

THE SOUTHERN WATCHMAN



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“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it...”

Here are Two Companies

“The third angel’s message must go over the land, and awaken the people, and call their attention to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Another angel unites his voice with the third angel, and the earth is lighted with its glory. The light increases, and it shines out to all the nations of the earth. It is to go forth as a light that burneth. It will be attended with great power, until its golden beams have fallen upon every tongue, every people, and every nation upon the face of the whole earth. Let me ask you, What you are doing to prepare for this work? Are you building for eternity? You must remember that this angel represents the people that have this message to give to the world. Are you among that people? Do you really believe that this work in which we are engaged is truly the third angel’s message? If so, then you understand that we have a mighty work to do, and that we ought to be about it. We must sanctify ourselves by a strict obedience to the truth, placing ourselves in right relation to God and his work. As the truth goes forth, Satan intensifies his zeal to defeat its progress by presenting pleasing delusions. As we urge the truth, he urges his errors. He will stir up his agents, in view of the coming of the Lord, to go out and cry, “Lo! here is Christ, and lo! there is Christ.” And here arises this superstition, and there arises that heresy. And tell me, what are we to do about it? I will tell you: we can become familiar, with the Bible, and read what saith the Lord. Not only the ministers but all who love and fear God are to do the Master’s work; and that is to let the light that he has given you shine before all. Here are two companies; one of them is being bound in bundles to burn, the other is being bound by the cords of truth and love. Satan is binding his followers with the work of iniquity; Christ is binding together his people in love and faith in the keeping of his commandments. And this work will increase more and more, and Satan will work to divide and separate God’s people one from the other. And while he is doing this kind of work, be careful that none of you are found helping him. We want to put away our cold-heartedness, and let love, tender compassion, true courtesy, and the spirit of tenderness come into our midst. Here we are in the waiting time, in the day of God’s preparation. Here in this world we are to fit up for these great trials that are soon coming upon us. And yet some of us act as though we had a whole millennium before us in which to accomplish the work. But, says the text, “Watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.” And what Christ said to his disciples, I say unto you, “Take ye heed, watch and pray,” that when the Master comes to reckon with his servants, you may receive from him the crown of life laid up for the overcomer, and rejoice with him in his kingdom. – {Review and Herald, August 18, 1885 Par. 14}

Daniel 1 – Rebellion and Captivity

Introduction — Context, Principles, Purpose and Design

Candid theological scholars will refer to the book of Leviticus as “proto-Daniel.” This is a scholastic way of identifying the intimate relationship which exists between the two books. But sadly, the links that unite the writings of the prophet Moses with those of the prophet Daniel and all other portions of Scripture are scarcely recognizable (let alone seen in their true import) by the leadership and laity of Adventism today. The reason for this state of things is simple. God’s people have been turned away from the rules of prophetic interpretation which were committed to them by the Highest Authority in the days of William Miller (*see 1888 403.1; RH November 25, 1884 Par. 23*). The Spirit of prophecy underscores the very heart of these rules in the preface of the the book “Great Controversy” as follows:

“The preparation of the written word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years, from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel. The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all “given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by his Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of his servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language.

Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by

different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony.

As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of a subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind; a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life. {The Great Controversy 1888, c.3-d.2}

In light of the above words, the Bible student 1 is constrained to view the word of God as a whole and see the relation of its parts, comparing Scripture with Scripture 2. This approach strikes directly against the man-made theory of compartmentalizing the Bible, a theory advocated by men of learning. An example of the foregoing theory can be noted in the words of Raymond. F. Cottrell, the main contributor to the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary. He states, “We can read the Bible as literature. Books such as Ruth, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and the Song of Solomon are literary masterpieces. It [the Bible] may also be read for inspiration, and upon occasion, consolation.”³ He further states that some books are apocalyptic (intimating that others are not), and that some are songs. And he further postulates that they should be viewed in complete isolation to each other. He insists that they are to be understood according to their immediate historical context and according to the salvation history perspective of the author, without reference to any present truth application for future ages.

With this approach, the student of the Word is limited to extracting moral lessons from its sacred pages, and nothing more. Thus, the links in the golden chain of truth which run from Genesis to the Revelation are dismantled and cast away by the sayings of men:

“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:” (Isaiah 29:13)

In this manner, men of learning have taken the key of knowledge—the rules of prophetic interpretation, colloquially known as the proof-text method—and buried it under the rubbish of human speculation (see *Isaiah 8:20; 28:9-13; Luke 11:52*). And yet this method of study was designed by God for the benefit of the learned and unlearned alike, and it transcends the complicated considerations of historical context and salvation history perspective. A common example of this approach, to which Adventists can relate, is the usage of Ezekiel 4:6 (Ezekiel in Babylonian captivity) and Numbers 14:32 (Moses and ancient Israel during the Exodus) to prove and uphold the year-day principle for understanding the time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation (such as the 2300, the 1290, the 1260 and the 1335 days). In doing this we view the Bible as a whole without recourse to immediate historical context and varying perspectives of salvation history. The testimony of Moses around 4000 BC is combined with that of Ezekiel around 600 BC to identify a truth which applies to the last days. This is the correct way to understand all Scripture. And with the foregoing points we will consider the first chapter of Daniel.

The Story of the Captivity

“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. And the king spake unto

Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;” (Daniel 1:1-3)

Daniel chose to begin his narrative with a synopsis of the siege that inaugurated the seventy year captivity. The calculation of the period of this captivity is based on the yearly sabbaths cycle of Leviticus 25 and 26 (see *Leviticus 26:34, 35; 2 Chronicles 36*). Thus, the Bible itself confirms the strong connection between Leviticus and Daniel. When the Word is viewed as a whole, we are enabled to see the relation of its parts. Consider the following texts:

“I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate. And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me: Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.” (Leviticus 26:22-24)

The capturing of Daniel, his companions and other of the Judaeen youth by the mighty forces of Babylon was a sure fulfillment of the words “I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children” in Leviticus 26. This application becomes apparent when one considers Daniel’s usage of the symbolism of beasts of prey,—“wild beasts,”—to represent the nations which would wage war against God’s people until the conclusion of the Great Controversy (see *Daniel 7*). Babylon was one of these beasts, and did indeed rob Israel of their children in the time of Jehoiakim. The transgression of the statutes and judgments given to Moses (of which Leviticus 26 formed a part) carried with it serious ramifications. Now we will contrast the results of Jehoiakim’s disobedience to those of Josiah’s obedience. In so doing, further evidence is given of the strong ties which exist between the Pentateuch and the book of Daniel, and truths relevant to our time will also be seen in the following consideration.

Josiah vs Jehoiakim

“And when they brought out the money that was

brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiyah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses. And Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, all that was committed to thy servants, they do it. Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.” (2 Chronicles 34:14-19)

The words of the law contained in the writings of Moses effected a great revival in the time of King Josiah. The particular portion which startled the leader of the Hebrews to immediate action is that which identified the wrath determined against them for disobedience to the statutes found in the “book of the law of the Lord.” Notice Josiah’s response:

“Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book.” (2 Chronicles 34:21)

Josiah understood the great “wrath of the Lord” which was determined against them. The portions of the Books of Moses which clearly outline this wrath are Leviticus 26 coupled with the testimony of Deuteronomy 28-30. The remedy for the wrath was given in Leviticus 26:40-45 and in Deuteronomy 30:1-10. They were to confess their iniquities and the iniquities of their forefathers, and turn to the Lord with all their hearts. This King Josiah did, for when he rent his clothes, it was simply an outward token of the rending of his heart. This is confirmed by the words of Huldah the prophetess to whom the king had sent for enquiry:

“Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of

Judah: Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched. And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel concerning the words which thou hast heard; Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.” (2 Chronicles 34:24-28)

“The curses written in the book” are the curses delineated in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28-30. And these were to come upon Judah and the inhabitants thereof. But because of the response of Josiah, the outpouring of divine wrath was temporarily stayed. It is unfortunate though that the reformation of the days of Josiah could not suffice to turn away the full measure of the fierceness of God’s wrath.

“And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him. Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.” (2 Kings 23:25-26)

The punishment of the Lord was in no wise arbitrarily brought upon His people. The course pursued by Josiah’s son and successor, Jehoiakim, brought about the execution of the divine sentence. In contrast to his father’s obedience to Huldah the prophetess, Jehoiakim refused to hearken to the words of the prophet of his day, Jeremiah:

*“Have not the hearts of Christ's disciples burned within them as he has talked with us by the way and opened to us the Scriptures? Has not the Lord Jesus opened to us the Scriptures, and presented to us things kept secret from the foundation of the world? Some have heard the reading of the evidence of the binding claims of the law of God, and the enjoined obedience to his commandments, and have felt their characters to be in such contrast to the requirements that had they been placed in circumstances similar to Jehoiakim, king of Judah, they would have done as he did. A special message was sent to him to be read in his hearing, but after listening to three or four pages, **he cut it out with a penknife, and cast it into the fire.** But this could not destroy the message; for the word of God will never return unto him void. The same Holy Spirit who had given the first testimony, which was refused and burned, came to the servant of God, who caused the first to be written in the roll, and repeated the very message that had been rejected, caused the latter to be written and added a great deal more to it.”* – {*New York Indicator, February 7, 1906 par. 5*}

This “special message” given to Jehoiakim is recorded in the 36th chapter of Jeremiah. And Sister White identifies the messages of Jeremiah as the “testimonies to the church” of his day, giving the people warning of impending doom and destruction:

“In his testimonies to the church, Jeremiah constantly referred to the teachings of the book of the law that had been so greatly honored and exalted during Josiah's reign. He emphasized anew the importance of maintaining a covenant relationship with the all-merciful and compassionate being who upon the heights of Sinai had spoken the precepts of the Decalogue. Jeremiah's words of warning and entreaty reached every part of the kingdom, and all had opportunity to know the will of God concerning the nation. The prophet made plain the fact that our heavenly Father allows His judgments to fall, “that the nations may know themselves to be but men.” Psalm 9:20. “If ye walk contrary unto Me, and will not hearken unto Me,” the Lord had forewarned His people, “I, even I, . . . will

scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.” Leviticus 26:21, 28, 33. At the very time messages of impending doom were urged upon princes and people, their ruler, Jehoiakim, who should have been a wise spiritual leader, foremost in confession of sin and in reformation and good works, was spending his time in selfish pleasure. “I will build me a wide house and large chambers,” he proposed; and this house, “ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion” (Jeremiah 22:14), was built with money and labor secured through fraud and oppression. “Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.” Verses 13-19.” – {*Prophets and Kings, p. 428.3-430.1*}

Jeremiah’s testimonies directed the attention of Ancient Israel to the blessed days of Josiah’s reformation, mingling with this testimony messages of warning of approaching destruction. But because of Jehoiakim’s obstinacy and his unwise spiritual leadership in disregarding the messages of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28-30, the captivity of Daniel 1 was inevitable. Now the Bible specifically teaches that there is no new thing under the sun (*see Ecclesiastes 1:9, 10; 3:15*), that history repeats itself (*see Luke 17:26-32*), and that each of the ancient prophet’s spoke more of the last days than the days in which they lived (*see 1 Peter 1:12*). And the testimony of Sister White corroborates the foregoing truths in the following words:

“The Old and New Testaments are linked together by the golden clasp of God. We need to become familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures. The unchangeableness of God should be clearly seen; the similarity of his dealings with his people of the past dispensation and of the present, should be studied. Under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, Solomon wrote, “That which hath been is now: and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.” In mercy God repeats his past

dealings. He has given us a record of his dealings in the past. **This we need to study carefully; for history is repeating itself.** We are more accountable than were those whose experience is recorded in the Old Testament; **for their mistakes, and the results of those mistakes, have been chronicled for our benefit.** The danger signal has been lifted to keep us off forbidden ground, and we should be warned not to do as they did, lest a worse punishment come upon us. The blessings given to those of past generations who obeyed God are recorded that we may be encouraged to walk circumspectly, in faith and obedience. The judgments brought against wrong-doers are delineated that we may fear and tremble before God. This Scripture biography is a great blessing. This precious instruction, the experience of ages, is bequeathed to us.” – {Southern Watchman, September 12, 1905 Par. 9}

“Never are we absent from the mind of God. God is our joy and our salvation. **Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us...**The Bible has accumulated and bound up together its treasures for this last generation. All the great events and solemn transactions of Old Testament history have been, **and are, repeating themselves in the church in these last days...**There the whole accumulated truths are presented in force to us that we may profit by their teachings. **We are under the influence of the whole.** What manner of persons ought we to be to whom all this rich light of inheritance has been given. Concentrating all the influence of the past with new and increased light of the present, accrued power is given to all who will follow the light. Their faith will increase, and be brought into exercise at the present time, awakening an energy and an intensely increased earnestness, and through dependence upon God for His power to replenish the world and send the light of the Sun of Righteousness to the ends of the earth.” – {Manuscript Releases, vol. 7, p.417.2}

In light of these quotations, it follows that the stories of Josiah and Jehoiakim and their divergent responses to the warning messages of the Lord are repeated “in the church in these last

days.” They are present truth for Seventh-day Adventists today.

Josiah and Jehoiakim in the last days

The history of Jehoiakim’s rebellion in Ancient Israel is identifying the rejection of the “testimonies to the church,” or the Spirit of prophecy in Modern Israel. The work of Jeremiah in “constantly referring to the teachings of the book of the law that had been so greatly honored and exalted during Josiah’s reign” is repeated in the role of Sister White’s writings. She constantly refers to the blessed days of the Great Second Advent Revival of 1840-1844, and of the teachings of God’s word which were in that time “greatly honored and exalted.” Consider the following testimonies:

“The truths that we received in 1841, ’42, ’43, and ’44 are now to be studied and proclaimed. The messages of the first, second, and third angels will in the future be proclaimed with a loud voice. They will be given with earnest determination and in the power of the Spirit.” – {Paulson Collection, p.322.2}

“Those who stand as teachers and leaders in our institutions are to be sound in the faith and in the principles of the third angel’s message. God wants His people to know that **we have the message as He gave it to us in 1843 and 1844. We knew then what the message meant, and we call upon our people today to obey the word, “Bind up the law among My disciples.”** In this world there are but two classes,—the obedient and the disobedient. To which class do we belong? God wants to make us a peculiar people, a holy nation. He has separated us from the world, and He calls upon us to stand on vantage ground, where He can bestow on us His Holy Spirit.” – {General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1903 par. 42}

“God bids us give our time and strength to the work of preaching to the people **the messages that stirred men and women in 1843 and 1844.**” – {Paulson Collection, p.60.6}

“We have, as had John, a message to bear of the things which we have seen and heard. God is not giving us a new message. **We are to proclaim the**

message that in 1843 and 1844 brought us out of the other churches. We need the Holy Spirit to kindle in our hearts the zeal and earnestness that were then seen among God's people. I thank the Lord that there are still living a few who can remember those days, and who know whereof they speak.” – {Review and Herald, January 19, 1905 par. 22}

“All the messages given from 1840-1844 are to be made forcible now, for there are many people who have lost their bearings. The messages are to go to all the churches.” – {Manuscript Releases, vol. 21, p.437.1}

““We must understand the present feebleness and smallness of the work. We have had an experience. In doing the work God has given us, we may go trustingly forward, assured that He will be our efficiency. He will be with us in 1906, as He was with us in 1841, 1842, 1843, and 1844 Oh, what wonderful evidences we had then of the presence of God with us. In the earlier stages of our work, we had many difficulties to meet, and we gained many victories.”” – {Pamphlet 95, p.12.1}

The above testimonies are today mingled with warnings of approaching destruction for God's people. The message that has been sounding in Adventism since October 22nd 1844 is the third angel's message. This message identifies the coming of a Sunday Law crisis which is to bring divine wrath on those who are unprepared to stand in protest against it. But notwithstanding the numerous witnesses of the validity of the messages of Adventism's past, and of the signs which show the Sunday Law crisis near, God's people are content to remain indifferent. In fact, many of His people are pursuing the same course today as Jehoiakim and his people did in their day. Instead of humbling themselves before the Lord and consulting the prophetess as did Josiah, they virtually burn the words of the Spirit of prophecy and the special messages which are present truth for this time. Mark the following point with care:

“One thing is certain: those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the

Testimonies of God's Spirit.” – {Manuscript Releases, vol. 3, p.259.2}

If there be any doubt concerning the aforementioned statement, consider the following questions. How many of us have houses in the city and are content with such a condition of things? How many are obtaining mortgages and loans for worldly advancement? How many are heedlessly sacrificing their children upon the altars of philosophy and theories of men who stand in direct opposition to the principles of God's word? Is this how inspiration states we are to prepare for the Sunday Law crisis which no human pen can portray? The reality of it is that this way of life is a direct denial of the Spirit of Prophecy and of the third angel's message. And those who persist in this course will “take their stand under Satan's banner.” But probably the most important of all these questions is, “When the light of truth concerning these issues confronts you, will you repeat the experience of Josiah or that of Jehoiakim?”

Closing Remarks

The contrasting reactions of Josiah and Jehoiakim to the warning messages of wrath derived from the Books of Moses, particularly from Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28-30, well illustrate two responses within Adventism in the last days to warning messages of coming wrath. Inspiration states that every aspect of the Jewish economy was prophetic, contrary to the principles of popular theology:

“All the ceremonies of the Jewish law were prophetic, typical of mysteries in the plan of redemption.” – {ST July 29, 1886 Par. 5}

Therefore, the statutes and judgments of Leviticus 25 and 26, repeated and enlarged upon in Deuteronomy 28-30 were types of future developments in the plan of redemption. There are prophetic lessons to be derived from these portions of Holy Writ; for God's dealings with men are ever the same (*see Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17*). Consequently, as the literal warnings of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28-30 were greatly honored and exalted during the revival of Josiah (the father),

but were afterward rejected and burned by Jehoiakim (the son), so also were the spiritual truths derived from the above passages of Scripture (among many other passages) honored and defended during the Great Second Advent Revival of 1840-1844 (the Adventist fathers) but are now rejected and burned by the Adventists of the present day (the Adventist sons). Jehoiakim's folly led to the siege recorded in Daniel 1, and the folly of the present day is binding the fetters of spiritual Babylon securely on the minds of God's people that many of them, unless they repent, will be prepared to receive the Mark of the Beast and the wrath of God. The next installment will endeavor to outline arguments which show the first chapter of Daniel to be a symbol of the first angel's message of Revelation 14.

End notes:

1. *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, pg. 709*
2. *Education, pg. 190*
3. *The Role of Biblical Hermeneutics in Preserving Unity in the Church, Chapter 1, by R.F. Cottrell:*

<http://www.little-book.org/wp-content/plugins/download-monitor/download.php?id=15>

Daniel and the King's Buffet

Introduction

Imagine yourself in Daniel's position for a moment? A captive of the most powerful monarch of the time. A youthful foreigner at the mercy of a heathen nation renowned for its cruelty against dissenters. But notwithstanding these dark circumstances, you find yourself in a somewhat better position than many of the natives. With admittance into the king's palace, and the royal servants of Babylon attending to your every need for a space of three years. Talk about a shift of fortunes! Now consider the following heart-searching questions. Would you not desire such an extravagant life, even for a day? Particularly the provision of rich dainties which you could eat to your hearts' desire? In

light of your personal responses, consider why Daniel and his friends snubbed Nebuchadnezzar's generous offer. The inspired word has this to say about the foregoing thought:

"At the very outset of their career there came to them a decisive test of character. It was provided that they should eat of the food and drink of the wine that came from the king's table. In this the king thought to give them an expression of his favor and of his solicitude for their welfare. But a portion having been offered to idols, the food from the king's table was consecrated to idolatry; and one partaking of it would be regarded as offering homage to the gods of Babylon. In such homage, loyalty to Jehovah forbade Daniel and his companions to join. Even a mere pretense of eating the food or drinking the wine would be a denial of their faith. To do this would be to array themselves with heathenism and to dishonor the principles of the law of God.

Had Daniel so desired, he might have found in his surroundings a plausible excuse for departing from strictly temperate habits. He might have argued that, dependent as he was on the king's favor and subject to his power, there was no other course for him to pursue than to eat of the king's food and drink of his wine; for should he adhere to the divine teaching, he would offend the king and probably lose his position and his life. Should he disregard the commandment of the Lord he would retain the favor of the king and secure for himself intellectual advantages and flattering worldly prospects." – {Prophets and Kings, 482.2, 3}

Daniel understood that diet was "a decisive test of character," and thus, he would not even to pretend to eat the food to preserve his temporal life. From the very onset, Daniel had settled in his mind the question of the food to partake of. His was not a decision based on circumstances, but notwithstanding them. The inquiring mind may ask, "What gave to the four Hebrew worthies the determination and spiritual fortitude to stand in defense of God's principles of health?" The answer is found in the writings of inspiration:

"Nor dared they risk the enervating effect of

and spiritual development. They were acquainted with the history of Nadab and Abihu, the record of whose intemperance and its results had been preserved in the parchments of the Pentateuch; and they knew that their own physical and mental power would be injuriously affected by the use of wine” – {Prophets and Kings, p.482.1}

Daniel and his friends learnt from the lines of sacred history, chronicled in the Books of Moses, the “physical, mental, and spiritual” effects of transgressing the laws of health. But how were these lessons brought to their attention? These boys were products of parental fidelity, having been trained to habits of strict temperance from a tender age (see *Prophets and Kings, p.482.2*). What a rebuke to modern society’s idea of giving children loose rein to satisfy their perverted appetite. And what a reprimand to the many parents in Adventism today, some of whom lament the rebellion and lack of spirituality seen among the children and youth in the home and the church. To a great extent, the sin of the youth lies at the door of the parents’ household. And what an account they have rendered to the God who committed these children to them! But all hope is not lost for those would redeem past errors. Consider the results of parental faithfulness in the following words:

“The Lord regarded with approval the firmness and self-denial of the Hebrew youth, and their purity of motive; and His blessing attended them. He “gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.” The promise was fulfilled, “Them that honor Me I will honor.” 1 Samuel 2:30. As Daniel clung to God with unwavering trust, the spirit of prophetic power came upon him. While receiving instruction from man in the duties of court life, he was being taught by God to read the mysteries of the future and to record for coming generations, through figures and symbols, events covering the history of this world till the close of time.” – {Prophets & Kings 484.3}

What an encouragement to strict integrity in the fulfilling of the role of the parents. They must faithfully acquaint their children with the principles recorded in the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy (as were Daniel and his companions) by precept and example. And blended with much

intercessory prayers on behalf of the current situation of their children, they will eventually realize the blessed promise “them that honor Me will I honor.” Now, having considered the foundation of the “firmness and self-denial of the Hebrew youth,” let us turn our attention to the practical results of the principles they received from the books of Ancient Israel’s prophet. What would qualify as having the effect of defiling oneself today, which as Daniel of old, we are to decidedly shun for our “physical, mental, and spiritual benefit?” For our answer we, similar to the faithful Hebrews of old, turn to the books of Modern Israel’s prophet—Sister White. She states the following concerning the subject at hand:

“A meat diet changes the disposition and strengthens animalism. We are composed of what we eat, and eating much flesh will diminish intellectual activity. Students would accomplish much more in their studies if they never tasted meat. When the animal part of the human agent is strengthened by meat eating, the intellectual powers diminish proportionately.” – {Counsels for the Church, p.230.5}

Consider the lack-luster intellect and poor mental aptitude of children and youth today. A large proportion of this lack of brain power traces its roots to the provisions placed on the plate. But a more serious consideration is highlighted in the following statements:

“The moral evils of a flesh diet are not less marked than are the physical ills. Flesh food is injurious to health, and whatever affects the body has a corresponding effect on the mind and the soul.” – {Counsels for the Church, p.230.4}

“The common use of the flesh of dead animals has had a deteriorating influence upon the morals, as well as the physical institution.” – {Counsels on Diet p.383.3}

“The common use of the flesh of dead animals has had a deteriorating influence upon the morals, as well as the physical institution.” – {Counsels on Diet p.383.3}

The lack of moral power in both young and old in our society is sure evidence that the Spirit of Prophecy is true. Because the diet prescribed by

predicated on the opinions of learned men and the supposed deductions of science, is the diet widely embraced by worldling and Christian alike; and sadly, by the remnant people of God. May we wonder then when we evaluate the moral situation in the church? The testimonies continue:

“Those who indulge in meat eating, tea drinking, and gluttony are sowing seeds for a harvest of pain and death. The unhealthful food placed in the stomach strengthens the appetites that war against the soul, developing the lower propensities. A diet of flesh meat tends to develop animalism. A development of animalism lessens spirituality, rendering the mind incapable of understanding truth.” – {Counsels on Diet, p.382.3}

There is a misconception in the minds of many of God’s people that the message of health reform only revolves around the flesh meat debate. But this is a sad misrepresentation of this truth. Sister White gives a balanced view of the subject. Flesh meat (whether classed as red or white) is not the only substance enervating in its effects, but “tea drinking” and “gluttony” in all its forms. In order to better understand what fits the definition of these defiling foods of the world’s buffet, simply consider inspiration’s testimony on that the foods and health practices which are wholesome and good. That way one will be able to learn a balanced understanding of the broad spectrum covered by God’s principles of health, and the beauty and benefits of the same (*see Ministry of Healing chapter 23*).

“That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.” (Psalm 67:2)

But for those determined to pursue a contrary course, the Spirit of Prophecy states that a wrong diet has the most fearful effect of “rendering the mind incapable of understanding truth.” So why is unpopular Bible truth such as the prophecies of Adventism’s past neglected, or rejected and proscribed to rack of the most damnable heresies the church has had to meet? Look no further than to the sins of the table. Now, can the judgment and evaluation of those who cherish, defend and practice these sins be trusted concerning these unpopular truths? The word of God answers in the negative. And what jeopardy is thus done to the salvation of many an unsuspecting soul!

Closing Remarks

“It is for their own good that the Lord counsels the remnant church to discard the use of flesh meats, tea, and coffee, and other harmful foods. There are plenty of other things on which we can subsist that are wholesome and good.” – {Counsels on Diet, p. 381.3}

The word of God ensures that none remain ignorant concerning the principles which are to govern Christian living. The illustrious example of Daniel and his friends has been set before us. They had to stand in defense of the principles of God in bondage, and with the risk of death. What excuse has this generation which enjoys unprecedented privileges of freedom and knowledge? What account do we desire to render unto a holy God? The answer lies with each of us as individuals.

A Siege and a Sign

Introduction

The subject of country living is a generally known fact within Seventh-day Adventist circles. But what is not commonly understood is its centrality to the salvation of our souls. That country living is a noble endeavor and should be incorporated into the Adventist’s life plan is undeniable. Yet the frequently asked question, “When is it time to leave the cities?” seems to never receive the qualitative answer that it deserves. As a result, a great deal of weight is removed from any statement concerning the urgency of executing this part of one’s life plan; country living is projected into the indefinite future, even to the years of retirement. But is this a safe understanding to rest upon? A consideration of the foregoing questions is the burden of this article.

“History is Repeating Itself...”

The underlying premise for understanding Scriptural testimony correctly in these last days is the fact that sacred history,—the history recorded in the Bible,—is repeating itself. This is absolutely crucial to understand. The prophets and apostles of the Bible repeatedly refer to and uphold this principle (*see Ecclesiastes 1:9, 10; 3:15; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11*). It is based upon the

facts that God never changes (see *Malachi 3:6; James 1:17*), and that He is ultimately in control of the events of history (see *Daniel 2:20, 21; 4:34, 35; Revelation 17:17*). The Spirit of prophecy states the following:

*“The Old and New Testaments are linked together by the golden clasp of God. We need to become familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures. The unchangeableness of God should be clearly seen; the similarity of his dealings with his people of the past dispensation and of the present, should be studied. Under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, Solomon wrote, “That which hath been is now: and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.” In mercy God repeats his past dealings. He has given us a record of his dealings in the past. **This we need to study carefully; for history is repeating itself.** We are more accountable than were those whose experience is recorded in the Old Testament; for their mistakes, and the results of those mistakes, have been chronicled for our benefit. The danger signal has been lifted to keep us off forbidden ground, and we should be warned not to do as they did, lest a worse punishment come upon us. The blessings given to those of past generations who obeyed God are recorded that we may be encouraged to walk circumspectly, in faith and obedience. The judgments brought against wrong-doers are delineated that we may fear and tremble before God. This Scripture biography is a great blessing. This precious instruction, the experience of ages, is bequeathed to us.” – {The Southern Watchman, September 12, 1905 Par. 9}*

This principle will be foundational to the points to be set forth in the following considerations.

“In the Beginning...” — First Cities

When God created our first parents, He was careful to prepare for them a home in a location calculated to preserve their temporal and spiritual well-being:

“And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.” (Genesis 2:8)

Man was placed in a natural environment, and this has lessons for us at the end of the world. This is because what happened at the beginning points forward to what happens at the end (see *Selected Messages, book 3, p. 338, 339; Isaiah 46:9, 10*). Those who would preserve themselves in good physical and spiritual health must locate themselves in the natural surroundings of the countryside.

*“The physical surroundings in the cities are often a peril to health. The constant liability to contact with disease, the prevalence of foul air, impure water, impure food, the crowded, dark, unhealthful dwellings, are some of the many evils to be met. **It was not God’s purpose that people should be crowded into cities, huddled together in terraces and tenements. In the beginning He placed our first parents amidst the beautiful sights and sounds He desires us to rejoice in today. The more nearly we come into harmony with God’s original plan, the more favorable will be our position to secure health of body, and mind, and soul.**” – {The Ministry of Healing, p. 365.1, 2}*

Now consider the circumstances surrounding the first city that was ever built:

“And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.” (Genesis 4:16, 17)

Cain was the first man to build a city, and the testimony of the Scriptures is that he “went out from the presence of the Lord.” In other words, he departed from the presence of Jehovah to stand at the head of a posterity that would wage war against God’s law and His people until the close of time. Thus is revealed not only the fact that city life was introduced after the entrance of sin into our world, but also the fact that rebellion is embedded in the very origin of city life. Another witness to this truth is the cities constructed by the rebellious Nimrod (see *Genesis 10:8-11; 11:1-9*). He and his associates ventured open defiance of God’s authority and their evil work had to be stayed by divine justice.

A third witness is seen in the history of Sodom and Gomorrha which formed a part of the “cities of the plain” (see *Genesis 19:29*) which the Lord had to give to the burning flames for their wickedness. The same rebellion is reflected in the cities of today, without an exception—history is repeating itself. So it goes without saying that God’s true covenant-keeping people, Seventh-day Adventists, were never to locate in the cities of this world. But now that we find ourselves in them, the question still remains, “When is it time to leave?”

The Babylonian Siege

The Babylonian siege that brought about the demise of the kingdom of ancient Judah transpired under the reign of its last three kings—Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah (see *2 Chronicles 36*). The first siege which saw Jehoiakim and others of the king’s seed (including Daniel and his companions) taken captive to Babylon was designed by the Lord as a warning to impenitent Judah to amend their ways with Him. The armies of the Chaldeans invested the land and then withdrew without effecting complete destruction (see *Daniel 1:1; 2 Kings 24:1-8*). The Jews were to see in this supernatural withdrawal a sign of impending doom and a final appeal of mercy. But sin had so darkened their spiritual perceptions that they were not willing to see it as a sign. In the assault that followed in the time of Jehoiachin, Scripture states the following:

“And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.” (2 Kings 24:14)

“All Jerusalem” was taken captive “save the poorest sort of the people of the land.” The latter class were left “to be vinedressers and husbandmen” (their escape is set within the context of a natural environment) and they were spared of captivity and death when Jerusalem was destroyed.

“And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives

that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away. But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.” (2 Kings 25:10-12)

The experience of the Jews in the time of the Babylonian siege was repeated in the time of the Roman siege.

The Roman Siege

“And the Saviour warned His followers: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains.” Matthew 24:15, 16; Luke 21:20, 21. When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight. When the warning sign should be seen, those who would escape must make no delay. Throughout the land of Judea, as well as in Jerusalem itself, the signal for flight must be immediately obeyed.” – {The Great Controversy, p.25.4}

The idolatrous standards of Rome were placed in the land of Judaea by Cestius who was ready to overthrow Jerusalem, but mysteriously withdrew at the critical moment (see *Great Controversy, p. 30.2*). This was a sign to God’s people in that time as the withdrawal of Nebuchadnezzar after the partial siege was a sign of impending destruction in the time of Jehoiakim. The warning was to be heeded without delay, and those with spiritual discernment were to find “safety in flight.” At the heart of each sign was a call for repentance and obedience to the divine commands. During the Babylonian siege, the poorest sort of the people of the land heeded the warning and in the time of the Roman siege, only those who had accepted the prophetic message of Christ heeded the warning. And since history repeats itself, it follows that God would ensure that our generation has a sign of impending destruction which is to come upon Adventism. And only those who are poor in spirit (humble enough to be taught the truth) and accept the

This is the Mark of the Beast crisis foretold in prophecy (see Great Controversy, p.449.1), and God has given Seventh-day Adventists a sign of its approach. But as it was in the Jewish age, we generally have no spiritual discernment because of our failure to make the prophetic message of Christ for this generation top priority. Like the Jews of old, many have seen the sign yet refuse to acknowledge it as a sign. This is expected; for history is repeating itself. But how fearful the consequences! So what is the sign?

Closing Remarks

It is a matter of fact that in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States which claimed thousands of lives, measures were put in place which in reality repudiated every principle of the U.S. Constitution (*note the description of Testimonies to the Church, vol. 9, p.11-16*). The USA PATRIOT ACT was effected shortly afterward and the American judicial system replaced English law (innocent until proven guilty) with Roman law (guilty until proven innocent). Whether we realize it or not, the United States was prepared to perform its role of inaugurating the Sunday Law crisis (*see Revelation 13:11-17*) shortly after the September 11, 2001 attacks, but this was supernaturally stayed; for the United States has since then had to tackle the protracted problems posed by radical Islam as never before. As the armies of Babylon and the armies of Rome supernaturally withdrew in their respective histories without destroying Jerusalem, so did the armies of modern Rome (the United States) withdraw from introducing the crisis that is to bring the judgments of God on all who are not prepared for it.

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patriot_Act

<https://www.rt.com/usa/usa-patriot-act-unconstitutional/>

So when is it time to leave the cities? The sad truth is, we are many years behind.

Women' s Ordination – Where is it Leading?

Introduction

The question of whether or not to ordain women to sacred office has featured largely in the theological debates of the Seventh-day Adventist Church over the years. But it has taken centre stage in recent times, particularly in the build up to the 2015 General Conference session. In considering this issue however, it is essential that it be not confused with the truth of the equality of men and women in the sight of their Creator. All human beings, male and female, have equal standing before God as created beings and as sinners in need of salvation through Christ (*see Genesis 1:27, 5:2, Matthew 19:4; Galatians 3:28; 1 Peter 3:7*). Women's ordination is therefore not a question of whether men and women were created equal. The underlying issue is that of how to interpret God's inspired word. This is by far the more serious issue involved in the debate. The outcome of this issue will affect how the church relates to other established Adventist truths including the truth of the Bible Sabbath. The prophetic ramifications of the current steps being taken concerning the issue of women's ordination is the burden of this article.

Twin Institutions and the Law of God

At creation, God gave to man two sacred institutions—Marriage and the Sabbath. Even after the entrance of sin into our world, these were carried by man beyond the gates of Eden. The former identifies human to human relations whereas the latter identifies human to divine relations. These same relations are denoted in the Ten Commandments. The last six highlight man's relationship with fellow men and the first four highlight man's relationship with God. Therefore, those who truly honor the marriage and Sabbath institutions keep the whole of the law:

“There were two institutions founded in Eden that were not lost in the fall,—the Sabbath and the marriage relation. These were carried by man beyond the gates of paradise. He who loves and observes the Sabbath, and maintains the purity of the marriage institution, thereby proves himself the friend of man and the friend of God. He who by precept or example lessens the obligation of these sacred institutions is the

enemy of both God and man, and is using his influence and his God-given talents to bring in a state of confusion and moral corruption.” – {Signs of the Times, February 28, 1884 par. 11}

Conversely, those who dishonor these institutions are transgressors of God’s law, and according to inspiration “bring in a state of confusion and moral corruption.” The book of James specifically teaches that it is not possible to keep the law of God unless it is kept in its entirety (see *James 2:10; 11*). Bringing this principle to its logical conclusion, it follows that a disregard of the principles encapsulated in the marriage relation will inevitably result in the disregard of God’s holy Sabbath; for these institutions represent the whole of the law. One of the principles God established in the marriage institution in the beginning is that of gender roles, and these were to govern the relations of the human race before and after the fall (see *Genesis 2:18-22; 1 Corinthians 11:4; 1 Timothy 2:11-14; 3:1-5*). Man was given a leadership role in the home, in the church, and in society. To the woman was committed a supportive role; and because of sin, the man was appointed ruler over the woman, though this is to be within the confines of God’s law:

“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” (Genesis 3:16)

Therefore, an alteration of these roles would be an example of a lessening of the obligations of the marriage institution. It would be an attack on God’s law that would naturally be followed by a lessening of the obligations of the Sabbath commandment. The pen of inspiration identifies the marriage and the Sabbath as follows:

“When the Pharisees afterward questioned Him concerning the lawfulness of divorce, Jesus pointed His hearers back to the marriage institution as ordained at creation. “Because of the hardness of your hearts,” He said, Moses “suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.” Matthew 19:8. He referred them to the blessed days of Eden, when God pronounced all things “very good.” Then

marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity.” – {MB 63.2}

These two institutions are twins; therefore, they bear resemblance to each other. This truth can be illustrated in a variety of ways. The marriage is a symbol of a covenant relationship (see *Jeremiah 31:31-33*), and so is the Sabbath commandment (see *Exodus 31:16*). Christ specifically teaches that the Sabbath was made for the benefit of man (see *Mark 2:27*). The same is true of the purpose of creating the woman and instituting marriage. Paul describes it in the following words:

“For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.” (1 Corinthians 11:8, 9)

As the Sabbath was made for the benefit of man and not man for the Sabbath, so was the woman created for the benefit of man and not the man for the woman. This is not discriminatory, but outlines a specific order set by God; for God is a God of order (see *1 Corinthians 14:33*). Well did Sister White state that the Sabbath and marriage are “twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity.” This sheds light on the implications of attempting to change the gender roles set up by the Lord in the beginning. The ongoing doctrinal struggle within Adventism to elevate the woman to the leadership role of the man is no doubt leading to another struggle that many Seventh-day Adventists could have never imagined would enter and plague the church—the elevation of Sunday to the appointed position of the holy Sabbath. Thus, the purpose of Satan in His warfare against the Adventist church would be achieved.

Overturning the Marriage and the Sabbath

The enemy of souls understands the intimate relationship between the marriage and the Sabbath. In the beginning, God set up the marriage first, and then instituted the Sabbath. And Satan understands that if he can overturn the marriage relation in the world and in the church, he is poised for success in overturning the Sabbath commandment through the enforcement of Sunday laws (in the world), and

through leading the majority of Seventh-day Adventists to yield to (and accept) these Sunday laws (in the church), and thus receive the mark of the beast. This explains the growing momentum of the gay movement in the United States and other nations of the world, and this is why such an unbiblical teaching is being advocated in our church. Satan is rapidly steering the world to a Sunday law crisis, and he is conditioning the minds of the unwary in Adventism to accept the same ideas and come to the same decision of the beast and the world. And this, that they may receive the mark of the beast:

“The time has come for the true light to shine amid moral darkness. The third angel’s message has been sent forth to the world, warning men against receiving the mark of the beast or of his image in their foreheads or in their hands. To receive this mark means to come to the same decision as the beast has done, and to advocate the same ideas, in direct opposition to the word of God. Of all who receive this mark, God says, “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”” – {Review and Herald, July 13, 1897 Par. 5}

The beast is the Papacy, the mark of his authority is Sunday sacredness (see *Great Controversy*, p. 449.1). And in order to get Seventh-day Adventists (as much as any other people) to receive this mark, Satan is leading them to the “same decision” and the “same ideas” of the beast which are “in direct opposition to the word of God.” At a basic level, the decision the beast made was to disregard the Sabbath of the Lord, and to force the people of the world to do the same. But in order to do this, the papacy as a church had to obtain civil power and be in control of that civil power (see *Great Controversy*, p.443.2). In Bible prophecy, a church is symbolized by a woman (see *Ephesians 5:23-32*), and civil power or state power is symbolized by manly figures (see *Revelation 17:1, 2*). Therefore, in order for the decision of exalting Sunday sacredness to be made, a woman of Bible prophecy had to be

elevated to the leadership role of a manly figure of Bible prophecy.

This should alarm any conscientious Seventh-day Adventist about where the women’s ordination and women empowerment movement in the church is leading to. The ideas of the beast are being advocated in the world, but now they have made inroads into the church through a falsified and corrupted educational system. The rise in prominence of the feminist theory and its promulgation in popular literature, in schoolbooks, and in modernized Bibles (such “Woman thou art Loosed”) represents women as an oppressed, discriminated and neglected class that need to assert their liberty and be elevated to the same roles as those of men. Women have a very important place in the plan of God and in society, but it is not what the world envisages. Female students in schools are from a very young age taught to aspire to manly roles in their secular pursuits, and they bring the same ideology into the church of God. This is “in direct opposition to the word of God” and is opening the floodgates for grosser misinterpretations of God’s word and a disregard of its express principles in the church. If the church can advocate and accept women as pastors and elders, what right will it have to disallow homosexual members and clergy, polygamous relationships and even forms of Sunday worship? What theological justification will be set forth for upholding the one and rejecting the others? Fearful are the implications and the conclusions to which this issue is leading us. Are you prepared for where this is leading?

Closing Remarks

These evidences are some of the many proofs that the Sunday law crisis is imminent and that it will wrack the frame of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—much harder than many anticipate. Satan is working hard to ensure that God’s people are swept into the ranks of this apostasy, and these developments show that he is by and large succeeding. Only those whose minds are fortified with the word of God, and bring their lives into agreement with the whole truth it teaches will remain standing. God has allowed the present condition of things to exist in the church not as a fear tactic, but as a reality

Are we prepared for the crisis just before us?

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminist_theory;
<http://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-feminist-theory-definition-lesson-quiz.html>

Adventist Pioneers: A Historical Overview

Introduction

The roots of the Seventh-day Adventist Church trace back to the Great Second Advent Movement of 1840-1844. The message that our spiritual forefathers in that movement proclaimed caused a shaking in Protestant Christianity that resulted in a separation and the eventual development of Seventh-day Adventism. The revival of interest in the Second Coming of Christ which they zealously advocated was a clear fulfillment of Bible prophecy (*see Revelation 14:6, 7*). It was the continuation of a work of clearing the path of truth of the rubbish of papal falsehoods and traditions; a work which had commenced in the days of the 16th Century Reformation. The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, anchored firmly on the rock of sacred history (the past fulfillment of portions of these prophecies and others), were drawing the ship of Advent believers to the shores of eternal truth that will eventually dock at the Heavenly harbor when Christ returns. A historical overview of the leading of God in the movement of our Adventist pioneers and the importance of their work is the subject of this article.

The Certainty of Prophecy: A Summary

Each line of prophecy in both of these prophetic books (Daniel and Revelation) led the Bible students to the same conclusion—that the end of the world was imminent, and that God was on the verge of establishing His everlasting kingdom. The time to which these Advent believers looked forward as near to come was “the hour of His judgment” based on the termination of the prophecy of Daniel 8:14. The following was the effect of their message:

“Thousands were led to embrace the truth preached by William Miller, and servants of God were raised up in the spirit and power of Elijah to proclaim the message. Like John, the forerunner of Jesus, those who preached this solemn message felt compelled to lay the ax at the root of the tree, and call upon men to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Their testimony was calculated to arouse and powerfully affect the churches and manifest their real character. And as the solemn warning to flee from the wrath to come was sounded, many who were united with the churches received the healing message; they saw their backslidings, and with bitter tears of repentance and deep agony of soul, humbled themselves before God. And as the Spirit of God rested upon them, they helped to sound the cry, “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.”” – {Early Writings, p.233.1}

The clarity of Biblical evidences was accompanied with the manifest movings of the Spirit of God on the hearts of those who heard the message of definite time for Christ’s return. The inaugural set time was expected within the period spanning from the spring of 1843 to the spring of 1844. When this period passed without the consummation of the Advent believers’ hopes, the opposition which for a time had been restrained by the power of the message began appear. In due course, the Advent believers perceived such opposition and the resultant moral decline of the churches as a clear sign that the message of the fall of Babylon (*see Revelation 14:8*) was applicable to these religious bodies.

“The second angel’s message of Revelation 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid.” – {Great Controversy, p.389.2}

Within this history, the Millerite Adventists witnessed and experienced the progressive development of prophetic light. This development was coined under the term, “the

Midnight Cry,” or “the True Midnight Cry” based on their understanding that they were fulfilling the parable of Matthew 25. Through continual, determined and prayerful study, they came to a the conclusion that the Jewish Day of Atonement typified the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 to which their faith looked forward. And upon making calculations of the tenth day of the seventh month (the day set for the atonement in the Mosaic system) in the year 1844, they determined that it would occur on the 22nd of October. But as it was in the spring of 1844, Christ did not appear in the clouds of heaven, there was great disappointment and the Advent movement itself was mightily shaken. Only a few remained faithful to the light of the midnight cry which they had received. Many use these disappointments and prophetic misunderstandings as an argument against accepting the works of the Adventist pioneers, but these are ignorant of the principles of God’s dealings with men. They do not understand that one of the attributed of the Almighty is that He is a testing God. He employs the circumstances of history to make a distinction between those who are truly His followers, and those who are not. This He has done in every generation, and He was not going to change in the time of the Adventist pioneers. Contrary to the tide of popular feeling sweeping through the ranks of Adventism today, the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy give a divine endorsement on the teachings and experiences of early Advent history.

Inspired Endorsement

Consider the following testimonies:

*“The warning has come: Nothing is to be allowed to come in that will disturb **the foundation of the faith upon which we have been building ever since the message came in 1842, 1843, and 1844.** I was in this message, and ever since I have been standing before the world, true to the light that God has given us. We do not propose to take our feet off the platform on which they were placed as day by day we sought the Lord with earnest prayer, seeking for light. Do you think that I could give up the light that God has given me? **It is to be as the Rock of Ages.** It has been guiding me ever since it was given.”* – {General Conference Bulletin, April 6, 1903 par. 35}

*“Those who stand as teachers and leaders in our institutions are to be sound in the faith and in the principles of the third angel’s message. God wants His people to know that **we have the message as He gave it to us in 1843 and 1844.** We knew then what the message meant, and we call upon our people today to obey the word, ...”* – {General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1903 par. 42}

*“God bids us give our time and strength to the work of preaching to the people **the messages that stirred men and women in 1843 and 1844.**”* – {Paulson Collection, p.60.6}

*“We must understand the present feebleness and smallness of the work. We have had an experience. In doing the work God has given us, we may go trustingly forward, assured that He will be our efficiency. He will be with us in 1906, **as He was with us in 1841, 1842, 1843, and 1844** Oh, what **wonderful evidences** we had then of the presence of God with us. In the earlier stages of our work, we had many difficulties to meet, and we gained many victories. – {Pamphlet 95, p. 12.1}*

“The presence of God” was with the Adventist pioneers, 1840-1844 provided many “wonderful evidences” of this fact. The truths that arrived in that time period are called the “foundation of the faith” and the “platform.” They are also likened to the “Rock of Ages.” Christ is the Rock of Ages (see Psalm 95:1; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4). The Bible teaches that Christ is the only true foundation upon which a Christian can build their faith (1 Corinthians 3:9-11). Those seeking to build their doctrinal understanding and religious experience on any other foundation do so at the cost of failure and the loss of their salvation (see Matthew 7:26-27). Consider the testimony of the Bible concerning the Millerite Adventists who cognitively fulfilled the experience of the church of Philadelphia:

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” (Revelation 3:10)

The popular idea that the Adventist pioneers were a group of uneducated, misguided zealots of prophecy strikes directly against the testimony of

Christ Himself. He states that they “kept the word” of His patience. Now who are we today to strive against Him by opposing His testimony? And why such a stolid indifference or open rejection of their work and the history of their experience? Well, one of the reasons is, when the pioneers began to die, the rising generation knew not the Lord as was the case in the time of Joshua (see *Joshua 2:7-10*) and this degeneration has continued up to our day. In the wake of this religious crisis, the need to witness to the past was expressed to J. N. Loughborough. He was told by Ellen White, “*You have an experience valuable to the cause of God. It must be made to tell for its full value.*” *Great Second Advent Movement (1992 edition), pp.484, 485.*

Closing Remarks

Their history is at our disposal, their teachings are recorded for our benefit. Will we accept these testimonies in their true value? The questions left with us is “Will we take up the sacred work passed on to us by the faithful standard-bearers—the Adventist pioneers?” “How is it with this rising generation?”

*“The old standard-bearers knew what it was to wrestle with God in prayer, and to enjoy the outpouring of his Spirit. **But these are passing off from the stage of action;** and who are coming up to fill their places? **How is it with the rising generation?** are they converted to God? Are we awake to the work that is going on in the heavenly Sanctuary, or are we waiting for some compelling power to come upon the church before we shall arouse? Are we hoping to see the whole church revived? **That time will never come.**” – {Review and Herald, March 22, 1887 Par. 2}*

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