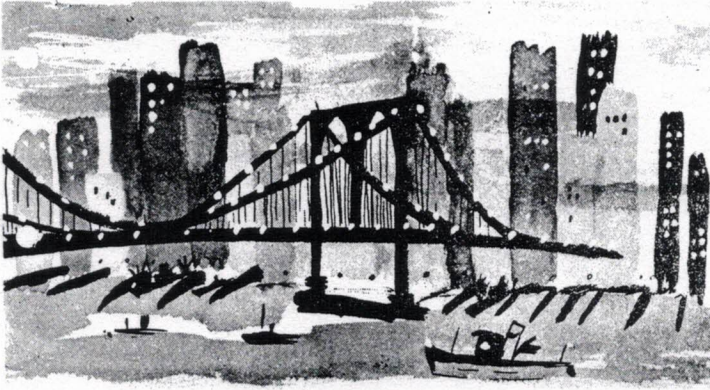


August 172.



"Watchman, what of the night?"

The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12

THE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY

As the Apostle Peter led the evangelistic thrust of the first Christian church, he did not present "cunningly devised fables" when he made known "the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ", but as an eyewitness of His majesty. Not only did he see in miniature the coming of the Lord in glory, but he also heard the "voice which came from heaven" when he was "with Him in the holy mount."¹ However, more sure than the evidence that comes from observation, or the perception gained from hearing, is the word of prophecy. Peter wrote - "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed."²

If we really believe that we have come to the end time in human history, then it is incumbent upon us to know the sure word of prophecy so that we can rightly interpret the events taking place in these final hours. The dangers that face us in this hour dare not be minimized. "The devil is come down unto [us], having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."³ But this wrath is disguised. "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness."⁴ These agents of Satan will "shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."⁵

Our only safety is in the Word of God. "None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict."⁶ "Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures, and who have received the love of the truth, will be shielded from the powerful delusion that

takes the world captive."⁷ We cannot even trust our eyesight, for "undeniable wonders will be performed."⁸ A question, we need to ponder, is asked - "Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidences of their senses?"⁷ When gross darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth under a guise of light from him who so transforms himself, then we need to give the most earnest heed to the sure word of prophecy as the true light "that shineth in a dark place."²

What does the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him to show unto His servants concerning things which must come to pass teach us? In that revelation we are told that God has a Movement and a Message for the final hours of human history. It is the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14 to be augmented with the light and power of the angel of Revelation 18.⁹ This message is declared to be "the everlasting gospel". If then it is the true gospel, there is no other! It is to be proclaimed "unto them that dwell on the earth."¹⁰ This includes all, even those who may profess to be Christians. Now God does not confuse the issue by giving this message to the Jesus Movement, the Campus Crusade for Christ, or to Billy Graham to proclaim.¹¹ This message has been committed to the Woman in white, and the the Remnant of her seed, "which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus."¹²

How tragic, then, to read of what is going on in our midst. A writer in In-sight reports:

. . . the style and the spirit of the [Jesus] movement is invading Adventist schools and Young People's Societies. The same powerful emotional religious experiences are being felt. The same songs are being heard with the same guitar accompaniments and soft beat. The same happy smiles are noticeable and the same questions are being raised.

Even within our church, doctrinal distinctions tend to recede into the background and a genuine Christian ecumenism takes over, centered in the person of Christ. Witnessing programs seem rather unstructured - "spontaneous, as the Spirit leads" - and aim at those who do not know Christ. If people are met who are already Christians, Ad-

ventist young men and women may enjoy the conversation with these fellow travelers for a while, but then hurry on to those still outside the family of Jesus. This development certainly is new in Adventist evangelism, and a tremendous challenge.¹³

Have our youth so completely lost the vision of the Three Angel's Messages of Revelation 14, that they have no message for the members of the Campus Crusade for Christ, or the Jesus Movement whom they meet in their missionary endeavors? Has our educational program so grossly failed us that we are turning out youth who are willing to surrender the doctrinal distinctions - the truth as it is in Jesus - that truth committed to our trust, and join in a so-called "genuine Christian ecumenism" with these other movements? And are we willing to adopt their emotionalism and bring this unholy traffic into the precincts of the temple of the Lord? When are we going to awaken to the truth of the book of the Revelation of Jesus?

In the book of Revelation, there are two women, and two cities presented. One woman is clothed in white, and is destined for the New Jerusalem. The other woman is clothed in scarlet and purple, and her city is Babylon the great. She is declared to be "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"¹⁴ There are no other women than these two presented. There is no woman clothed in grays or browns. With one or the other of these two women will the inhabitants of the earth be identified. Now it is true that the leadership of Babylon is made up of three parts:¹⁵ the dragon with the out-in-the-open devil worshipers; the beast, the papacy; and the false prophet, that leadership which gives a guise of having a genuine relationship with Jesus, but of whom Christ professes, "I never knew you, depart from Me, you who break my law."¹⁶ This latter section of Babylon even reproduce "The Elijah Message" with signs and wonders, leading the inhabitants of the world to make an image to the beast which had a wound by the sword, yet lived.¹⁷

We are not left in doubt as to how a movement may be judged, whether it be the Jesus Movement, or the Campus Crusade for Christ. The Bible states - "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because

there is no light in them."¹⁸ If no light, then it is gross darkness! And if our senses seem to detect light, it is but the deceptive ghostly light being emitted by the enemy himself.

If our youth had been "rightly trained" for the final witness, they would now understand that God's message for this hour not only includes those who are to be found under the banners of the dragon and the beast, but also those who are being beguiled by the false prophet. All who are not with the Woman in white are to be found either purposefully or ignorantly with the Woman in scarlet. There can be no "Christian ecumenism" between the two.

What a heavy debt some of our liberal educators will have to pay in the day of final accounts. They have drunk deeply at the broken cisterns of this world's educational founts, and then have passed this foul water to our youth sent to them in our schools. But not alone will these liberal educators have to give an accounting, but this generation of our youth have seen their pastors joining and becoming officers in the local Ministerial Associations of Babylon. They have heard of our leaders fraternizing with the Evangelicals, compromising our doctrines so that we need no longer be considered a "sect". Then why should they emphasize doctrine when meeting with the devotees of the Jesus Movement, or the members of the Evangelical Campus Crusade for Christ teams. And when a leader of the General Conference Ministerial Association can go before a convention of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International and commend the "spirit" present as of God without a rebuke from the leadership of the church, what are our youth to think? Further, when a Youth's Congress in the Southern Union features as one of its main attractions, the Spiritist Pentecostal, David Wilkerson, what impression is left upon our youth? We have sowed to the wind, now we are reaping the whirlwind!

But one says - look at the drug addicts being rescued through these movements. Look at some of the youth turning from vices that have held them captive for a period of time. True, our senses are seeing things. Undeniable wonders are being

performed. Our perceptions and judgments are becoming blurred. We need the gift of the discernment of spirits that comes through the Word of God. We need to consider anew our sacred trust. Contemplate these words:

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchman and lightbearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning message for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import, - the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.

The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given to us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them.¹⁹

-
- ¹III Peter 1:16-18 ²II Peter 1:19 ³Revelation 12:12
⁴II Corinthians 11:14-15 ⁵Matthew 24:24
⁶Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, pp. 593-594
⁷Ibid., p. 625 ⁸Ibid., p. 588
⁹Revelation 14:6-15; 18:1-5 ¹⁰Revelation 14:6
¹¹If we construe that the Jesus Movement, or the Campus Crusade for Christ, or Billy Graham is giving the same message that God has committed to our trust, then we are admitting that we have failed the Lord, and He has indeed let out His message to other "husbandmen". Such a concept would only complicate our already sad state of affairs.
¹²Revelation 12:17
¹³Gottfried Oosterwal, "The Jesus People", Insight, April 11, 1972, pp. 16-17
¹⁴Revelation 17:3-5 ¹⁵Revelation 16:19, 13-14
¹⁶Matthew 7:23 Greek ¹⁷Revelation 13:13-14
¹⁸Isaiah 8:20
¹⁹Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 9, p. 19

+++++

Elder Wm. H. Grotheer
P. O. Box 237
Florence, Miss., 39073

V-8 (August, 1972)