sacrifice for us? Are not our tithes and offerings a meager pittance

unworthy of comparison with what God has sacrificed for us?

I speak of the tithing system; yet how meager it looks to my mind! How small the estimate! How vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable! Tithes for Christ! Oh, meager pittance, shameful recompense for that which cost so much!—4T 119.<sup>8</sup>

The rivers of blood that flowed at the harvest thanksgiving, when sacrifices were offered in such large numbers, were meant to teach a great truth. For even the productions of the earth, the bounties provided for man's sustenance, we are indebted to the offering of Christ upon the cross of Calvary. God teaches us that all we receive from Him is the gift of redeeming love. From His instruction to Israel, He would have us learn that He has made ample provision for the poor to receive the comforts of this life, and also for the gospel to be carried to all those who are perishing in their sins.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 343, 344.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 712.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 751, 752.

<sup>6</sup>Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 129, 130.

<sup>7</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 474.

<sup>8</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 76.

<sup>9</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

## Chapter 15

### SAD SABBATH KEEPERS

Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?

Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?

And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; they that tempt God are even delivered. Malachi 3:13-15.

The passage above brings to light a class of people that profess the truth, but who are not pleasing to God—the mourners and the complainers. These complain not only of their fellowmen and criticize the saints, but they actually complain of and falsely accuse God.

Some have the mistaken idea that true religion consists of long-faced soberness and mournfulness. But these misrepresent the loving and cheerful God of heaven to their children and to non-believers. Many persons of whom we have no knowledge are watching us to see what kind of effect our religion will have upon our lives. Then what kind of impression are we leaving upon them if our faces are all sad and gloomy?

In the first place, who required this mournfulness? God didn't. Such a thing never entered His mind. The idea of maintaining a religious demeanor of mournfulness is a popular misconception of religion that has come down to modern man from centuries of papal darkness. For centuries people were taught to earn their salvation by the merits of their own works, through careful mournfulness and deprivation. But the Bible teaches that there is no

merit in any such thing. We cannot be saved by our works-  
-by paying tithe, by keeping the Sabbath, or by being  
mournful before the Lord. The Bible says, "the just shall  
live by his faith." Habakkuk 2:4 (Romans 1:17).

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that  
not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast.  
Ephesians 2:8, 9.

If we had to earn our way to heaven by our own works,  
well might we mourn, for it would be impossible of  
ourselves to live a perfect life. There would be nothing in  
our hand we could bring to atone for our failings. Our  
situation would be hopeless. We would be doomed to  
eternal death. But praise the Lord, our own works are not  
the basis of our salvation! Our salvation is "the gift of  
God" to us on account of the merits of our Saviour Jesus  
Christ. Such an abundant gift as this should call forth from  
us the highest joy and gladness. Our faces should shine  
with a holy radiance because of the blessings that God  
bestows upon us. Then the world will see that God is with  
us and that He has blessed us.

In a large degree, the lack of blessing that the mournful  
Sabbath keepers complain of is due to their own rebellion  
and selfishness. They withhold their tithes and offerings.  
Therefore the curse comes upon them. Their crops fail.  
They suffer financial losses. All their Sabbath keeping  
does them no good, because they embezzle the Lord of the  
money that belongs to Him. Ellen White explains this, and  
throws an interesting light upon the application of the false  
claim that the "wicked are set up." Malachi 3:15.

"Your words have been stout against Me, saith  
the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so  
much against Thee? Ye have said, It is vain to  
serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept

His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." [Malachi 3:] Verses 13-15. Those who withhold from God His own make these complaints. The Lord asks them to prove Him by bringing their tithe into His storehouse to see whether He will not pour them out a blessing. But they cherish rebellion in their hearts and complain of God; at the same time they rob Him and embezzle His goods. When their sin is presented before them, they say: I have had adversity; my crops have been poor; but the wicked are prospered; it does not pay to keep the ordinance of the Lord.

But God does not want any to walk mournfully before Him. Those who thus complain of God have brought their adversity on themselves. They have robbed God, and His cause has been hindered because the money that should have flowed into His treasury was used for selfish purposes. They showed their disloyalty to God by failing to carry out His prescribed plan. When God prospered them, and they were asked to give Him His portion, they shook their heads and could not see that it was their duty. They closed the eyes of their understanding, that they might not see. They withheld the Lord's money and hindered the work which He designed to have done. God was not honored by the use made of His entrusted goods. Therefore He let the curse fall upon them, permitting the spoiler to destroy their fruits and to bring calamities upon them.<sup>1</sup>

There is another class of believers that in effect charge that the wicked prosper while those that do God's will suffer. These are those that see advantages in worldly

policy and worldly alliances, and want to do the Lord's work in a way opposite to that which the Lord requires. Many of these are zealous to do a great work. Many are even acknowledged leaders in the church, filling important offices, and sitting on influential committees. Unwittingly, however, they are following the wrong leader. They try to work for the Lord according to the methods of Satan. They can see no light in following the path of virtue and principle. They feel such a course is doomed to failure. Only their worldly policies will succeed, they feel.

This course of action is also slander against the Most High. God outlines the only course which will truly succeed. The Omniscient One makes no mistakes. He knows what is best. But those who try to disparage the right way and set about to point out a better way set themselves above God.

But fortunately God has a people who fall into another category. God has some who are to Him a special treasure.

In Malachi 3:16 an opposite class is brought to view, a class that meet together, not to find fault with God, but to speak of His glory and tell of His mercies. These have been faithful in their duty. They have given to the Lord His own. Testimonies are borne by them that make the heavenly angels sing and rejoice. These have no complaints to make against God. Those who walk in the light, who are faithful and true in doing their duty, are not heard complaining and finding fault. They speak words of courage, hope, and faith. It is those who serve themselves, who do not give God His own, that complain.

"They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord

of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." Verses 16-18.<sup>2</sup>

The psalmist Asaph for a time had difficulty in envying the prosperity of the wicked. He acknowledged, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." Psalm 73:2, 3. He described the outward appearance of their prosperity:

For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.

They are not in trouble as other men; neither are thy plagued like other men.

Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.

Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.

They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.

They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.

And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.

When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Psalm 73:4-17.

When the psalmist went into the sanctuary of God, and studied the plan of salvation, he then could have a different view of things, for he could see the end results of righteousness and transgression. He could see the eternal reward of the righteous, and the everlasting destruction of the wicked. He then had no more envy for the wicked.

Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castest them down into destruction.

How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment: they are utterly consumed with terrors.

As a dream when one awaketh; so O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

So foolish was I, and ignorant. Psalm 73:19-22.

Now the psalmist is grieved for a different reason,—not because the wicked prosper and he doesn't,—because he was so foolish as to envy the wicked. The wicked are the ones to be pitied, for they shall miss out on eternal life, and go down to destruction.

The same lessons are brought out in Malachi. We should not fret because of outward appearances now. God calls us to lift our eyes a little higher, so that we can see a little farther. He bids us look to the day of rewards:

Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, said the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts. Malachi 3:18-4:3.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, pp. 389, 390.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 390.

## Chapter 16

### CALLING EVIL GOOD

Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment? Malachi 2:17.

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!...

Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and the blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. Isaiah 5:20, 24, 25.

Here we have mentioned in Malachi and Isaiah another sin—the sin of calling evil good, and good evil. This is the last sin mentioned in Malachi before God presents the prophetic solution to the stubborn rebellion of His people. Calling evil good, and good evil, however, is not merely just another sin to be included in a list. It is the most serious of all sins. In order to clearly see this, we need to consider a couple of Bible stories and some statements

from Ellen White's writings. Two stories in the Bible especially lend themselves to an explanation of this point. One is the Israelites' response to the destruction of Korah and his company by the judgments of God. The other is the Jewish leaders' response to Jesus' mighty miracles.

Korah was a Levite, a cousin of Moses and Aaron. He had been greatly honored of God. He had been one of the seventy elders of Israel that had seen the glory of God in the mount. Yet, little by little, he began to become jealous of the authority and power God had given to Moses and Aaron. He was resentful of the newly effected plan of God that the priesthood should cease from the heads of all individual families, and be transferred to the family of Aaron.

Korah found ready sympathizers in his next door neighbors. Korah lived next to the tents of Dathan and Abiram, two princes of the tribe of Reuben, the firstborn son of Jacob. They listened to the complaints of Korah, and decided that they too had been greatly wronged by Moses and Aaron. Notwithstanding the prophecy of Jacob, Dathan and Abiram felt that Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, should have the birthright, and they as his descendants should be the rightful rulers of the nation. Notwithstanding all the evidence of Moses' and Aaron's divine calling, Dathan and Abiram imagined Moses and Aaron had usurped the authority rightfully theirs. They purposed to overthrow the government of Israel, and make themselves the leaders. But they were quite willing to give the priesthood to Korah, who had started them thinking of such a plan.

The people of Israel were ripe for such a revolt. Because of their sin in rejecting the report of the two faithful spies and receiving the report of the ten spies that they were not able to take the land of Canaan, the Lord had sentenced them to forty more years of wandering in the wilderness. All the adults were to die in the wilderness except Caleb and Joshua the faithful spies. The people

were rebellious at such a sentence. They kept losing sight of the fact that God was their invisible leader, and were ready to charge all their misfortune upon Moses and Aaron.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were successful in alienating two hundred and fifty princes, "men of renown" in the congregation. Finding such ready success with the leaders, the conspirators then took their case to the people. They flattered the people that they were good and holy, and that the reasons for all their difficulties were Moses and Aaron's mismanagement and tyrannical authority. The people were pleased with these men's praises, and contrasted them with Moses' reproofs and rebukes. They decided that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were holy men, and that Moses and Aaron were operating by the power of Satan. A large part of the congregation sided with Korah, and they were ready to murder Moses and Aaron, and set up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram as their new leaders. The congregation experienced a greater sense of unity and harmony in this conspiracy than they had ever had before under the administration of Moses and Aaron. Korah viewed this as evidence of the rightness of his course, and he was emboldened in his plan, regarding his envy and rebellion as zeal for God.

For a time the work was carried on secretly. But when the movement attained sufficient strength, Korah appeared at the head of the faction, publicly accusing Moses and Aaron of usurping the authority which Korah and his associates were equally entitled to share. Korah further charged that the people had been deprived of their liberty and independence. "Ye take too much upon you," said the conspirators, "seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" Numbers 16:3.

Moses had not suspected this deep-laid plot, and when its terrible significance burst

upon him, he fell upon his face in silent appeal to God. He arose sorrowful indeed, but calm and strong. Divine guidance had been granted him. "Even to-morrow," he said, "the Lord will show who are His, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto Him: even him whom He hath chosen will He cause to come near unto Him." The test was to be deferred until the morrow, that all might have time for reflection. Then those who aspired to the priesthood were to come each with a censer, and offer incense at the tabernacle in the presence of the congregation. The law was very explicit that only those who had been ordained to the sacred office should minister in the sanctuary. And even the priests, Nadab and Abihu, had been destroyed for venturing to offer "strange fire," in disregard of a divine command. Yet Moses challenged his accusers, if they dared enter upon so perilous an appeal, to refer the matter to God.

Singling out Korah and his fellow Levites, Moses said, "Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And He hath brought thee near to Him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also? for which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord. And what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?"

Dathan and Abiram had not taken so bold a stand as had Korah; and Moses, hoping that they might have been drawn into the conspiracy without having become wholly corrupted, summoned them to appear before him, that he might hear their charges against him. But they would not come, and they insolently refused to acknowledge his authority. Their reply, uttered in the hearing of the congregation, was, "Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards; wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up."

Thus they applied to the scene of their bondage the very language in which the Lord had described the promised inheritance. They accused Moses of pretending to act under divine guidance, as a means of establishing his authority; and they declared that they would no longer submit to be led about like blind men, now toward Canaan, and now toward the wilderness, as best suited his ambitious designs. Thus he who had been as a tender father, a patient shepherd, was represented in the blackest character of a tyrant and usurper. The exclusion from Canaan, in punishment of their own sins, was charged upon him.<sup>1</sup>

It was clear to see that the sympathies of the people were with the disaffected party. But Moses made no effort

at self-vindication. He appealed to God as a witness to the purity of his motives.

On the morrow, the two hundred and fifty princes, with Korah at their head, presented themselves, with their censers. They were brought into the court of the tabernacle, while the people gathered without, to await the result. It was not Moses who assembled the congregation to behold the defeat of Korah and his company, but the rebels, in their blind presumption, had called them together to witness their victory. A large part of the congregation openly sided with Korah, whose hopes were high of carrying his point against Aaron.

As they were thus assembled before God, "The glory of the Lord appeared unto all the congregation." The divine warning was communicated to Moses and Aaron, "Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." But they fell upon their faces, with the prayer, "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation?"

Korah had withdrawn from the assembly to join Dathan and Abiram when Moses, accompanied by the seventy elders, went down with a last warning to the men who had refused to come to him. The multitudes followed, and before delivering his message, Moses, by divine direction, bade the people, "Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins." The warning was obeyed, for an apprehension of impending judgment rested upon all. The chief rebels saw themselves abandoned by those whom they had deceived, but their hardihood was unshaken. They stood with

their families in the door of their tents, as if in defiance of the divine warning.

In the name of the God of Israel, Moses now declared, in the hearing of the congregation: "Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth upon her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit, then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord."<sup>2</sup>

Moses had no more than finished speaking, when the solid earth parted, and the rebels and all that pertained to them went down into the pit. The earth closed again upon them, and they perished. The people of Israel fled in terror, self-condemned as partakers in the sin. The two hundred and fifty princes who were at the sanctuary offering incense were not that moment destroyed. God permitted them to first see the destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and give them opportunity to repent. But repent they did not. Their sympathies were with the conspirators. So, after a few moments for reflection and change of heart for the two hundred and fifty princes, God flashed fire from the cloud and devoured them.

When Moses was entreating Israel to flee from the coming destruction, the divine judgment might even then have been stayed, if Korah and his company had repented and sought forgiveness. But their stubborn persistence sealed their doom. The entire congregation were sharers in their guilt, for all had, to a greater or less degree, sympathized with them. Yet God in His great mercy made a

distinction between the leaders in rebellion and those whom they had led. The people who had permitted themselves to be deceived were still granted space for repentance. Overwhelming evidence had been given that they were wrong, and that Moses was right. The signal manifestation of God's power had removed all uncertainty.

Jesus, the Angel who went before the Hebrews, sought to save them from destruction. Forgiveness was lingering for them. The judgment of God had come very near, and appealed to them to repent. A special, irresistible interference from heaven had arrested their rebellion. Now, if they would respond to the interposition of God's providence, they might be saved. *But while they fled from the judgments, through fear of destruction, their rebellion was not cured. They returned to their tents that night terrified, but not repentant.*

They had been flattered by Korah and his company until they really believed themselves to be a very good people, and that they had been wronged and abused by Moses. Should they admit that Korah and his company were wrong, and Moses right, then they would be compelled to receive as the word of God the sentence that they must die in the wilderness. They were not willing to submit to this, and they tried to believe that Moses had deceived them. They had fondly cherished the hope that a new order of things was about to be established, in which praise would be substituted for reproof, and ease for anxiety and conflict. The men who had perished had spoken flattering words and had professed great interest and love for them, and the people concluded that Korah and his companions must have been good men, and that Moses had by some means been the cause of their destruction.

It is hardly possible for men to offer greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities He would use for their salvation. The Israelites had not only done this, but had purposed to put both Moses and Aaron to death. Yet they did not realize the necessity of seeking pardon of God for their grievous sin. That night of probation was not passed in repentance and confession, but in devising some way to resist the evidence which showed them to be the greatest of sinners. They still cherished hatred of the men of God's appointment, and braced themselves to resist their authority. Satan was at hand to pervert their judgment and lead them blindfold to destruction.

All Israel had fled in alarm at the cry of the doomed sinners who went down into the pit, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up also." "But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord." And they were about to proceed to violence against their faithful, self-sacrificing leaders. A manifestation of divine glory was seen in the cloud above the tabernacle, and a voice from the cloud spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment."<sup>3</sup>

Moses had not partaken in the sin of the people, and hence he had no fear of judgment upon himself, and he did not hasten away from the people to leave them to perish. Instead he manifested his shepherd's interest in the flock under his care. He pleaded to God in behalf of the people. By his intercession the nation of Israel was spared from full destruction. But the minister of wrath from God had gone forth. The plague had begun to do its work. Thousands were dying. Under the direction of Moses, Aaron took his

censer with incense and went into the congregation who were falling by the plague. And Moses was praying fervently in the sanctuary, interceding for the people. Aaron hastened to the place where the people were dying. He stood with his censer between the living and the dead. Only then was the plague stayed. But not until there were fourteen thousand Israelites lying dead.

This lengthy story has been related in order to present the following important lesson:

Korah would not have taken the course he did had he *known* that all the directions and reproofs communicated to Israel were from God. But he might have known this. God had given overwhelming evidence that He was leading Israel. But Korah and his companions rejected light until they became so blinded that the most striking manifestations of His power were not sufficient to convince them; they attributed them all to human or satanic agency. The same thing was done by the people, who the day after the destruction of Korah and his company came to Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord." Notwithstanding they had the most convincing evidence of God's displeasure at their course, in the destruction of the men who had deceived them, they dared to attribute His judgments to Satan, declaring that through the power of the evil one, Moses and Aaron had caused the death of good and holy men. It was this act that sealed their doom. They had committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, a sin by which man's heart is effectually hardened against the influence of divine grace. "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man," said Christ, "it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him." Matthew 12:32. These words were spoken by our

Saviour when the gracious works which He had performed through the power of God were attributed by the Jews to Beelzebub. It is through the agency of the Holy Spirit that God communicates with man; and those who deliberately reject this agency as satanic, have cut off the channel of communication between the soul and Heaven.

God works by the manifestation of His Spirit to reprove and convict the sinner; and if the Spirit's work is finally rejected, there is no more that God can do for the soul. The last resource of divine mercy has been employed. The transgressor has cut himself off from God, and sin has no remedy to cure itself. There is no reserved power by which God can work to convict and convert the sinner. "Let him alone" (Hosea 4:17) is the divine command. Then "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Hebrews 10:26, 27.<sup>4</sup>

Korah's sin, and the sin of the people of Israel, was calling evil good, and good evil. They attributed the work of God to Satan, and the work of Satan to God. This is the most serious of all sins. This is the sin against the Holy Ghost, the unpardonable sin for those who cannot be turned from it. The sin of the scribes and Pharisees in Jesus' day was the same. They called evil good, and good evil. They attributed the work of Christ to the power of Satan, and their own satanic designs to the work of God. They did so in the face of the most supernatural evidence of the divine character of Christ's work. This was the sin against the Holy Ghost. There remained no greater evidences that God could employ to convince them of their error. By taking this stand, they sealed their fate.

Thus we see how truly serious this sin is—the sin of calling evil good, and good evil. There is scarcely any escape from it. Are we guilty of it today? Maintaining that profane and vulgar literature is good and holy is calling evil good. Saying that those who reprove the church leaders for this course are being led of Satan to do this is calling good evil (and this has been done). Saying "that occasional oral stimulation as a part of foreplay is in keeping with an Adventist philosophy of sex" or that intercourse during menstruation is O.K. (see chapter 13) is calling evil good. But let us consider another example of this sin among us.

The October 30, 1979 issue of *Insight* magazine was devoted to the discussion of the need for, and techniques that can be used in, city evangelism. On first sight it was refreshing to see emphasis placed on this much needed work. But on greater scrutiny, there was seen cause for alarm. Methods that were advocated for city evangelism were not in accordance with the light God has given this people. Furthermore, the method that God has instructed us to use was termed *selfish*, and the opposite approach advocated.

God has said to His Adventist people:

The cities are to be worked from outposts. Said the messenger of God, "Shall not the cities be warned? Yes: not by God's people living in them, but by their visiting them, to warn them of what is coming upon the earth."<sup>5</sup>

But this is what a respected Adventist leader said in print in that issue of *Insight* magazine.

Of course, it is better, healthier, and probably more productive to live one's life in a rural retreat, but it is selfish, and no one has ever been able to convince me that witnessing to live people can be

achieved by avoiding them and the place in which they live.

With the huge size of today's cities, it seems utterly impracticable to attempt to influence their inhabitants by some outpost process that removes us completely from the total life of the city dweller. It is time to rethink the mission call in these terms.<sup>6</sup>

How can we say such things? We flatly contradict God and His messenger. We say God's way is *selfish*—the principle that underlies every action in Satan's kingdom. And we say that the selfless loving thing to do (the principle of God's kingdom) is to do what Satan proposes. We attribute the work of God to Satan, and the work of Satan to God! We will leave God to judge whether this has reached the state of the unpardonable sin, but it is perilously close! And this is the provender that is offered to our youth for their spiritual instruction and motivation! How can our publishing house editors consider printing such a thing, unless they have nearly reached the same condition? What could be more serious? We may go into the cities and do a grand work for God. But what god are we doing it for? We say God's way is selfish. We refuse to work along His planned lines. We do the opposite. Who will our converts really be converted to? Can we really finish the work of God on earth in this manner?

God has committed to His servants a message for this time; but this message does not in every particular coincide with the ideas of all the leading men, and some criticize the message and the messengers. They dare even to reject the words of reproof sent to them from God through His Spirit.

What reserve power has the Lord with which to reach those who have cast aside His warnings and reproofs, and have accredited the testimonies of the

Spirit of God to no higher source than human wisdom?<sup>7</sup>

When the messenger of the Lord to the remnant church does not say, "I think. . . .", but quotes the messenger of God to her (the angel) as saying the cities should be worked from outposts, and we say that such a thing is *selfish*, what more can God do for us to reach us? What reserve power has the Lord left to reach the rejecters of His warnings and reproofs? What reserve power does the Lord have to reach such leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist church? What power does God have left to purify the church and keep it from falling utterly when such men are in power and controlling the media of church communications? Not much. But God does have something left. And it is something not altogether pleasant—at least not to the wicked. If we study on in the prophecy of Malachi and the other prophets we will learn that "God will not only reveal himself as a God of mercy and forgiveness and long forbearance, but by terrible things in righteousness He will make it manifest that He is not a man that He should lie."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 398, 399.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 400, 401.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 401-403.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 404, 405.

<sup>5</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two, p. 358.

<sup>6</sup>"Unfinished Mission: The Challenge of the Cities," *Insight*, October 30, 1979, p. 11. (Author not credited to save embarrassment.)

<sup>7</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 465, 466.

<sup>8</sup>Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

## PART THREE

### THE CITED PROPHECIES

The prophecy of Malachi was brought before them in connection with Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah. The teaching of these books was carefully investigated.—E. G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

## Note

The Message that was presented to the large ministerial meeting in Ellen White's 1902 dream would be incomplete without the "terrible things in righteousness [by which] He [God] will make it manifest that He is not a man that He should lie." These sudden, unlooked for, earthshaking events are brought to light in a careful study of the cited prophecies—namely Malachi in connection with Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah. However, the careful treatment of these prophecies is so lengthy and complex, it does not fit best in one book—in this book. So far, the author has four books dealing with aspects of that subject—*Daniel Eleven Mysteries*, *The Mystery of the Second Advent*, *Daniel and the Revelation with Comments and Parallel Applications*, and *Does God Really Love Us?* More books expanding that theme are on the way. The author suggests the reader study those books. They are all or will be available for downloading free from various web sites. So the content in PART THREE of this book is covered by the other books. This book concludes with PART FOUR.

## Chapter 17

### HOW DO YOU SEE IT NOW?

In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the Lord by the prophet Haggai, saying,

Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying,

Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Haggai 2:1-3.

When the returned exiles laid the foundation of the new temple, there were a few very elderly persons who were there who remembered the first temple. While the young people rejoiced to see the foundation laid, the ancient men wept for they saw how much inferior the new temple was compared to the old one. But according to Ellen White, there is a lesson in this story for us in our time. We can see in the temple a symbol of our church. Who is there left among us that saw this church in its first glory? and how do you see it now?

In the April 9, 1981 issue of *Adventist Review* there were two articles honoring the centenarian Howard Milton Lee, former missionary-educator to Korea. When Elder Lee first went to Korea, there were only 200 Seventh-day Adventist members in Korea. On his recent trip to Korea, he learned that there are now more than 40,000 SDA members in Korea. How was Elder Lee affected by his trip to Korea? Was he thrilled with the astounding progress of the work in that land since he left there?

Elder Lee told how he felt:

My recent trip to Korea has convinced me that our schools overseas are now fast following the same step-by-step advance to the world that has overtaken our educational system in America. As I see it, our only hope is in listening to God's voice and following in His ways as clearly outlined for us through Ellen White's writings. Then we can expect God to miraculously—and it will take a miracle—raise our schools back to their upright position of distinction from the world. Otherwise, we will remain as "prisoners of hope."

When asked, "What is your greatest heart burden for your church?" he responded:

I must honestly confess and testify that upon the basis of my own personal observations and study of the instruction given in the Spirit of Prophecy, my greatest desire for Adventists is that they be saved. I believe with all my heart that our only hope is to awaken to the undeniable fact that we have wandered far from God's simple, utilitarian plan in our educational, health-care, and evangelistic program of giving the final warning to the world.

I believe that our current theological controversies and problems in education, health-care and evangelism are due largely to turning away from the pure fountain of God's instruction given the remnant church through the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, and contrariwise, seeking the polluted streams that flow from the theology of Rome and the educational program of ancient Greece.<sup>1</sup>

In giving his personal testimony, Elder Lee gave undeniable evidence that we did not just accidentally drift into a conformity to worldly policies. There were earnest

men who pleaded against such a course, but they were deliberately outvoted by General Conference councils.<sup>2</sup> Elder Lee knew. He was there at such councils as a delegate. Our only hope as a denomination is to corporately repent of our insubordination and make a corporate vote to reverse our long-standing refusal to do God's will.

Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do you see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Haggai 2:3.

How did Elder Lee evaluate the state of our church? Was he thrilled or saddened? He was saddened. We have greatly increased in numbers, but we have greatly decayed in moral worth. Numbers alone do not represent progress. There were a lot of Jews in the time of Christ, but no fruit on the pretentious, big tree. Are we any different?

God has had many, many reproofs for this people, but only because He loves us. He tells us, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Revelation 3:19. But now the reproofs are done. There is nothing more that is negative that God has to say to His people at this time. Instead, the Lord gives us a message of reassurance and staggering promises:

Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord: and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts:

According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.

For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;

And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts. Haggai 2:4-9.

Though we have sinned so long, though we have been insubordinate, God reassures us that He is still with us; His Spirit remains among us. Our coming out of Egypt in the antitype was in 1844. As God was with us then, He is with us now.

God says, "Be strong, all ye people of the land, and work: for I am with you." If we wholeheartedly repent, if we throw our entire soul into the work, if we invest all our possessions in the Lord's cause quickly, right now, we will be staggered by the results. John the Baptist, single-handedly prepared a nation for the first advent of the Messiah in six months. Jonah single-handedly prepared a city in forty days. In seventy days the 1844 Midnight Cry message was carried to the world.

God's promises are staggering. He promises to shake the heavens and the earth, and the Desire of all nations shall come. And God will fill this house (church) with glory. And the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former. The Bible promises that the glory and wealth of the Gentiles shall flow into this church, as a flowing stream. Nations will be stirred to their very center. We can have, right now, a mighty movement such as we have not yet witnessed. It is time now to proclaim in the large

centers of population, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh! Go ye out to meet Him."

The work can be done quickly, but it must be carried on according to an altogether different plan than we have been following. There must be a hundred workers where there is now but one. The New Testament Christians sold everything they possessed and put it into a common purse. No one claimed that anything he had was his own. By this means, money was secured for the gospel labor. But not only for that—much of the money was used to relieve the wants of the orphans and widows. Enough money was secured to make every disciple a missionary. The work progressed rapidly, and it was done in God's order. It was first done in Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria, and then in the uttermost parts of the world. Our approach must be similar. We must first labor for the large cities, for they are the first to be burned. We can reach the outlying territories on the way out. But let us not move into the cities to work them. Let us move out and quickly establish outpost centers. But let us not colonize. Let each person go on assignment to a neglected area, two-by-two.

When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out His Spirit when selfishness and selfindulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain,—“Am I my brother's keeper?”<sup>3</sup>

God has promised that if we throw our whole souls into the service of Christ, He will pour out upon us the Holy Spirit without measure. The timid will become bold for Christ. We will have the gift of tongues where we need

it,—not the gibberish of counterfeit tongues, but a miraculous understanding of foreign languages. The sick will be healed, the dead raised. Demons will be cast out. The world will tremble before the Lord's army. What are we waiting for?

#### THE MASTER'S CALL\*

1. I have seen the day grow dimmer as the night begins to fall,

Yet the fields are white to harvest—don't you hear the Master's call?

Go ye out into the highways, spread the message 'round to all,

The night is coming on.

Chorus Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!

Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!

Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!

His truth is marching on!

2. Nations are confused and angry as the storm clouds gather fast,

Earth is ready for the battle that will surely be the last;

Hear the call—Come join the faithful e'er the harvest time is past,

While God is marching on.

3. Faithful pilgrims have been working through the long and weary day,

Now their eyes are growing heavy, they are slipping fast away.

Come, relieve them now, my brother, for our God shall soon repay,

Our God is marching on.

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\*To be sung to the tune of the Battle Hymn of the Republic.

(Words by the author at age 17.)

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<sup>1</sup>James Lee and S. A. Yakush, "A Link with the Pioneers," *Adventist Review*, April 9, 1981, pp. 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup>Howard Milton Lee, "A Centenarian's Testimony," *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 52.

[Continued from back cover.]

our own time. After a diligent searching of the Scriptures, there was a period of silence. A very solemn impression was made upon the people. The deep moving of the Spirit of God was manifest among us. All were troubled, all seemed to be convicted, burdened, and distressed, as they saw their own life and character represented in the word of God, and the Holy Spirit was making application to their hearts.

“Conscience was aroused. The record of past days was making its disclosure of the vanity of human inventions. The Holy Spirit brought all things to their remembrance. As they reviewed their past history there were revealed defects of character that ought to have been discerned and corrected. They saw how through the grace of Christ the character should have been transformed. The workers had known the sorrow of defeat in the work intrusted to their hands, when they should have had victory.

“The Holy Spirit presented before them Him whom they had offended. They saw that God will not only reveal himself as a God of mercy and forgiveness and long forbearance, but by terrible things in righteousness He will make it manifest that He is not a man that He should lie.

“Words were spoken by One, saying, ‘The hidden inner life will be revealed. As if reflected in a mirror, all the inward working of the character will be made manifest. The Lord would have you examine your own lives, and see how vain is human glory.’ ‘Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.’”—Ellen G. White, “A Test of Gratitude and Loyalty,” *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

This book is the amplification and realization of part of the following quotation from Ellen G. White:

“In the night season I was in my dreams in a large meeting, with ministers, their wives, and their children. I wondered that the company present was mostly made up of ministers and their families. The prophecy of Malachi was brought before them in connection with Daniel, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah. The teaching of these books was carefully investigated. The building of the temple, and the temple service were considered. There was close searching of the Scriptures in regard to the sacred character of all that appertained to the temple service. Through the prophets, God has given a delineation of what will come to pass in the last days of this earth's history; and the Jewish economy is full of instruction for us.

“The offering of beasts did not cleanse away sin, but was a symbol of the great and complete sacrifice that was to be made for the sins of the whole world. The rivers of blood that flowed at the harvest thanksgiving, when sacrifices were offered in such large numbers, were meant to teach a great truth. For even the productions of the earth, the bounties provided for man's sustenance, we are indebted to the offering of Christ upon the cross of Calvary. God teaches us that all we receive from Him is the gift of redeeming love. From His instruction to Israel, He would have us learn that He has made ample provision for the poor to receive the comforts of this life, and also for the gospel to be carried to all those who are perishing in their sins.

“The whole sanctuary service was designed to impress the people with the fact that the things which God has set apart for Himself are holy. They were ever to observe the distinction between the sacred and the common. Holy things must be kept holy.

“All these things were closely studied by the company before me in my dream. Scripture was compared with scripture, and application was made of the word of God to [Continued on inside back cover.]