

Is It Babylon?

I have recently heard much agitation on the topic of the church. I have heard people talk about doing a work that would greatly please Satan; they think this work will prove that they are the virgins with oil in their lamps. It is for the purpose of warning against these specific errors that I have written this newsletter. We are warned:

“You will take passages in the *Testimonies* that speak of the close of probation, of the shaking among God’s people, and you will talk of a coming out from this people of a purer, holier people that will arise. Now all this pleases the enemy.... Should many accept the views you advance, and talk and act upon them, we would see one of the greatest fanatical excitements that has ever been witnessed among Seventh-day Adventists. This is what Satan wants.”—*Last Day Events*, 51.

Satan wants a fanatical movement that calls the Seventh-day Adventist Church Babylon. We can be certain that he is working with hellish wisdom and zeal to accomplish this purpose. Will the Seventh-day Adventist Church ever be Babylon?

“There is but one church in the world who are at the present time standing in the breach, and making up the hedge, building up the old waste places; and for any man to call the attention of the world and other churches to this church, denouncing her as Babylon, is to do a work in harmony with him who is the accuser of the brethren. Is it possible that men will arise from among us, who speak perverse things, and give voice to the very sentiments that Satan would have disseminated in the world in regard to those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus? Is there not work enough to satisfy your zeal in presenting the truth to those who are in the darkness of error? As those who have been made stewards of means and ability, you have been misapplying your Lord’s goods in disseminating error. The whole world is filled with hatred of those who proclaim the binding claims of the law of God, and the church who are loyal to Jehovah must engage in no ordinary conflict. ‘We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places’ [Ephesians 6:12]. Those who have any realization of what this warfare means will not turn their weapons against the church militant, but with all their powers will wrestle with the people of God against the con-

federacy of evil.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 50-51.

God’s last-day church is those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is the only denomination that believes all Ten Commandments are applicable, has faith in Christ’s work in the Sanctuary in heaven, and has a prophet that meets the Biblical criteria. What makes a church Babylon?

“It is our individual duty to walk humbly with God. We are not to seek any strange, new message. We are not to think that the chosen ones of God who are trying to walk in the light compose Babylon. The fallen denominational churches are Babylon. Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error. This wine of error is made up of false doctrines, such as the natural immortality of the soul, the eternal torment of the wicked, the denial of the pre-existence of Christ prior to His birth in Bethlehem, and advocating and exalting the first day of the week above God’s holy and sanctified day. These and kindred errors are presented to the world by the various churches, and thus the Scriptures are fulfilled that say, ‘For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication’ [Revelation 18:3]. It is a wrath which is created by false doctrines, and when kings and presidents drink this wine of the wrath of her fornication, they are stirred with anger against those who will not come into harmony with the false and satanic heresies which exalt the false sabbath, and lead men to trample underfoot God’s memorial.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 61-62.

There are those who point to the prevailing apostasy as an excuse to justify their faultfinding spirit. There is certainly apostasy, but the Seventh-day Adventist denomination holds none of the above mentioned doctrines as beliefs. They hold up the commandments of God, the ministry of Christ in His Sanctuary, and the correct interpretation of prophecy. They have the prophetic gift that meets all the tests of a prophet. Our prophet has said that the Seventh-day Adventist organization appears to fall, but it does not. **God’s church is comprised of individuals who hold these common beliefs, and those who do not are the tares and wolves that Christ warned against.** When will these false shepherds and wicked men leave?

“The great issue so near at hand [enforcement of Sunday laws] will weed out those whom God has not appointed and He will have a pure, true, sanctified ministry prepared for the latter rain.”—3 *Selected*

Messages, (1886); Last Day Events, 179.

2 The enforcement of Sunday laws will see all the tares leave the church. They will not be persecuted for something that they do not believe.

“The enemy has made his masterly efforts to unsettle the faith of our own people in the *Testimonies*.... This is just as Satan designed it should be, and those who have been preparing the way for the people to pay no heed to the warnings and reproofs of the *Testimonies* of the Spirit of God will see that a tide of errors of all kinds will spring into life.”—*Last Day events, 178.*

The error that Satan would exult the most to see taught is that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is fallen. He delights in putting darkness for light and light for darkness. The church is the light of the world. Those who wrest the *testimonies* from their purpose, misquoting and misusing them, unsettle people’s faith in them. Thus, they accomplish the work of Satan while professing to be workers with Christ.

“God has a people in which all heaven is interested, and they are the one object on earth dear to the heart of God. Let everyone who reads these words give them thorough consideration, for in the name of Jesus I would press them home upon every soul. When anyone arises, either among us or outside of us, who is burdened with a message which declares that the people of God are numbered with Babylon, and claims that the loud cry is a call to come out of her, you may know that he is not bearing the message of truth. Receive him not, nor bid him Godspeed; for God has not spoken by him, neither has He given a message to him, but he has run before he was sent.... Such messages will come, and it will be claimed for them that they are sent of God, but the claim will be false; for they are not filled with light, but with darkness. There will be messages of accusation against the people of God, similar to the work done by Satan in accusing God’s people, and these messages will be sounding at the very time when God is saying to His people, ‘Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee’ [Isaiah 60:1-2].”—*Testimonies to Ministers, 41-42.*

Satan, the accuser of the brethren, will paint the church to be in darkness. Of a truth, there is sin in the camp. There are tares in the church. There are pastors who kindle the hellish torch of false prophecy in our pulpits. There is a trampling upon of the rights of others’ consciences. But Christ seeks to heal these conditions with the straight testimony to the church of Laodicea. He does not cast off those who are lifting up the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

“Men may get up scheme after scheme and the enemy will seek to seduce souls from the truth, but all who believe that the Lord has spoken through Sister White, and has given her a message, will be safe from the many delusions that will come in these last days.”—3 *Selected Messages, 83-84 (1906); Last Day Events, 44.*

“I am instructed to say to Seventh-day Adventists the world over, God has called us as a people to be a peculiar treasure unto Himself. He has appointed that His church on earth shall stand perfectly united in the Spirit and counsel of the Lord of hosts to the end of time.”—2 *Selected Messages, 397 (1908).*

Satan has sown his tares in the church, to keep the will of God from being accomplished. However, we have a more sure word of prophecy, that Christ is at the head of the work. We will be safe from the special delusions of the last days if we trust the council He has given us through His prophet. If we unite in the spirit and council of the Lord, believing His prophet and following His Word, Satan’s plans will be thwarted.

“The sincere believers of truth are often made sad, and their trials greatly increased, by elements among them that annoy and dishearten them in their efforts. But there is no need of doubts and fears that the work of God will not succeed. God is at the head of the work, and He will set everything in order. Let us have faith that He is going to carry the noble ship which bears His people, safely into port. At one time when I sailed from Portland, Maine, to Boston, a storm came upon us, and the great waves dashed us to and fro. The chandeliers fell, and the trunks were rolled from side to side like balls. The passengers were frightened, and many were screaming, waiting in expectation of death. After a while, the pilot came on board. The captain stood near the pilot as he took the wheel, and expressed fear about the course in which the ship was directed. ‘Will you take the wheel?’ asked the pilot. The captain was not ready to do that, for he knew that he lacked experience. Then some of the passengers grew uneasy, and said they feared the pilot would dash them upon the rocks. ‘Will you take the wheel?’ asked the pilot; but they knew that they could not manage the wheel. When you think that the work of God is in danger, pray, ‘Lord, stand at the wheel; carry us through this perplexity; bring us safely into port.’ Have we not reason to believe that the Lord will bring us through triumphantly?”—*Bible Echo and Signs of the Times, July 15, 1892, par. 8. (This was the first journal published by our Church in Australia and the South Pacific region, later known as Signs of the Times.)*

We would do well to remember the history of D.M. Canright and open our hearts to receive the

message.

W
M
3
3
9
1

“I had an impressive dream last night. I thought that you were on a strong vessel, sailing on very rough waters. Sometimes the waves beat over the top, and you were drenched with water. You said: ‘I shall get off; this vessel is going down.’ ‘No,’ said one who appeared to be the captain. ‘This vessel sails into the harbor. She will never go down.’ But you answered: ‘I shall be washed overboard. As I am neither captain or mate, who cares? I shall take my chances on that vessel you see yonder.’ Said the captain: ‘I shall not let you go there, for I know that vessel will strike the rocks before she reaches the harbor.’ You straightened yourself up and said with great positiveness: ‘This vessel will become a wreck; I can see it just as plain as can be.’ The captain looked upon you with piercing eye, and said firmly: ‘I shall not permit you to lose your life by taking that boat. The timbers of her framework are worm-eaten, and she is a deceptive craft. If you had more knowledge you could discern between the spurious and the genuine, the holy and that appointed to utter ruin.’—5 *Testimonies*, 571-572.

The culmination of what Ellen White taught is the following: Christ raised up the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is the church of prophecy; it bears all the marks of God’s church because it is the only church to teach all Ten Commandments. Also, it believes in Christ’s ministry in the Sanctuary and has the gift of prophecy; it believes Christ is eternal, everlasting, with no beginning, He is like the Father; and has the correct understanding of the state of the dead and the punishment of the wicked. As long as the denomination holds these beliefs, it will never be Babylon, even if the earthly leader is Nebuchadnezzar. If one were to study this topic in the Bible, they would discover the same message.

Let us now consider all that Ellen White indicates when she makes the following statement:

“The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place.”—2 *Selected Messages*, 380 (1886).

When the Sunday law comes, including the first stages that say one cannot work, what if the Seventh-day Adventist Church were to adopt a Sunday resolution (noun of finding a solution, an answer to the problem), to protect Church members, and put it into their Fundamental Beliefs statement? Would they have apostatized? Certainly a large group of people would claim it! Certainly they would appear as about to fall. Even though the Spirit of Prophecy’s counsel is not to do work that draws negative attention to us and spreads the Sunday prejudice, What we should do? The following was at the 1889

General Conference Session in Battle Creek. Let’s look at 3 *Selected Messages*, 394:

3

“Such resolutions should not be placed before this conference, requiring their action.... While all Sabbathkeepers are anxious and troubled, seeking to penetrate the mysteries of the future, and to learn all they can in regard to the correct position they shall take, be careful that they are advised correctly in regard to Sunday observance.... There will ever be danger of going to extremes.”

I believe that, at this time, Satan will seek to accomplish his purpose—to start a great fanatical movement. It wouldn’t be a surprise if there will be an accusation that our Church is Babylon. Given the current state of leadership, it’s very doubtful that they will follow inspired council; They may accept the early stages because of worldly policy. Should this happen we can be certain that many will leave our Church, calling it Babylon. And many will leave the Church because the Seventh-day Sabbath begins to call forth contempt from the world. “Great” leaders will apostatize and take many with them. At this time, what light does Ellen White have for us?

“The light given me by the Lord at a time when we were expecting just such a crisis as you seem to be approaching, was that when the people were moved by a power from beneath to enforce Sunday observance, Seventh-day Adventists were to show their wisdom by refraining from their ordinary work on that day, devoting it to missionary effort.”—9 *Testimonies*, 232.2.

“To defy the Sunday laws will but strengthen in their persecution the religious zealots who are seeking to enforce them. Give them no occasion to call you law-breakers. If they are left to rein up men who fear neither God nor man, the reining up will soon lose its novelty for them, and they will see that it is not consistent nor convenient for them to be strict in regard to the observance of Sunday. Keep right on with your missionary work, with your Bibles in your hands, and the enemy will see that he has worsted his own cause. One does not receive the mark of the beast because he shows that he realizes the wisdom of keeping the peace by refraining from work that gives offense, doing at the same time a work of the highest importance.”—9 *Testimonies for the Church*, 232.

When holding a form of religious services, it is advised that it not be a worship service (such as holding church services on Sabbath); but it should be a revival series or a prophecy seminar. In doing this, we are told we will learn how to work and reach many souls.

“Sunday can be used for carrying forward various lines of work that will accomplish much for the Lord. On this day open-air meetings and cottage meetings can be held. House-to-house work can be done. Those who write can devote this day to

4 writing their articles. Whenever it is possible, let religious services be held on Sunday. Make these meetings intensely interesting. Sing genuine revival hymns, and speak with power and assurance of the Saviour's love. Speak on temperance and on true religious experience. You will thus learn much about how to work, and will reach many souls."—9 Testimonies, 233.

Before we get carried away, as I am sure some of the great men in our church will (likely by misusing this very statement), let us look at a warning:

"The law for the observance of the first day of the week is the production of an apostate Christendom. Sunday is a child of the papacy, exalted by the Christian world above the sacred day of God's rest. In no case are God's people to pay it homage. But I wish them to understand that they are not doing God's will by braving opposition when He wishes them to avoid it. Thus they create prejudice so bitter that it is impossible for the truth to be proclaimed. Make no demonstration on Sunday in defiance of law. If this is done in one place, and you are humiliated, the same thing will be done in another place. We can use Sunday as a day on which to carry forward work that will tell on the side of Christ. We are to do our best, working with all meekness and lowliness."—9 Testimonies, 235.

A wonderful bit of wisdom: Do not pay Sunday homage; avoid creating unnecessary strife, lest we sow bitterness. Distrust those who call for "lions." The righteous might be bold, but they are not to demonstrate predatory temperaments. They are not to hurt others in order to advance the truth. The work is to be done in meekness and lowliness, not making a raid on other churches or tirades (long angry speech of criticism) against them.

"The people must be given the truth, straightforward, positive truth. But this truth is to be presented in the spirit of Christ. We are to be as sheep in the midst of wolves. Those who will not, for Christ's sake, observe the cautions He has given, who will not exercise patience and self-control, will lose precious opportunities of working for the Master. The Lord has not given His people the work of making a tirade against those who are transgressing His law. In no case are we to make a raid on the other churches. Let us remember that, as a people entrusted with sacred truth, we have been neglectful and positively unfaithful. The work has been confined to a few centers until the people in them have become gospel-hardened. It is difficult to make an impression on those who have heard so much truth, and yet have rejected it."—9 Testimonies, 236.

We must be very careful how we treat the issue of Sunday worship. We do not want people to be deceived about the seriousness of the situation. But, at the same time, we dare not work in a way that will create prejudice so bitter that it will hinder the work. Let us carefully examine Luke 18:35-39. Those who run before Christ scatter abroad.

When I was younger, the problems in the church really shook my faith. One day, God called me into the woods to teach me something. I was hiking up a mountain on a nice cool winter day. I had made it half way to the top when I looked out across the valley and saw a huge storm coming. It moved so quickly that I was overtaken within a short time. First the wind came, then a wall of water moved up the valley. I stood behind a particularly large tree. Because the rain was falling at an angle, I was perfectly safe behind the tree. As I laughed, the thought suddenly came to me, "I have a shelter in the storms of life; it is a living structure, and I placed it there for you." I was all ears, waiting for what God would speak to me next. After a few minutes, water began to drip on my face. No matter where I moved, it still landed on me; and I began to get annoyed. Then again, I heard: "You will have uncomfortable experiences, and you may not always want to be there." And I understood. A few drops of water is better than being in the storm with no shelter. I then relaxed and waited for what was next, intending to ride out the storm. Then the wind stopped, and it began pouring rain on me. I had to make a mad dash for my house, which was over a mile away. As I was running down the hill, God said, "Without My Holy Spirit, you will be miserable and cold no matter where you are." Brothers and sisters, it is better to be in Noah's ark, even if it smells like a pig farm, than to be in the flood. It is better to be in the church than out of it. God's church is a hospital for sinners, just beware of the doctors, some of them are patients in disguise.

For a finished work,



Jonathan Taylor

Wisdom is justified of all her children. -Luke 7:35