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ARE YOU PREPARED?

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As we face the final conflict between good and evil, there will be more and more manifestations of supernatural power. "Satan is marshalling his hosts; and are we individually prepared for the fearful conflict that is just before us? Are we preparing our children for the great crisis?"¹

False Christs Working Miracles

Chapter 24 of the Gospel of Matthew is a chapter on the signs of the second coming of Christ. Christ enumerated those signs while He was with His disciples on the Mount of Olives. It is interesting to note that the first signs He mentioned are happening in many places of the world and have resulted in many believers following other Christs. Let us take a look at the words of Jesus in Matt 24:3-5:

And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately saying, Tell us when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

¹Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home: Counsels to Seventh-day Adventist Families as Set Forth in the Writings of Ellen G White* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1952), 18.

The first sign that Jesus gave is the appearance of many who will claim to be Christ. Satan knows that the people of God are eagerly looking forward to that blessed hope of “the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). Therefore, by doing miracles and claiming to be Christ, he will lead astray those who are ignorant of the Scriptures. Jesus repeated the warning against this deception over and over again in Matt 24. Note the following passages:

And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. (v. 11)

Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert: go not forth; or behold, he is in the secret chambers: believe it not. (vv. 23-26)

Ellen G. White tells us that Satan will even imitate certain aspects of the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ. If we rely only on Matt 24:27, which states that Christ will come with the brightness of His glory that fills the whole world and is as bright as lightning that can be seen from the east to the west, I am afraid that Satan could deceive us.

Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures.

As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear as though Christ has come. In different parts of the earth Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in Revelation. Revelation 1:13-15. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: “Christ has come! Christ has come!” The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people; and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to

listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion.¹

The apostle Paul gave advance warning in 2 Cor 11:14,15:

And no marvel; for 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; whose end shall be according to their works.

Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul issued another important warning: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils” (1 Tim 4:1). How can we identify these deceptions of the enemy?

The Seducing Spirits

Ellen G. White has many passages on the seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. The seducing spirits will work miracles to deceive people and make them accept the doctrines of devils. I want to identify two erroneous doctrines of devils. But before I do that, let us discover also how the seducing spirits work miracles. Here are three quotations about the seducing spirits and doctrines of devils:

As trials thicken around us, both separation and unity will be seen in our ranks. . . . Those who have had great light and precious privileges, but have not improved them will, under one pretext or another, go out from us. Not having received the love of the truth, they will be taken in the delusions of the enemy; they will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and will depart from the faith.²

When the law of God is made void, the church will be sifted by fiery trials, and a larger proportion than we now anticipate will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.³

We have reached the perils of the last days, when some, yes, many, shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. Be cautious in regard to what you read and how you hear. Take not a particle of interest in spiritualistic theories. Satan is waiting to steal a march upon every one who allows

¹Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan: The Conflict of the Ages in the Christian Dispensation* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1950), 624-25.

²Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 6:400-401.

³Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1946), 361.

himself to be deceived by his hypnotism. He begins to exert his power over them just as soon as they begin to investigate his theories.¹

How do the seducing spirits perform miracles? Ellen G. White offers some answers here as well:

Through the agency of spiritualism miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.²

Through spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people, and professing to present a new and exalted system of religious faith; but at the same time he works as a destroyer. His temptations are leading multitudes to ruin.³

The time will come, Christ tells us of, when many deceivers will go forth, declaring themselves to be Christ. The Saviour says, Go ye not after them. We need not be deceived. Wonderful scenes, with which Satan will be closely connected, will soon take place. God's word declares that Satan will work miracles. He will make people sick, and then will suddenly remove from them his satanic power. They will then be regarded as healed. These works of apparent healing will bring Seventh-day Adventists to the test. Many who have had great light will fail to walk in the light, because they have not become one with Christ.⁴

These reputed wonder-working activities constitute a false manifestation of the "loud cry" of Rev 14:9-11, an imitation of the latter rain. Joel 2:23 speaks of the former and the latter rain. Please note that the verse says that the former rain will be given "moderately." And then in vv. 28-29 we see the effect of the outpouring of the latter rain: "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and so upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit."

Ellen White clearly reveals to us the meaning of the former and latter rains:

In the East the former rain falls at the sowing time. It is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the

¹Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry: A Treatise on Medical Missionary Work in the Gospel* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1963), 101-2.

²White, *Great Controversy*, 588.

³Ibid., 589.

⁴Ellen G. White to "Our Leading Medical Workers" in Battle Creek, Michigan, 12 November 1903 (Battle Creek Letters B-57-04, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD).

grain, and prepares it for the sickle. The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit.¹

The former rain was given at the time of the early Christian church on the day of Pentecost. That was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in which genuine miracles accompanied the ministry of the people of God. That was necessary for the growth of the seed of Christianity. And Joel says it was given moderately. The latter rain will be the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in greater abundance “near the close of the season,” to ripen the grain and prepare it for the sickle.

The outpouring of the latter rain will result in the “Loud Cry.” The loud voice of the proclamation of the gospel will be heard throughout the whole world. The witnessing of God’s people will be more powerful because of the Holy Spirit that is working with them. The day of Pentecost will be repeated, at which time many genuine miracles will accompany the proclamation of the gospel. And it will be in greater magnitude than that of the former rain. The Loud Cry is the last warning message to the world before the close of probation. It will be near the close of the season to prepare the field for the harvest. Jesus said, “The harvest is the end of the world” (Matt 13:39).

God has honest children among the fallen churches of Babylon. And before the close of probation, before the seven last plagues are poured out, many ministers and members of these fallen churches will be enlightened and will gladly receive the truth.² Jesus said, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10:16). Commenting on this situation, Ellen White wrote,

Satan knows this; and before the loud cry of the third angel is given, he raises an excitement in these religious bodies, that those who have rejected the truth may think that God is with them. He hopes to deceive the honest and lead them to think that God is still working for the churches. But the light will shine, and all who are honest will leave the fallen churches, and take their stand with the remnant.³

It is very clear that before the outpouring of the latter rain, Satan will steal a march, and the seducing spirits will work miracles through spiritualism, through the church system, claiming belief in the Bible, and they will ascribe their miracles to the work of the Holy Spirit. This is the false Loud Cry.

If we study carefully the writings of Ellen White, we will know that the Loud Cry will occur after the passing of a national Sunday law. The Beast from the earth (Rev 13:11-17), which represents Protestant America, will initiate it, forming an

¹Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1962), 506.

²Ellen G. White, *Early Writings of Ellen G. White* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1945), 261.

³Ibid.

image to the first Beast, and the whole world will follow. Hence, the Sunday law will begin in the United States as a national Sunday law before it becomes a universal Sunday law.

The timing here is very important. The true Loud Cry will come after the national Sunday law. The miracle healings and the speaking in tongues, which are imitations of Pentecost that are happening now, are in reality the false loud cry. They are the work of seducing spirits, the work of Satan to deceive, if possible, even the very elect. Satan will try to imitate many of the miracles that God has done for His people.

During the time of Elijah, at his ministry on Mount Carmel, fire came down from heaven. Rev 13:13 tells us that this kind of sign will be repeated. Jesus and His disciples healed many diseases. The present false Loud Cry is doing this also. At Pentecost, the members of the early Christian church were enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak in different tongues. This too claims to be happening today. It appears to be like the work of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but careful scrutiny will reveal that the spurious is different from the genuine. Please read Acts 2:1,4-11.

Pentecost is the festival that the Jews celebrate every year in gratitude for the abundant spring harvest. It was on the day of that feast, after the ascension of Jesus Christ, that the former rain was poured out. Acts 2:4 says that "they were filled with the Holy Ghost." Verse 5 says that in Jerusalem at that time there were many devout Jews that came from every nation under heaven to celebrate the feast of Pentecost.

That was a golden opportunity for the early Christian church to proclaim the gospel. The message would spread throughout the known world because there were Jews "out of every nation under heaven." They were born and grew up in foreign lands. They could not understand the language in Jerusalem. Hence, God, through the Holy Spirit, enabled the early Christian church members to speak in the languages of those people from other countries so that they would fully understand the message. Note vv. 7-8: "And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?"

Everybody had complete understanding of what was spoken. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the early Christians were able to effectively communicate the gospel in foreign languages. Verses 9-11 list sixteen countries from which people came. Read vv. 22-36 and you will notice that Peter in his preaching emphasized that Jesus, whom the Jews crucified, was the Messiah. Verses 37-41 tell us the victory of the gospel—three thousand were baptized in one day.

The point that I want to drive home is that in the true Pentecostal speaking in tongues, the speaker understands what he is speaking and the listeners understand also what they hear. What about the speaking in tongues today by the charismatic movement? The one speaking in tongues is somewhat hypnotized. He does not know what he is talking about. His tongue is out of control. How about the

listeners? Do they understand? No. The speaker does not even understand what he is talking about; even less the listeners. Here is what the Scripture counsels us with regard to speaking in tongues, "For God is not the author of confusion. . . . Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor 14:33,40).

Let me emphasize again that the present charismatic movement is the false Loud Cry. It is the work of seducing spirits.

One very important thing for us to consider is, if the false Loud Cry is now happening, what will follow? Yes, the true Loud Cry is just around the corner. Are we ready for the final conflict? These seducing spirits are now at work to influence the rulers and dignitaries of this world. This is to prepare for Armageddon, the final conflict between good and evil. Rev 16:13-14 says,

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Ellen White describes this threefold union:

When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.¹

What are these "papal falsehoods and delusions," and why are they so readily accepted? It is the phenomena of signs and miracles that leads the world to accept doctrines of devils. "Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded."²

Doctrines of Devils

Let me present to you two doctrines accepted by the world today as truth. One originated in Eden; the other came from the pagan world, was adopted by the Roman power, and was propagated to the Christian world.

¹White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:451.

²White, *Great Controversy*, 588.

Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome.¹

Those who accept the doctrine of the immortality of the soul can easily be deceived by seducing spirits. When Satan will impersonate Christ, work miracles, and proclaim the change of the Sabbath to Sunday, they will readily accept it.

Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. . . . Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of spiritualism.²

Spiritualism is communication with the spirits as the source of help. And those who believe in the doctrine of the devil about the immortality of the soul, which was first introduced to Eve in the garden of Eden (Gen 3:4), accept that the spirits or souls of the dead live on after death and one can communicate with them. Satan made that the foundation for his masterpiece of deception.

Be Ready for the Final Conflict

“As we near the close of this world’s history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study.”³

Many of the prophecies are about to be fulfilled in quick succession. Every element of power is about to be set to work. Past history will be repeated; old controversies will arouse to new life, and peril will beset God’s people on every side. Intensity is taking hold of the human family. It is permeating everything upon the earth.⁴

Ellen White wrote already in 1854, “I saw that God’s people are on the enchanted ground, and that some have lost nearly all sense of the shortness of time and the worth of the soul.”⁵

Let me reiterate the timing and the sequence of events. The false Loud Cry comes ahead of the true Loud Cry. The Loud Cry of the third angel’s message will come after the national Sunday law, which has not come yet. Therefore, all those miracles today ascribed as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit are spurious. The time of the latter rain has not come yet. Ellen White clearly outlines the sequence of events. Let us not be deceived.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., 561.

³Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1941), 133.

⁴Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1962), 116.

⁵White, *Evangelism*, 139.

Our success will depend on carrying forward the work in the simplicity in which Christ carried it forward.¹

The way in which Christ worked was to preach the word, and to relieve suffering by miraculous works of healing. But I am instructed that we cannot now work in this way, for Satan will exercise his power by working miracles. God's servants today could not work by means of miracles, because spurious works of healing, claiming to be divine, will be wrought.²

Conclusion

Our only defense against the onslaught of Satan is to be fortified by the word of God.

“Search the Scriptures.” Study your Bible as you have never studied it before. Unless you arise to a higher, holier state in your religious life, you will not be ready for the appearing of our Lord.³

Our enemy is more powerful than we are. We cannot overcome him by our own power. It is only by abiding in Christ that we will be victorious.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. (James 4:7-8)

And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. (Ps 50:15)

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. (1 Pet 5:7)

God loves this church. He loves you and me. Let us stay close to Him and be shielded from the wiles of Satan.

¹White, *Early Writings*, 120.

²White, *Medical Ministry*, 14.

³White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:717.