

To Elder Figuhr and GC Committee (7L-EF L5)

Description

October 26, 1955

President R. R. Figuhr and
General Conference Committee of Seventh-day Adventists
Takoma Park, Washington, D. C.

Dear Brethren:

It is my earnest desire to make plain that in this series of articles to you, the aim is not to manifest a spirit of criticism and to point to past failures, for we well realize that the flesh is weak and human nature is faulty. It, therefore, becomes none to speak ill of his brother. The point is not to look back to the failures of the past but forward, pressing toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus. The purpose of these letters is not to cause greater division among Sabbathkeepers, which already exceeds that in Christ's day, but rather to call for unity of action among all Seventh-day believers in our day.

For as long as Sabbath-keepers continue to fight among themselves, the gentile will stand by and watch until he loses his soul, for many gentiles are honest and peace-loving not desiring to get into a family squabble.

Therefore, let our warfare be directed against the devil and wickedness in high places so prevalent throughout the length and breadth of the land, and not at each other, though there be differences of opinion.

But the Lord's promise is: "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." • Isa. 52:8.

As one travels about the country he will come in contact with the different beliefs among various sects of Sabbath-keepers. As you study with them you will find that all have some very high moral standards, and are as loyal to principle (as they understand it) and are as devoted to God as others in any church. The question comes to mind: Why are not these dear souls with the main body of Seventh-day Adventists? Has every possible effort been exerted to bring about the unity for which Jesus prayed? Are these honest souls to be lost, or are there many ways to salvation? Sister White gives us the one and final effort the Lord will employ, if His people do not get together, and iron out the problems that keep His Spirit from

L5, p. 1 30 working in a marked way.

"I was shown the inhabitants of the earth in the utmost confusion. War, bloodshed, privation, want, famine, and pestilence were abroad in the land. As these things surrounded God's

people, they began to press together, and to cast aside their little difficulties. Self dignity no longer controlled them; deep humility took its place. Suffering, perplexity, and privation caused reason to resume its throne, and the passionate and unreasonable man became sane, and acted with discretion and wisdom. • • • Testimonies, Vol. 1, p. 28.

Yes, the Lord may have to employ the same means He used in the brick yards of Egypt, to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness. And if it takes persecution to prepare the church for deliverance, is this to come from the world? Sister White explains:

• • • Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church, but He has not committed to us the work of judging character and motive. He knows our nature too well to entrust this work to us. Should we try to uproot from the church those whom we suppose to be spurious Christians, we should be sure to make mistakes. Often we regard as hopeless subjects the very ones whom Christ is drawing to Himself. Were we to deal with these souls according to our imperfect judgment, it would perhaps extinguish their last hope. Many who think themselves Christians will at last be found wanting. Many will be in heaven who their neighbors supposed would never enter there. Man judges from appearance, but God judges the heart. The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest, and the harvest is the end of probationary time. • • • Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 71,72.

• • • Notwithstanding Christ's warning, men have sought to uproot the tares. To punish those who were supposed to be evildoers, the church has had recourse to the civil power. Those who differed from the established doctrines have been imprisoned, put to torture and to death, at the instigation of men who claimed to be acting under the sanction of Christ. But it is the spirit of Satan, not the Spirit of Christ, that inspires such acts. This is Satan's own method of bringing the world under his dominion. God has been misrepresented through the church by this way of dealing with those supposed to be heretics. • • • Ibid., p. 74, 1941 Edition.

The thought behind these statements from the Lord's servant presents to the church a great problem. For when the message comes

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in at the right time to join the third angel in the last great work for the world (Early Writings, p. 277), the church is not looking for a message to join the third angel. Then there is the possibility that she might brand the message as heresy, and do as the church has done in times past. God forbid that His church of today find in itself of the same spirit that was manifest in the church at the first advent of Christ and, thereby, bring down upon the church God's displeasure.

The church has been warned over and over again through the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to manifest a spirit of tolerance towards those that they may consider as heretics, that they not be found fighting against God. Yes, we realize that there are many voices saying, • • • This is the way, walk ye in it. • • • Nevertheless, the Lord at the same time sends a message that is to judge the living • • • first to the church, then to the world. • • • The church will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. If her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond with the benefits and blessings God has conferred upon her, she will be found wanting. • • • Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 83.

â??In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had.â?•â?? Testimonies, Vol. 8, p. 247.

Since the church is to be judged in the heavenly Sanctuary, it must be that our cases come up in the investigative judgment before probation closes. At the same time there is to be a message of reform. A warning to the church on earth.

â??While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among Godâ??s people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14.â?•â?? The Great Controversy, p. 425.

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

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chosen of God, his representatives.â?•â?? Testimonies, Vol. 8, pp. 250, 251.

â??The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife. Those who have not been living in Christian fellowship will draw close to one another. One member working in right lines will lead other members to unite with him in making intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit. There will be no confusion, because all will be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit. The barriers separating believer from believer will be broken down, and Godâ??s servants will speak the same things. The Lord will co-operate with His servants. All will pray understandingly the prayer that Christ taught His servants: â??Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.â?? Matthew 6:10.â?•â?? Ibid., p. 251.

And what is to judge us? â??He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.â?• John 12:48

So the church, the house of God, is to be judged by a message! Since she is to be judged by a message, then the message, like that of 1844, should come on time and proclaim that the event has actually taken place, and is now going on.

Such a message did come October 10, 1955, and the parable was uttered in fulfillment of Ezekiel 24:1-3 marking the date of the beginning of Judgment of the Living. As God is the Great Head of gold and the true King of Babylon â?? a King of kings, â?? and made plain by Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar; so, the application was made to the message and the parable was uttered. Anciently God used the King of Babylon to judge Judah â?? the two tribes. The parable shows that

God, the true King of Babylon, has taken the reins in His own hands and is judging His people. The application of the King of Babylon to the message of 1955 was made before it was known that Sister White had anything to say about the subject. She writes:

“The history which the great I AM has marked out in His word, uniting link after link in the prophetic chain, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tells us where we are today in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come. All that Prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history and we may be assured

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that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order.” Education, p. 178.

Every link of prophetic truth is to fit perfectly into the golden chain of truth and show where we are today, and that which is yet future will be fulfilled in its order. But, you may ask, how does the truth of the King of Babylon fit into this chain? Let us see what Sister White says:

“The final overthrow of all earthly dominions is plainly foretold in the word of truth. In the prophecy uttered when sentence from God was pronounced upon the last king of Israel is given the message.” Ibid., p. 179. In other words, the parable is uttered, or the comparison is made to the message like the King of Babylon coming to Jerusalem to take captive the last king of Israel, King Zedekiah.

“For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about.” Jer. 52:3,4.

How does this show where we are living? The next paragraphs tell us,

“Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; . . . exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.” Ezekiel 21:26,27. The crown removed from Israel passed successively to the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. God says, “It shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.” Education, p. 179.

Since the Judgment of the Living is the crowning act of the Gospel, the announcement, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye: out to meet Him,” is given again. This is the time Christ receives His (figuratively), and they receive their (figurative) crowns. The Judgment of the Living, the loud cry Angel of Revelation 18:1 will take the crown off the heads of earthly kingdoms. Now that God is the King of Babylon and the ministry (the mother “one that brings in the converts) of the modernist churches is His estranged wife: therefore,

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the woman on the back of the scarlet-colored beast is the mother of harlots â?? Mystery, Babylon the Great (Rev. 17:5)

Since the Atonement was October 22, and the Feast of Tabernacles is five days later, the Sabbath should be celebrated as a Sabbath within a Sabbath.

â??And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. These are the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: Beside the sabbaths of the Lord, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the Lord. Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.â?• Lev. 23:33-39.

As part of the seven days was allotted to study during this time, then it would be fitting if time could be devoted to Bible study now during Autumn Council.

Your brother in Christ,

Ben L. Roden

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