

THEOCRACY: God's Government



www.DTUniversity.org

THEOCRACY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	2
CHAPTER 1 THEOCRACY.....	3
CHAPTER 2 REPEATING THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT ISRAEL.....	29
CHAPTER 3 APOSTASY IN THE CHURCH OR THE CHURCH IN APÓSTASY	41
CHAPTER 4 A GROSSROOTS MOVEMENT FROM MINISTRY AN LAITY.....	61
CHAPTER 5 THE LATTER RAIN.....	71
CHAPTER 6 THE FINAL PHASE.....	85
CHAPTER 7 STUDENTS OF GOD'S WILL.....	101

THEOCRACY

FOREWORD

From times of Eternity, the universe enjoyed the only pure form of Governance – a Theocracy in which God rules on the basis of love. His rule was inerrant, but Lucifer’s rebellion introduced another form of rulership based upon pride and the will of a rebel leader.

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve benefited from the liberty of God’s government—theocracy. However, when they chose Satan as their advisor, liberty was lost, and the archdeceiver introduced autocratic rule to the earth. It was ever God’s plan to reintroduce His perfect government through His true followers. Nevertheless, time and time again, apostasy and a desire to be like the fallen nations about them caused God’s people to surrender their God-bestowed liberty, and accept the bondage of the tyranny of human kings, religious leaders, presidents and numerous other forms of leadership contrary to God’s divine plan. Never have more Christians—Seventh-day Adventists—placed their faith in church leaders and pastors than today. This is Satan’s ploy to derail the presentation of God’s last message. Let us arise and follow God and His Word alone. Such is the call of this book, *Theocracy*.

Today, as never before, our God is calling out a people who will look to Him as their only Leader, eschewing the kingly power of men in an age in which men and women are looking to the arm of flesh as their guide. “Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.” Jeremiah 17:5. Noted Biblical and Spirit of Prophecy scholar Pastor Ron Spear, in this book presents compelling evidence that it is now time, and long overdue, that His faithful people turn once more to God and His theocracy form of leadership. God speaks to us through Inspiration; He calls to us to serve Him and not fallible men—no matter how elevated their ecclesiastical post. Only such a people will be invested with the latter rain and sally forth to

THEOCRACY

successfully take God's last and greatest message of love to this sin-cursed earth. Then, and only then, will our Saviour return.

I thank God for the dedication of Elder Spear, but now he calls men and women to follow the words of God, which he presents in this book, *Theocracy*.

Russell Standish

THEOCRACY

INTRODUCTION

by

Ellen G. White

O WE realize how large a number in the world are watching our movements? From quarters where we least expect will come voices urging us forward in the work of giving to the world the last message of mercy. Ministers and people, wake up! Be quick to recognize and seize every opportunity and advantage offered in the turning of the wheel of providence. God and Christ and the heavenly angels are working with intense activity to hold in check the fierceness of Satan's wrath, that God's plans may not be thwarted. God lives and reigns. He is conducting the affairs of the universe. Let His soldiers move forward to victory. Let there be perfect unity in their ranks. Let them press the battle to the gates. As a mighty Conqueror, the Lord will work for them.

Let the gospel message ring through our churches, summoning them to universal action. Let the members of the church have increased faith, gaining zeal from their unseen, heavenly allies, from a knowledge of their exhaustless resources, from the greatness of the enterprise in which they are engaged, and from the power of their Leader. Those who place themselves under God's control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch the steady tread of the events ordained by Him to take place.

Inspired with the Spirit of Him who gave His life for the life of the world, they will no longer stand still in impotency, pointing to what they cannot do. Putting on the armor of Heaven, they will go forth to the warfare, willing to do and dare for God, knowing that His omnipotence will supply their need.

Testimonies, vol. 7, 14.

THEOCRACY

THEOCRACY

When God's People Are Willing to Accept God As the Ruler of Their Lives

AT THE Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve walked and talked with God; they knew His voice. They enthusiastically raced to their meeting place to be instructed by Christ, their Creator. They were under the theocracy of the Creator, Jesus Christ. But now there was another voice in the garden. That voice could be heard only in one place in the newly created planet—the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Jesus, their Creator, had carefully instructed them that they should not eat of the fruit of this tree. They had been informed of the war in heaven, and that Lucifer—Satan—had been cast out to this earth, and that the only place where he had access to them was at the forbidden tree.

We all know the history of the fall of our first parents—their sin drove them from their garden home and the tree of life. From the very day of their creation, they were under the direct leadership of their Creator—the theocracy. What a wonderful experience to be instructed by Jesus! Their perfect characters responded to the voice of God. His love for them became their love for Him, but their sin—disobedience—separated them from the face-to-face experience. Their repentance and confession for their sin gave them the opportunity to return under the leadership of their God, who was now to become their promised Redeemer—Recreator.

Their willingness to be made willing to be obedient to all truth—God's revealed will—allowed them to again be under the theocracy. This opportunity was to be extended to all their children for all generations. If they would be obedient, Christ would rule and reign in their lives, but willful disobedience would separate them from the theocracy.

The Theocracy and Human Leaders

THEOCRACY

Webster's Dictionary defines theocracy as "The rule of God or immediate direction by God." Under the theocracy the work of the human leaders is simply to enforce the laws and directions that God has given. The human, visible leaders have no authority to legislate. It is not acceptable for them to direct the people in any way contrary to the directives of God. Human leadership is strictly evaluated by the verse: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. These principles are described in the context of ancient Israel:

The government of Israel was administered in the name and by the authority of God. The work of Moses, of the seventy elders, of the rulers and judges, was simply to enforce the laws that God had given; they had no authority to legislate for the nation. This was, and continued to be, the condition of Israel's existence as a nation. From age to age men inspired by God were sent to instruct the people and to direct in the enforcement of the laws. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 603.

The function of human leadership today in spiritual Israel is the same as it was in ancient Israel. As did Moses, leaders today are to obey and to communicate to the people the instructions of the Lord without adding to them or subtracting from them. The purpose of the church and of the church leadership is to say what God says and to lead God's people into obedience to God's full will on every issue. When Christ's will is faithfully communicated—whether by one man or a committee of men—it is Christ who is directing His church. The actions of such human leadership is ratified in heaven:

Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbathbreaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil. "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:21. If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God's Word is pronounced upon them in heaven.

In choosing to sin, they disown Christ; the church must show that she does not sanction their deeds, or she herself dishonors her Lord. She must say about sin what God says about it. She must deal with it as God directs, and her action is ratified in heaven. He who despises the authority of the church, despises the

THEOCRACY

authority of Christ Himself. *The Desire of Ages*, 806.

Henceforth Elisha stood in the place of Elijah. He was called to the position of highest honor because he had been faithful over a few things. The question arose in his mind. Am I qualified for such a position? But he would not allow his mind to question. The greatest qualification for any man in a position of trust is to obey implicitly the Word of the Lord. Elisha might exercise his reasoning ability on every other subject but the one that would admit of no reasoning. He was to obey the Word of the Lord at all times and in all places. Elisha had put his hand to the plow, and he would not look back. He revealed his determination and firm reliance upon God.

This lesson is for us to study carefully. We are in no case to swerve from our allegiance. No duties that God presents before us should cause us to work at cross-purposes with Him. The Word of God is to be our counselor. It is only those who render perfect and thorough obedience to God that He will choose. Those who follow the Lord are to be firm and straightforward in obeying His directions. Any deviation to follow human devising or planning disqualifies them for being trustworthy. Even if they have to walk as did Enoch —with God alone —His children must separate from those who do not obey Him, who show that they are not in vital connection with Him. *Ellen G. White Comments SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, 1037.

We are to look to and trust in God rather than man:

Let man now cease to trust in man. While they should respect God's plan for unity of action, let all remember that the Holy Spirit is molding and fashioning the human agent in the divine similitude. The life that is hid with Christ in God is revealed through men. We are now living in the closing scenes of this world's history. Let men tremble with the sense of the responsibility of knowing the truth. The ends of the world are come. Proper consideration of these things will lead all to make an entire consecration of all that they have and are to their God. There should be no boasting, no seeking for the highest places; but all should be ambitious to do with fidelity, with an eye single to the glory of God, the sacred work which it is

THEOCRACY

our exalted privilege to engage in. The eye should not be so constantly looking to man, studying the plans which men devise; but rather seeking for a knowledge of the plans which are determined by the Source of all wisdom. Then there will be no danger of having plans for work contaminated by flowing through impure human channels. Look to God; pray to God; wait and watch and pray to God; work for God. *Review and Herald*, July 23, 1895.

Unfortunately, ancient Israel did not often function as a theocracy. Her rulers, too often, led the people contrary to the directives of the Lord —apostasy. Too often her spiritual leaders administered human wisdom and ruled as a hierocracy which the dictionary defines as “rule or government by priests or ecclesiastics.” But leaders in God’s theocracy are called to not rule but to plan, counsel, and to educate:

God is to be the strength and wisdom of His people. Man power is not to rule the church of Christ. *Loma Linda Messages*, 221.

Men whom the Lord calls to important positions in His work are to cultivate a humble dependence upon Him. They are not to seek to embrace too much authority; for God has not called them to a work of ruling, but to plan and counsel with their fellow laborers. Every worker alike is to hold himself amenable to the requirements and instructions of God. *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 270.

There is to be no ordering, no domineering, no masterly authority. The love of God, in a healing, life-giving current, is to flow through the life. The spirit and words and deeds of every worker are to show that he realizes that he is acting in Christ’s place. The power that he receives from the great Teacher is the power to educate others, not the power to order or dictate. He is to come to Christ as one who desires to know how to teach and help others. *Pacific Union Recorder*, July 26, 1906.

God’s leaders are to study His plans and work according to them and not their own ideas:

As a people we should study God’s plans for conducting His work. Wherever He has given

THEOCRACY

directions in regard to any point, we should carefully consider how to regard His expressed will. This work should have special attention. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 342.

Those who bear responsibilities must be wide-awake. It is not the man who drifts with circumstances, and who in an emergency indorses questionable moves, who wins the respect of his fellow men and the approval of heaven. It is the man who, like a rock meeting the tide, stands firm against evil who commands respect.

In a crisis, when many are not fully decided as to the right course, the one who moves steadfastly in the path that God has marked out, with unshaken determination carrying out God's plans, is the one who wins confidence as a man fit to command. Those who occupy positions of responsibility should know what saith the Lord, and they should then stand unflinchingly for the right, stemming the tide of evil. *Review and Herald*, September 14, 1905.

Usurpation of God's Authority

To personally disobey, neglect, or reject God's expressed will as in the law or in the testimony or in the wooing of the Holy Spirit—or to cause others to—is to negate the rightful function of His authority in our personal or corporate lives. This rejection of the revealed will of God and all sin is usurpation—wrongful seizure—of authority.

And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. Ezekiel 33:31.

And why call ye me. Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Luke 6:46.

It is Satan's desire for us to look to man rather than to God:

Now, it has been Satan's determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus, and lead man to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the church has been looking to man and

THEOCRACY

expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, 130.

The way so plainly specified to manage our institutions has not been followed:

Conformity to the world is causing many of our people to lose their bearings. I feel deeply over this matter, because it is continually kept before me by the Lord. For many years it has been presented to me again and again that a worldly policy has been coming into the management of many of our institutions.

And when I read the published *Testimonies* that were given in the early seventies and even before that time, I am surprised to see how clearly our dangers in this matter have been pointed out, and how plainly the right way has been outlined from the beginning. But the way, so plainly specified, has not been followed. Men act as if counsels had never been given; and yet we expect the Lord to uplift us and to do great things for us! *Ibid.*, vol. 1,243.

Disbelief in the *Testimonies* leads to rebellion and ends in destruction:

It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the *Testimonies*. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the *Testimonies*, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction. *Testimonies*, vol. 4,211.

There are many who are not under Christ's rule:

There are many whose names are on the church books, but who are not under Christ's rule. They are not heeding His instruction or doing His work. Therefore they are under the control of the enemy. They are doing no positive good; therefore they are doing incalculable harm. Because their influence is not a savor of life unto life, it is a savor of death unto

THEOCRACY

death. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 304.

Appearances are deceiving. All is not well. There is a spirit of apostasy among us, an exaltation of human authority over that of God:

If all of those who come together for meetings of edification and prayer could be regarded as true worshipers, then might we hope, though much would still remain to be done for us. But it is in vain to deceive ourselves. Things are far from being what the appearance would indicate. From a distant view much may appear beautiful which, upon close examination, will be found full of deformities. The prevailing spirit of our time is that of infidelity and apostasy—a spirit of pretended illumination because of a knowledge of the truth, but in reality of the blindest presumption. There is a spirit of opposition to the plain word of God and to the testimony of His Spirit. There is a spirit of idolatrous exaltation of mere human reason above the revealed wisdom of God.

There are men among us in responsible positions who hold that the opinions of a few conceited philosophers, so called, are more to be trusted than the truth of the Bible, or the testimonies of the Holy Spirit. Such a faith as that of Paul, Peter, or John is considered old-fashioned and insufferable at the present day. It is pronounced absurd, mystical, and unworthy of an intelligent mind.

God has shown me that these men are Hazael's to prove a scourge to our people. They are wise above what is written. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 79.

The great sin which has been entering the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists is the sin of exalting man, and placing him where God should be. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1619.

Human inventions and plans are taking God's place:

Much pride and loftiness and a spirit which desires to rule has been manifested, but very little of the spirit which leads men to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of Him, has been shown. Human inventions and human plans are eclipsing sacred things, and excluding divine

THEOCRACY

instruction. Men are taking the place of God by seeking to assume authority over their fellow-men. Ibid., 1558-1559.

Harmful Results of Usurpation of God's Authority
The inexperienced are led astray when leaders reject God's rule:

Often the professed followers of Christ are found with hearts hardened and eyes blinded, because they do not obey the truth. Selfish motives and purposes take possession of the mind. In their self-confidence they suppose that their way is the way of wisdom. They are not particular to follow exactly the path that God has marked out. They declare that circumstances alter cases, and when Satan tempts them to follow worldly principles, they yield, and, making crooked paths for their feet, they lead others astray. The inexperienced follow where they go, supposing that the judgment of Christians so experienced must be wise. *Review and Herald*, September 14, 1905.

If we follow our own impulses, rejecting God's instructions, the Holy Spirit will be removed from us, and we will fight on the side of the enemy:

As a people we need to study this portion of sacred history: for these experiences are being brought into the lives of the people of God in these last days. A people who have had great light and every evidence of truth are turning away from the light, and following their own impulses. The instruction God has given in the record of His people in early days is not regarded. The mistakes and sins of His early people are being repeated in His people today: warnings and admonitions given in that day are not being heeded in this. Notwithstanding all the warnings that have been given, they see not their danger, but join the ranks of the enemy, and fight on his side. They choose to entertain their own ideas and to follow the suggestions of their own minds. The Lord is greatly dishonored by their course, and He is removing His Spirit from them.

THEOCRACY

“Shall I not judge them for these things,” saith the Lord, “unless they repent?”
The Paulson Collection, 78-79.

Dark hours of trial are before the church because we have not followed the Shepherd’s voice:

Dark hours of trial are before the church because they have not obeyed the warnings and reproofs and counsel of God. What a bewitching power comes upon human minds to do contrary to the oft repeated will of God, and close the eyes and stop the ears, when Jesus is calling to them to hear His voice. He says, *My sheep hear my voice.*” The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 1002.

We weaken our faith and experience when we carry out or sanction the decisions of men contrary to God’s will:

I call upon God’s people to open their eyes. When you sanction or carry out the decisions of men who, as you know, are not in harmony with truth and righteousness, you weaken your own faith and lessen your relish for communion with God. *Ibid.*, 1336.

Institutions managed by man's plans, rather than God's plans, are unacceptable in the divine scales:

Our health institutions are of value in the Lord’s estimation only when He is allowed to preside in their management. If His plans and devisings are regarded as inferior to plans of men. He looks upon these institutions as of no more value than the institutions established and conducted by worldlings. God cannot endorse any institution unless it teaches the living principles of His law and brings its own actions into strict conformity to these precepts. Upon those institutions that are not maintained according to His law He pronounces the sentence, “Unaccepted; weighed in the balances of the sanctuary and found wanting.” *Medical Ministry*, 164.

THEOCRACY

Our weakness and inefficiency are largely the result of looking to man:

Let us, then, remember that our weakness and inefficiency are largely the result of looking to man, of trusting in man to do those things for us that God has promised to do for those who come unto Him. *Review and Herald*, August 14, 1894.

Leaders in God's temple who try to control what the people should have, will be unable to perceive light from darkness, and will go out from us.

In the very courts of the temple scenes will be enacted that few realize. God's people will be proved and tested, that He may discern between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not.

Vengeance will be executed against those who sit in the gate, deciding what the people should have, and what they should not have. These take away the key of knowledge. They refuse to enter in themselves, and those who would enter, they hinder. These bear not the seal of the living God. All who now occupy responsible positions should be solemnly and terribly afraid lest in this time they shall be found as unfaithful stewards. *The Paulson Collection*, 55.

Those who do not repent of believing that God's plans can be improved upon will see the utter failure of their lifework:

Those in positions of responsibility who follow their own way are held responsible for the mistakes of those who are led astray by their example. "Shall I not judge for these things?" God asks.

There are those who think that they can improve upon the plan that the Lord has given; that they can mark out for themselves a course better than the course He has marked out for them. Such ones, choosing the things that be of men, harden their hearts against God's leading, and follow their own way. Unless they repent, the time will come when they will look upon the utter failure of their life-work. Man's wisdom, exercised without Christ's guidance, is a dangerous element. *Review and Herald*, September 14, 1905

THEOCRACY

Those who will not hear God's voice, or do His will, are to be separated entirely from the work:

If those connected with the work of God will not hear His voice and do His will, they should be separated entirely from the work. God does not need the influence of such men. I speak plainly; for it is time that things were called by their right name. Those who love and fear God with all their hearts are the only men that God can trust. But those who have separated their souls from God, should themselves be separated from the work of God, which is so solemn and so important. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1573.

Human Rulership in Ancient Israel

When priests or ecclesiastics rule, they practice and teach the people human wisdom and methods in varying degrees, contrary to God's will, and thus lead the people out of the theocracy into apostasy.

Adam and Eve began life in Eden under the theocracy. But they doubted God's word, and following human and satanic reasoning, they temporarily departed from the theocracy. At times, with the patriarchs, we see the theocracy of God. By the great Exodus movement under Moses, the theocracy was again displayed. Moses, receiving his instructions directly from God, through the Urim and Thummim, and through Aaron, the high priest, became the visible leader in the theocracy. But there was disobedience to God's commands. Rebellion against Moses—God's leader—was rebellion against the mighty God, Jesus, in the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. In a later rebellion, they wanted a king, like the nations around them. God gave them their wish—Samuel anointed Saul king—and the ancient church became ruled by men, and eventually removed itself completely from the theocracy. Finally, the church came to be ruled entirely by men—and even by demons.

The terrible history of the church is clearly written for our admonition. In the Old Testament the apostasy under the hierocracy of corrupt kings, priests, and prophets were responsible for the apostasy against God's plans for His church. The following Scriptures will support how God was finally

THEOCRACY

forced to allow a seventy-year captivity in Babylon for the church's rebellion:

For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed. Isaiah 9:16.

That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets. Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, and prophecy deceits: get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, and cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us. Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. Isaiah 30:9-13.

Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say. Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us. Micah 3:9-11.

Only a small number returned from Babylon under the leadership of Ezra. Nehemiah then becomes another Moses, leading the church back to the theocracy. Those who stayed in Babylon under the rule of men finally tended to become Babylonians.

When “the fullness of the time” was come, as prophesied in Daniel, chapters 8 and 9, Christ was born in Bethlehem. God sent forth His Son in a final effort to restore ancient Israel to the theocracy. The main purpose was to show to the world the character and love of God, by sending His Son as an appeal to the church—an invitation to once again return to the theocracy.

THEOCRACY

God, in his infinite wisdom, chose Israel as the depositary of priceless treasures of truth for all nations. He gave them His law as the standard of the character they were to develop before the world, before angels, and before the unfallen worlds. They were to reveal to the world the laws of the government of heaven. *Southern Watchman*, January 10, 1905.

By their willingness to again come under the theocracy, they would have fulfilled their obligation and responsibility to be God's chosen people.

Through disloyalty, God's chosen people developed a character exactly the opposite of the character He desired them to develop. . . . Like the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, they followed out every imagination of their evil hearts. *Ibid.*

“And he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.” Isaiah 5:2. The people of Christ's day made a greater show of piety than did the Jews of earlier ages, but they were even more destitute of the sweet graces of the Spirit of God. The precious fruits of character that made the life of Joseph so fragrant and beautiful, were not manifest in the Jewish nation.

God in His Son had been seeking fruit, and had found none. Israel was a cumberer of the ground. Its very existence was a curse; for it filled the place in the vineyard that a fruitful tree might fill. It robbed the world of the blessings that God designed to give. The Israelites had misrepresented God among the nations. They were not merely useless, but a decided hindrance. To a great degree their religion was misleading, and wrought ruin instead of salvation. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 215.

But the Israelites fixed their hopes upon worldly greatness. From the time of their entrance to the land of Canaan, they departed from the commandments of

THEOCRACY

God, and followed the ways of the heathen. It was in vain that God sent them warning by His prophets. In vain they suffered the chastisement of heathen oppression. Every reformation was followed by deeper apostasy.

Had Israel been true to God, He could have accomplished His purpose through their honor and exaltation. If they had walked in the ways of obedience. He would have made them "high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour." "All people of the earth," said Moses, "shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee." "The nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say. Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." Deuteronomy 26:19; 28:10; 4:6. But because of their unfaithfulness, God's purpose could be wrought out only through continued adversity and humiliation. *The Desire of Ages*, 28.

Repeated and prolonged refusal of the Jewish leaders to remain in the theocracy had resulted in God's nearly complete withdrawal from the Jewish temple. The Jewish leaders' rejection of the Son of God's personal appeals to return to the theocracy ended in the temple becoming desolate of all divine presence:

But the second temple had not equaled the first in magnificence; nor was it hallowed by those visible tokens of the divine presence which pertained to the first temple. There was no manifestation of supernatural power to mark its dedication. No cloud of glory was seen to fill the newly erected sanctuary. No fire from heaven descended to consume the sacrifice upon its altar. The Shekinah no longer abode between the cherubim in the most holy place; the ark, the mercy seat, and the tables of the testimony were not to be found therein. No voice sounded from heaven to make known to the inquiring priest the will of Jehovah.

For centuries the Jews had vainly endeavored to show wherein the promise of God given by Haggai had been fulfilled; yet pride and unbelief blinded their minds to the true meaning of the prophet's words. The second temple was not honored with the cloud of

THEOCRACY

Jehovah's glory, but with the living presence of One in whom dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily—who was God Himself manifest in the flesh. The "Desire of all nations" had indeed come to His temple when the Man of Nazareth taught and healed in the sacred courts. In the presence of Christ, and in this only, did the second temple exceed the first in glory.

But Israel had put from her the proffered Gift of heaven. With the humble Teacher who had that day passed out from its golden gate, the glory had forever departed from the temple. Already were the Saviour's words fulfilled: "Your house is left unto you desolate." Matthew 23:38. *The Great Controversy*, 24.

Christ Restores the Theocracy

What a tragedy! Because of their unwillingness to come under the theocracy, the Jewish church crucified their Lawgiver and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Jesus was then forced to create the Christian Church. The Jewish Church could no longer be trusted. God established His new church again under the theocracy. Pentecost, especially, placed the disciples under the direct command of God. Their willingness to be made willing to obey all truth without compromise brought the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The apostles accepted God's system of government, and immediately there was a tremendous revival and reformation. Thousands were added to the church! Read the book of Acts.

Always when those who are willing to be made willing to come under the leadership of God—the theocracy—there is also persecution:

Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.
2 Timothy 3:11-13.

All the disciples, except John, suffered martyrdom. At the time of Christ's ministry the church leaders had departed so far from God that they had set up a rival church government in the midst of God's theocracy. This was a hierocracy form of rule where leaders rule under the direction of Satan:

THEOCRACY

But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them. Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Mark 10:42-45.

A Falling Away

Hierocracy principles—kingly power and human wisdom—have no place in God's theocracy. God's principle of rule is not the domination of man over man, but service. The Roman Catholic Church is an example of hierocracy. It is a copy of the church's government in Christ's day:

There is a striking similarity between the Church of Rome and the Jewish Church at the time of Christ's first advent. *The Signs of the Times*, June 30, 1898.

We must pass through the kingly power of the human rulers of the Roman Church during the Dark and Middle Ages to the reformation period. Persecution raged and millions of faithful souls were martyred. Those who were willing to be made willing to obey God without compromise, instead of the rule of man, came under the theocracy. It was their determination to obey God that brought the reformation under Huss, Jerome, Luther, and others, and resulted in the Inquisition.

Kingly Power Interrupts God's Endtime Theocracy

It was God's plan in 1844, and onward to the end of the great controversy, to again establish His church under the theocracy. This was the Seventh-day Adventist Church—the church of Laodicea—the last church. But again, history reveals that kingly power began to develop in the leadership. This was of great concern to our prophet Ellen White. Let us now look at the inspired evidence:

THEOCRACY

Now I want to say, God has not put any kingly power in our ranks to control this or that branch of the work. The work has been greatly restricted by the efforts to control it in every line. *The General Conference Bulletin*, April 3, 1901.

The pope claims authority over the practice of many who do not recognize Christ as our only authority. He places himself in the position of God, and the weak and uninformed are kept from the knowledge that would reveal to them their privileges as children of God. We are to have no kings, no rulers, no popes among us. It is time for us diligently to heed the messages that have brought us out from the world.

In the past, the Lord's work has been carried on altogether too much in accordance with the dictation of human agencies. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, 291.

The Lord has not placed any one of His human agencies under the dictation and control of those who are themselves but erring mortals. He has not placed upon men the power to say, You shall do this, and you shall not do that. But there is a power exercised in Battle Creek that God has not given, and He will judge those who assume this authority. They have somewhat of the same spirit that led Uzzah to lay his hand on the ark to steady it, as though God was not able to care for His sacred symbols. Far less of man's power and authority should be exercised toward God's human agencies. Brethren, leave God to rule. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 347-348.

The question of religious liberty needs to be clearly comprehended by our people in more ways than one. With outstretched arms men are seeking to steady the ark, and the anger of the Lord is kindled against them because they think that their position entitles them to say what the Lord's servants shall do and what they shall not do. They think themselves competent to decide what shall be brought before God's people, and what shall be repressed. The Lord inquires of them, "Who has required this at your hand? Who has given you the burden of being conscience for My people? By what spirit are you guided and controlled when you seek to restrict their liberty? I have not chosen you as I

THEOCRACY

chose Moses —as men through whom I can communicate divine instruction to My people. I have not placed the lines of control in your hands.” . . .

There is an evil, a great evil, that is to be rooted out of all council meetings and board meetings. We are living in perilous times. Men are striving for the control over their fellow men. God is displeased and dishonored. Man is led to fear man rather than God. My brethren, has not the word of God been dismissed from your councils? Have not the words of men had too much power? Has not religious freedom been excluded from your assemblies ? Have you not censured your fellow men, when you yourselves were standing under the censure of God? Take your hands off your brethren. They are not to be under the control of any man or set of men. Men are not to league together to bind their fellow men by rules and restrictions. God knows the characters of men. He sees their weakness, and He has not put into their hands the power that belongs alone to Him. He has not given them the right to say what their fellow men shall do and what they shall not do. . . .

Those who do not know God, who refuse to hear His voice or to be ruled by Him, will stand with cord in hand, ready to bind the Lord’s workers and trammel them in their efforts. . . .

Let God place restrictions on His workers, but let man beware how he places restrictions where God places none. If men are permitted to control the judgment of their fellow men, oppression will result. The cause of God will be bound about. Scheme after scheme that is unjust will be planned. Let not men take on themselves the responsibility of controlling the words and actions of their fellow men. Let our institutions give place to the working of God on human minds. Let God have opportunity to control. Should the principle obtain sway that in speaking and writing, men are to be under the control of human beings, deadly evils would be the result.

God calls upon men to act under His supervision, to accept His standard, to take all their decisions and plans to Him for approval. His holiness. His justice, is to keep them from unprincipled actions. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, 223-226

THEOCRACY

A strange thing has come into our churches. Men who are placed in positions of responsibility that they may be wise helpers to their fellow workers have come to suppose that they were set as kings and rulers in the churches, to say to one brother. Do this; to another. Do that; and to another. Be sure to labor in such and such a way. There have been places where the workers have been told that if they did not follow the instruction of these men of responsibility, their pay from the conference would be withheld. *Testimonies to Ministers, All.*

Over and over again men have said, "The voice of the conference is the voice of God; therefore everything must be referred to the conference. The conference must permit or restrict in the various lines of work." As the matter has been presented to me, there is a narrow compass, and within this narrow compass, all the entrances to which are locked, are those who would like to exercise kingly power. But the work carried on all over the field demands an entirely different course of action. There is need of the laying of a foundation different from the foundation which has been laid in the past. *Manuscript Releases, vol. 13, 192-193.*

Following Human Wisdom

We need to ask ourselves. Why were the following inspired statements written? Some in high places have stated that they were written to the church before the turn of the last century and are not applicable today. If they were applicable to any time in the history of the church, they will be applicable to our final apostasy—the Omega. Before the turn of the century there were less than one hundred thousand members; today with nearly eleven million, the church's situation is desperately worse—nearly every sin and immorality is tolerated without rebuke, but yet many will not tolerate the preaching of present truth from our pulpits.

Who can now feel sure that they are safe in respecting the voice of the General Conference Association? If the people in our churches understood the management of the men who walk in the light of

THEOCRACY

the sparks of their own kindling, would they respect their decisions? I answer. No, not for a moment. . . . Where is the voice, from whence will it come, to whom the people may listen, knowing that it comes from the true shepherd. I am called upon by the Spirit of God to present these things before you, and they are correct to the life, according to the practice of the past few years. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1568.

In the General Conference the counsels of God have been set aside, and the counsels and wisdom of men have been relied upon. God has seen this, and He is displeased. The General Conference—what is it? what does it comprehend? Is it a General Conference, or is it something wrapped up and called by that name? With the exception of a limited number, the people who ought to know are not intelligent in regard to its workings.

A few have managed matters according to their own judgment, and the people at large know scarcely anything of what is being done at the heart of the work, only as it is represented by the men who have not set the Lord ever before them.

As I was made to understand something of the management of the work in this great center, it was ah that I could bear.

My spirit was pained within me, for I had lost confidence in that which I had ever presented before the people as the voice of God to His children. It has not been the voice of God. There has been a lording power exercised over God's heritage in decisions which were not dictated by the Spirit of God. Unconsecrated men who were brought in connection with the work have exercised their own wisdom, and have woven into the work their own unconverted peculiarities. Their own principles have been counterworking the principles of truth and righteousness. We cannot therefore present before the people that the voice of the General Conference in its decisions must move and control them; for its propositions and decisions cannot be accepted. They are not in the right line of progress. God is cropped out of their counsels. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 17, 221-222.

To divide our interest with the leaders of error is

THEOCRACY

aiding the wrong side and giving advantage to our foes. The truth of God knows no compromise with sin, no connection with artifice, no union with transgression. *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 81.

Put Not Your Confidence In Man

Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Jeremiah 9:4-5.

The time has come when it is not safe to put confidence in a friend or a brother. *Review and Herald*, June 3, 1884.

Let those who would follow Christ fully come up to the work, even if it be over the heads of ministers and president. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 369.

God requires certain things of His people; if they say, I will not give up my heart to do this thing, the Lord lets them go on in their supposed wise judgment without heavenly wisdom, until this scripture [Isaiah 28:13] is fulfilled. You are not to say, I will follow the Lord's guidance up to a certain point that is in harmony with my judgment, and then hold fast to your own ideas, refusing to be molded after the Lord's similitude. Let the question be asked. Is this the will of the Lord? *Testimonies to Ministers*, 419.

I think we will institute, at least once each day, a season of prayer for the Lord to set things in order at the center of the work. Matters are being shaped so that every other institution is following in the same course. And the General Conference is itself becoming corrupted with wrong sentiments and principles.

In the working up of plans the same principles are manifest that have controlled at Battle Creek for a long time. *Special Instruction Relating to the Review and*

THEOCRACY

Herald Office, and the Work in Battle Creek, 25.

Special Efforts to Activate the Theocracy

It was God's plan to quickly cut His work short in righteousness soon after 1844. Listen to God speak to us through our inspired prophet Ellen White:

Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith, and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 68. See *The Great Controversy*, 458.

Again, God attempted to bring the leadership and laity under the rule of theocracy in the 1888 General Conference in Minneapolis, but the leadership refused. The rejection of the righteousness by faith message presented by Jones and Waggoner and our prophet, Ellen White, was a refusal of the leadership of God and His theocracy:

An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E.J.] Waggoner and [A.T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 234-235. See *Testimonies to Ministers*, 90-107

THEOCRACY

Rejection of Theocracy Is Apostasy

What has been the result of the rejection of God's rule over His remnant church—His theocracy?—It is apostasy. Men in leadership have always been responsible for the tragic history recorded in the Old Testament and the New Testament:

In the instruction given by our Saviour to His disciples are words of admonition especially applicable to us: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Watch, pray, work—this is the true life of faith. "Pray always"; that is, be ever in the spirit of prayer, and then you will be in readiness for your Lord's coming.

The watchmen are responsible for the condition of the people. While you open the door to pride, envy, doubt, and other sins, there will be strife, hatred, and every evil work. Jesus, the meek and lowly One, asks an entrance as your guest; but you are afraid to bid Him enter. He has spoken to us in both the Old and the New Testament; He is speaking to us still by His Spirit and His providences. His instructions are designed to make men true to God and true to themselves. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 235.

The books of Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and much of the New Testament, were necessitated because of reoccurring apostasy. Inspired writings reveal the condition of the church in Christ's day and compare it to the church at the end-time:

The message of salvation is communicated to men through human agencies. But the Jews had sought to make a monopoly of the truth which is eternal life. They had hoarded the living manna, and it had turned to corruption. The religion which they tried to shut up to themselves became an offense. They robbed God of His glory, and defrauded the world by a counterfeit of the gospel. They had refused to surrender themselves to God for the salvation of the world, and they became agents of Satan for its destruction.

The people whom God had called to be the pillar and ground of the truth had become representatives of Satan. They were doing the work that he desired them

THEOCRACY

to do, taking a course to misrepresent the character of God, and cause the world to look upon Him as a tyrant. The very priests who ministered in the temple had lost sight of the significance of the service they performed. They had ceased to look beyond the symbol to the thing signified. In presenting the sacrificial offerings they were as actors in a play. The ordinances which God Himself had appointed were made the means of blinding the mind and hardening the heart. God could do no more for man through these channels. The whole system must be swept away.

The deception of sin had reached its height. All the agencies for depraving the souls of men had been put in operation. The Son of God, looking upon the world, beheld suffering and misery. With pity He saw how men had become victims of Satanic cruelty. He looked with compassion upon those who were being corrupted, murdered, and lost. They had chosen a ruler who chained them to his car as captives. Bewildered and deceived, they were moving on in gloomy procession toward eternal ruin—to death in which is no hope of life, toward night to which comes no morning. Satanic agencies were incorporated with men. The bodies of human beings, made for the dwelling place of God, had become the habitation of demons. The senses, the nerves, the passions, the organs of men, were worked by supernatural agencies in the indulgence of the vilest lust. The very stamp of demons was impressed upon the countenances of men. Human faces reflected the expression of the legions of evil with which they were possessed. Such was the prospect upon which the world's Redeemer looked. What a spectacle for Infinite Purity to behold! *The Desire of Ages*, 36.

The interest of the people in Christ and His work had steadily increased. They were charmed with His teaching, but they were also greatly perplexed. They had respected the priests and rabbis for their intelligence and apparent piety. In all religious matters they had ever yielded implicit obedience to their authority. Yet they now saw these men trying to cast discredit upon Jesus, a teacher whose virtue and knowledge shone forth the brighter from every assault.

THEOCRACY

They looked upon the lowering countenances of the priests and elders, and there saw discomfiture and confusion. They marveled that the rulers would not believe on Jesus, when His teachings were so plain and simple. They themselves knew not what course to take. With eager anxiety they watched the movements of those whose counsel they had always followed. . . .

"The scribes and the Pharisees," He said, "sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not yet after their works: for they say, and do not." The scribes and Pharisees claimed to be invested with divine authority similar to that of Moses. They assumed to take his place as expounders of the law and judges of the people. As such they claimed from the people the utmost deference and obedience. Jesus bade His hearers do that which the rabbis taught according to the law, but not to follow their example. They themselves did not practice their own teaching. Ibid., 611-612.

THEOCRACY

CHAPTER 2

REPEATING THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT ISRAEL

I was shown that the follies of Israel in the days of Samuel will be repeated unless men have greater humility and less confidence in themselves, and greater confidence in the Lord God of Israel, the Ruler of His people. The ability and wisdom of any man is only derived from God. Connected with God, his life bound up with God, he will work the works of God. God has wisdom underived. He is the Infinite One; the human is finite, erring. He is the Fountain of the light and life and glory of the world. One leak will sink the mightiest vessel that ever rode the proud ocean; so will the church make shipwreck amid the perils of these last days unless the holy Captain of her salvation shall not only serve as Captain but Pilot.

We have a living Head, and every man in office where sacred responsibilities are involved must inquire at every step, "Is this the way of the Lord?" He must look constantly and continuously to Jesus for His guidance, and maintain principle at any cost. It is not what finite men can do, but what God can do through finite men who are teachable, humble, unselfish, and sanctified. We cannot put the least confidence in human ability, unless the divine power cooperate with the human. When men make God their trust, it will be evidenced by meekness, by much prayer, by love, by Christian politeness and genuine courtesy to all people, and by great caution in their position and movements. They will reveal dependence upon God, and give evidence that they have a firm platform of solid, uncontaminated principle beneath their feet. These men will show that they have the mind of Christ.

There is altogether too much self-confidence and self-sufficiency, altogether too much pride of heart and self-esteem, without giving glory to God. God has given minds and talents to men only in trust, on trial, to test and prove them to see if they will work in His way and do His will, and put not confidence in themselves alone. If they do not stand the test, they are false to His kingdom. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 919-920

THEOCRACY

The question must now be asked. Is the Seventh-day Adventist Church following the very same apostasy of the ancient church? The answer must be Yes, for our history is the same as the ancient church that refused the theocracy—God's right to rule and direct His church:

I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. Grievous and presumptuous sins have dwelt among us. And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders.

The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power. Doubt, and even disbelief of the testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus. Ministers who preach self instead of Christ would have it thus.

The *Testimonies* are unread and unappreciated. God has spoken to you. Light has been shining from His Word and from the *Testimonies*, and both have been slighted and disregarded. The result is apparent in the lack of purity and devotion and earnest faith among us. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 217.

Our people are making very dangerous mistakes. We cannot praise and flatter any man without doing him a great wrong; those who do this will meet with serious disappointment. They trust too fully to finite man and not enough to God, who never errs. The eager desire to urge men into public notice is an evidence of backsliding from God and of friendship with the world. It is the spirit which characterizes the present day. It shows that men have not the mind of Jesus; spiritual blindness and poverty of soul have come upon them. Often persons of inferior minds look away from Jesus to a merely human standard, by which they are not made conscious of their own littleness, and hence have an undue estimate of their own capabilities and endowments. There is among us as a people an idolatry

THEOCRACY

of human instrumentalities and mere human talent, and these even of a superficial character. We must die to self and cherish humble, childlike faith. God's people have departed from their simplicity. They have not made God their strength, and they are weak and faint, spiritually.

I have been shown that the spirit of the world is fast leavening the church. You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. There is the same falling away from your holy calling as God's peculiar people. You are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Your concord with unbelievers has provoked the Lord's displeasure. You know not the things that belong to your peace, and they are fast being hid from your eyes. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe. *Ibid.*, 75-76.

God has called His church in this day, as He called ancient Israel, to stand as a light in the earth. By the mighty cleaver of truth, the messages of the first, second, and third angels, He has separated them from the churches and from the world to bring them into a sacred nearness to Himself. He has made them the depositaries of His law and has committed to them the great truths of prophecy for this time. Like the holy oracles committed to ancient Israel, these are a sacred trust to be communicated to the world. The three angels of Revelation 14 represent the people who accept the light of God's messages and go forth as His agents to sound the warning throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Christ declares to His followers: "Ye are the light of the world." To every soul that accepts Jesus the cross of Calvary speaks: "Behold the worth of the soul: 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'" Nothing is to be permitted to hinder this work. It is the all-important work for time; it is to be far-reaching as eternity. The love that Jesus manifested for the souls of men in the sacrifice which He made for their redemption, will actuate all His followers. *Ibid.*, 455-56. See *ibid.*, vol. 5, 94, 160.

THEOCRACY

Even Worse Than Ancient Israel

The disobedience of the ancient church has become the same disobedience of the remnant church. Ellen White states that it is worse than the ancient church, because of the greater light and message given to the Seventh-day Adventist people in the end-time—because of our disregard of the Gift of Prophecy:

I saw that many who profess to believe the truth for these last days think it strange that the children of Israel murmured as they journeyed; that after the wonderful dealings of God with them, they should be so ungrateful as to forget what He had done for them. Said the angel: “Ye have done worse than they.” I saw that God has given His servants the truth so clear, so plain, that it cannot be resisted. Wherever they go, they have certain victory. Their enemies cannot get round the convincing truth. Light has been shed so clear that the servants of God can stand up anywhere and let truth, clear and connected, bear away the victory. This great blessing has not been prized, or even realized. If any trial arises, some begin to look back and think they have a hard time. Some of the professed servants of God do not know what purifying trials are. They sometimes make trials for themselves, imagine trials, and are so easily discouraged, so easily hurt, self-dignity is so quick to feel, that they injure themselves, injure others, and injure the cause. Satan magnifies their trials and puts thoughts into their minds that if given way to, will destroy their influence and usefulness. *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 129.

Does that make our apostasy, our insubordination to God’s rule, “worse than they”?—Inspiration tells us that it is so. How does the rejection now of God’s theocracy compare with the rejection by the church in Christ’s day?

We want to understand the time in which we live. We do not half understand it. We do not half take it in. My heart trembles in me when I think of what a foe we have to meet, and how poorly we are prepared to meet him. The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, have been presented before me again and again to illustrate

THEOCRACY

the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ—how the enemy sought every occasion to take control of the minds of the Jews, and today he is seeking to blind the minds of God's servants, that they may not be able to discern the precious truth. *Selected Messages*, book 1,406.

The Final Apostasy—the Omega

Then, according to the above, the same method of church government would exist in both eras. Men would rule over God's heritage—His people—the same as the high priest and the Sanhedrin did in the time of Christ. If this is our situation now, then we are told that the final apostasy will be the Omega—and it will be of a most startling nature (see *Selected Messages*, book 1,193-206), and would continue and get worse until the coming of the Lord. See *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7,57-58.

What would the Omega accomplish in the final apostasy? To understand this we must turn to the experience of the church at the turn of the century—the Alpha of Apostasy. The Alpha of Apostasy was defeated because most of the leaders and pastors aligned themselves behind the prophet of the Lord, Ellen White. She describes what would have happened to the church if the Alpha of Apostasy had succeeded:

Few can discern the result of entertaining the sophistries advocated by some at this time. But the Lord has lifted the curtain, and has shown me the result that would follow. The spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give John to give to His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science.

THEOCRACY

In a vision of the night I was shown distinctly that these sentiments have been looked upon by some as the grand truths that are to be brought in and made prominent at the present time. I was shown a platform, braced by solid timbers —the truths of the Word of God. Someone high in responsibility in the medical work was directing this man and that man to loosen the timbers supporting this platform. Then I heard a voice saying, “Where are the watchmen that ought to be standing on the walls of Zion? Are they asleep? This foundation was built by the Master Worker, and will stand storm and tempest. Will they permit this man to present doctrines that deny the past experience of the people of God? The time has come to take decided action.”

The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines, which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established.

Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.

Who has authority to begin such a movement? We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this

THEOCRACY

truth?

I hesitated and delayed about the sending out of that which the Spirit of the Lord impelled me to write. I did not want to be compelled to present the misleading influence of these sophistries. But in the providence of God, the errors that have been coming in *must be met. Selected Messages*, book 1,203-205. (Emphasis in the original.)

Elder Robert Pierson outlined the Omega in an article in the *Ministry Magazine*. Let us explore more widely the ramifications of the Omega as given by Elder Robert Pierson in 1977. His ten points, taken from *Selected Messages*, book 1,193-208, need to be thought through now, carefully and prayerfully:

1. The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Ibid., 204.
2. It will “make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin.” Ibid.
3. Our religion would be changed. Ibid.
4. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Ibid., 205.
5. There would be a “supposition” that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist of giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith. Ibid., 204.
6. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. Ibid.
7. It would seek to weaken the preaching of the Second Advent by teaching that “the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention.” Ibid.
8. Books of a new order would be written. Ibid.
9. A new organization would be established. Ibid.
10. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. Ibid., 205.

Now go back over these points again. Study them carefully and prayerfully. You may have to meet them sooner than you expect.

THEOCRACY

Elder Pierson made these statements in 1977, during his term as General Conference president. Do you think he was familiar with the conditions in the church?

In addition to these ten characteristics of the Omega, we now have the celebration movement that was prophesied to appear just before the close of probation. See *Selected Messages*, book 2,35-37.

The Omega Implements the Alpha

Let us now examine carefully what would have happened if the Alpha of Apostasy had succeeded. First of all, the platform of truth, which our prophet tells us was built by the Master Worker, Jesus Himself, with solid timbers—the pillars of our faith, such as the Sabbath, the state of the dead, the sanctuary, and the three angels' messages—would be changed.

If the Alpha of Apostasy had succeeded, the Seventh-day Adventist Church would have lost its status as the remnant church of God in the final generation. But now we are living in the very end-time when the Omega of Apostasy was to appear. It would be of a most startling nature. Everything the prophet described would have happened in the Alpha is now taking place in the church in the Omega.

The New Theology

Elder Pierson has drawn a very clear picture in his ten identifying marks of the Omega. There has been a reorganization, our sanitariums have become hospitals, which are now deeply in debt, and one has now embraced—yes, amalgamated—into the Catholic hospital system in Colorado. Our educational system, given to us by God, has adopted the system of the world through accreditation. Intellectual philosophy has replaced the emphasis on the doctrines, the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. This is changing our religion. Today, a false gospel is being preached in many of our pulpits. It is called the New Theology — saved *in* sin, instead of *from* sin:

THEOCRACY

Unsanctified ministers are arraying themselves against God.

They are praising Christ and the god of this world in the samebreath. While professedly they receive Christ, they embrace Barabbas, and by their actions say, “Not this man, but Barabbas.”

Let all who read these lines, take heed. Satan has made his boast of what he can do. He thinks to dissolve the unity which Christ prayed might exist in His church. He says, “I will go forth and be a lying spirit to deceive those that I can, to criticize, and condemn, and falsify.” Let the son of deceit and false witness be entertained by a church that has had great light, great evidence, and that church will discard the message the Lord has sent, and receive the most unreasonable assertions and false suppositions and false theories. Satan laughs at their folly, for he knows what truth is. Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan. If doubts and unbelief are cherished, the faithful ministers will be removed from the people who think they know so much. “If thou hadst known,” said Christ, “even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 409-410.

I saw that Satan was working through agents in a number of ways. He was at work through ministers who have rejected the truth and are given over to strong delusions to believe a lie that they might be damned. *Early Writings*, 43-44.

This New Theology, with its concept of saved while sinning, destroys and makes of none effect the truth of heavenly origin.

The Very Last Deception

The pastors, leaders and laity who accept it, make of none effect the Spirit of Prophecy, which is Satan’s very last deception for us as a people. His success challenges our right to be the remnant church:

Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious —to

THEOCRACY

lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony.

There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded. *Selected Messages*, book 1,48.

Desecrating the Sabbath

Also, the Sabbath would be lightly regarded. We are told that now nearly eleven million souls have placed their names on the church rolls through baptism, but how many keep Sabbath according to Isaiah 58:13-14?

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

In most cases, the sacredness of the Sabbath has not been taught to our converts. Those who do not keep Sabbath as related in Isaiah 58:13 will one day receive the mark of the beast. This test of true Sabbathkeeping will come to every Seventh-day Adventist. This will be the final test for every member:

This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the

THEOCRACY

living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast (Letter 11, 1890). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 976.

Yes, the Sabbath question—including how it is to be kept—is to be the final issue in the final conflict for the church and for the world:

In establishing new churches, ministers should give careful instruction as to the proper observance of the Sabbath. We must be guarded, lest the lax practices that prevail among Sundaykeepers shall be followed by those who profess to observe God's holy rest day. The line of demarcation is to be made clear and distinct between those who bear the mark of God's kingdom and those who bear the sign of the kingdom of rebellion.

Far more sacredness is attached to the Sabbath than is given it by many professed Sabbathkeepers. The Lord has been greatly dishonored by those who have not kept the Sabbath according to the commandment, either in the letter or in the spirit. He calls for a reform in the observance of the Sabbath.

At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said: "Remember." He knew that amid the multitude of cares and perplexities man would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirement of the law, or would forget its sacred importance. Therefore He said: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." Exodus 20:8.

All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment. We are not merely to observe the Sabbath as a legal matter. We are to understand its spiritual bearing upon all the transactions of life. All who regard the Sabbath as a sign between them and God, showing that He is the God who sanctifies them, will represent the principles of His government. They will bring into daily practice the laws of His kingdom. Daily it will be their prayer that the sanctification of the Sabbath may rest upon them. Every day they will have the companionship of Christ and will exemplify the perfection of His character. Every day their light will shine forth to others in good works.

In all that pertains to the success of God's work,

THEOCRACY

the very first victories are to be won in the home life. Here the preparation for the Sabbath must begin. Throughout the week let parents remember that their home is to be a school in which their children shall be prepared for the courts above. Let their words be right words. No words which their children should not hear are to escape their lips. Let the spirit be kept free from irritation. Parents, during the week live as in the sight of a holy God, who has given you children to train for Him. Train for Him the little church in your home, that on the Sabbath all may be prepared to worship in the Lord's sanctuary. Each morning and evening present your children to God as His blood-bought heritage. Teach them that it is their highest duty and privilege to love and serve God. *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 353-354.

Books of a New Order

Tragically, this New Theology preaching would weaken the preaching of the soon coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Then the scenes of the final events now bursting upon us, would not be of sufficient importance to be given by many of our ministers. Books of a new order would be published by our presses. When we walk into our Adventist Book Centers, we can quickly see books of a new order. Jack Sequeria's books are there, including *Beyond Belief*. We have also found there *Confession of a Nomad*, which promotes Sunday worship, was printed by Pacific Press and sponsored by the Ministerial Department of the General Conference. There have been and are many others.

Nothing would stand in the way of this new movement. Today, many of those who hold, preach, and live the real Seventh-day Adventist message are denied the pulpits of our churches. Yes, we must confess, this is the Omega of Apostasy. There is now a very contentious argument between leadership, pastors, and those who stand faithfully for the landmarks—the pillars of our faith. Leadership contends that there is apostasy in the church, but that the church is not in apostasy.

THEOCRACY

CHAPTER 3

APOSTASY IN THE CHURCH, OR THE CHURCH IN APOSTASY?

When we review the history of the church and its leaders and priests in the Old Testament and the New, we must ask the question. In the seventy-year captivity in Babylon, was there apostasy in the church or was the church in apostasy? Was the church in apostasy in Christ's day? Anytime the leaders and pastors allow the apostasy to continue without strong opposition to that apostasy, then it must be decided that the church is in apostasy. Let us not forget that everything that happened in the church in Christ's day would be repeated in the church in the last days. We are told by our prophet that the church today is retreating toward Egypt, and that we have done worse than the ancient church, because of the tremendous light God has bestowed upon His remnant people in this end-time through the great gift of the Spirit of Prophecy. See *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 129; *ibid.*, vol. 5, 75-76, 217.

All this inspired evidence shows that we are in the Omega of Apostasy, which means the structured church is not following Christ and is thus not under the theocracy.

The experience of the past will be repeated. In the future, Satan's superstitions will assume new forms. Errors will be presented in a pleasing and flattering manner. False theories, clothed with garments of light, will be presented to God's people.

Thus Satan will try to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Most seducing influences will be exerted; minds will be hypnotized. *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 293.

The Cable Cut

When the leaders and pastors tolerate heresy and error to be fed to our people, there is rebellion; the cable is cut, and God is not allowed to direct and lead His people:

The solemn question should come home to every member of our churches, How are we standing before God, as the professed followers of Jesus Christ? . . . Spiritual death has come upon the people that should

THEOCRACY

be manifesting life and zeal, purity and consecration, by the most earnest devotion to the cause of truth. The facts concerning the real condition of the professed people of God, speak more loudly than their profession, and make it evident that some power has cut the cable that anchored them to the Eternal Rock, and that they are drifting away to sea, without chart or compass. *Review and Herald*, July 24, 1888.

Changing Leaders

When the cable is cut because of our rebellion, it is because man has chosen to come under the rule of men. They have chosen to no longer be under the theocracy. How could it happen? This inspired statement will explain:

If you indulge stubbornness . . . these last days will encircle you, and you will change leaders, and not know that you have done so. *Review and Herald*, December 16, 1890.

Rebellious leaders, pastors, and laity do not recognize their deplorable lack of spiritual vitality:

The enemy is preparing for his last campaign against the church. He has so concealed himself from view that many can hardly believe that he exists, much less can they be convinced of his amazing activity and power. They have to a great extent forgotten his past record; and when he makes another advance move, they will not recognize him as their enemy, that old serpent, but they will consider him a friend, one who is doing a good work. Boasting of their independence they will, under his specious, bewitching influence, obey the worst impulses of the human heart and yet believe that God is leading them. Could their eyes be opened to distinguish their captain, they would see that they are not serving God, but the enemy of all righteousness. They would see that their boasted independence is one of the heaviest fetters Satan can rivet on unbalanced minds. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 294.

The sensibilities of a large number seemed to be benumbed in regard to spiritual and eternal things, while their minds seemed all awake to their worldly interests. Many were cherishing idols in their hearts and were practicing iniquity which separated them

THEOCRACY

from God and caused them to be bodies of darkness. I saw but few who stood in the light, having discernment and spirituality to discover these stumbling blocks and remove them out of the way. Men who stand in very responsible positions at the heart of the work are asleep. Satan has paralyzed them in order that his plans and devices may not be discerned, while he is active to ensnare, deceive, and destroy. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 439.

Men of experience have seen stealthy hands slipping the bolts that Satan might enter; yet they have held their peace with apparent indifference as to the results. Some have been glad to see this, as it seemed an extenuation of their past neglect, which made it a necessity to call for others to fill the posts of responsibility that they had abused or neglected. This lack of watchfulness on the part of these newer incumbents seemed to excuse the former for their own want of faithfulness, as it showed that others were fully as derelict in duty. These persons do not realize that God holds them responsible for every advantage gained by the foe who is admitted to the fort. The desolation and ruin following lie at the door of the unfaithful sentinels, who, by their neglect, become agents in the hands of the adversary to win souls to destruction. Men in responsible positions should seek wisdom and guidance of God, and not trust to their own judgment and knowledge. Like Solomon they should earnestly pray for faith and light, and God will give them freely of His abundant supply. *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 211-212.

The church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst. . . .

What a terrible thing it is to exclude Christ from His own temple! What a loss to the church!

Our Redeemer sends His messengers to bear a testimony to His people. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." But many refuse to receive Him, because they fear that He will be an expensive guest. The Holy Spirit waits to soften and subdue hearts, but they are not willing to open the door and let the Saviour in; for they fear that He will require something from them. And so Jesus of Nazareth passes

THEOCRACY

by. He longs to bestow on them His rich blessings and gifts of grace, but they refuse to accept them. *Notebook Leaflets*, vol. 1,99-100.

Why the Long Delay?

We have read where God was willing to cut His work short in righteousness soon after 1844 if the leaders and laity would have accepted the experience of the three angels' messages—victory over sin by the power of the Holy Spirit, which brings the experience of justification and sanctification to the soul. Christ delays His coming because so many of us are not ready:

I saw that watch after watch was in the past. Because of this, should there be a lack of vigilance? Oh, no! There is the greater necessity of unceasing watchfulness, for now the moments are fewer than before the passing of the first watch.

Now the period of waiting is necessarily shorter than at first. If we watched with unabated vigilance then, how much more need of double watchfulness in the second watch. The passing of the second watch has brought us to the third, and now it is inexcusable to abate our watchfulness. The third watch calls for threefold earnestness. To become impatient now would be to lose all our earnest, persevering watching heretofore. The long night of gloom is trying; but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God's unwillingness to have His people perish has been the reason for so long delay. But the coming of the morning to the faithful, and of the night to the unfaithful, is right upon us. By waiting and watching, God's people are to manifest their peculiar character, their separation from the world.

By our watching position we are to show that we are truly strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. The difference between those who love the world and those who love Christ is so plain as to be unmistakable.

THEOCRACY

While worldlings are all earnestness and ambition to secure earthly treasure, God's people are not conformed to the world, but show by their earnest, watching, waiting position that they are transformed; that their home is not in this world, but that they are seeking a better country, even a heavenly. *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 193-194.

Insubordination

We are not ready and thus are still in this world because of our rebellion against Christ's rule—the theocracy. Yes, insubordination to the theocracy has delayed Christ's return these many years:

We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel: but for Christ's sake. His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action. *Evangelism*, 696.

Our insubordination is the result of our failure to accept the message of righteousness by faith of 1888—the third angel's message. Righteousness is right doing by faith in Christ's leadership, and by faith in His enabling grace to obey Him. Our ongoing insubordination—refusal of the theocracy—is *unrighteousness by lack of faith*.

Christ and His righteousness —let this be our platform, the very life of our faith.

Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, "It is the third angel's message in verity."

This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person. His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless

THEOCRACY

gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent.

This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. *Evangelism*, 190-191.

This message was given in 1888 and was rejected by many of the leaders and pastors and laity. See *Testimonies to Ministers*, 90-107; *Selected Messages*, book 1, 234-235.

Righteousness by Faith Includes

Self-Denial and Character Perfection

None of us are living Christians unless we are continually practicing self-denial for the finishing of God's work, and are daily advancing in perfection by the Holy Spirit's power working in our lives:

That belief that is laid aside when convenient, and put on and off like a garment, is not the religion of Christ, but a spurious article that will not bear the tests even of this world. *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 190.

Every passing hour of the present is shaping our future life. These moments spent in carelessness, in self-pleasing, as if of no value, are deciding our everlasting destinies. The words we utter today will go on echoing when time shall be no more. The deeds done today are transferred to the books of heaven, just as the features are transferred by the artist onto the polished plate.

They will determine our destiny for eternity, for bliss or eternal loss and agonizing remorse. Character cannot be changed when Christ comes, nor just as a man is about to die. Character building must be done in this life. We fear that repentance will come to the self-indulgent, tainted soul ah too late. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 429[^]-30.

A perfect character *must* be developed now—before Jesus comes:

A character formed according to the divine likeness is the only treasure that we can take from this world to the next. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 332.

THEOCRACY

The Three Angels' Messages

We have truly misunderstood the three angels' messages. Those angels are only symbols of a people who have victory over every sin and temptation, and who with the power of the Holy Spirit and with a Christlike lifestyle, take the everlasting gospel to the world in the loud cry of the third angel:

Christ is coming the second time, with power unto salvation. To prepare human beings for this event. He has sent the first, second, and third angels' messages. These angels represent those who receive the truth, and with power open the gospel to the world. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 978-979.

Justification

Justification can never take place in any human heart until there is sorrow for sin, a sorrow not to be repented of:

Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 2 Corinthians 7:9- 10.

Repentance is turning from self to Christ. *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 87.

This repentance is a gift. "It is the virtue that goes forth from Christ, that leads to genuine repentance." *Steps to Christ*, 26.

Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. *Our High Calling*, 51.

None but God can subdue the pride of man's heart. We cannot save ourselves. We cannot regenerate ourselves. . . .

What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 456.

THEOCRACY

We are justified on the condition of future obedience:

You will come from a concentrated study of the theme of redemption strengthened and ennobled. Your comprehension of the character of God will be deepened; and with the whole plan of salvation clearly defined in your mind, you will be better able to fulfill your divine commission. From a sense of thorough conviction, you can then testify to men of the immutable character of the law manifested by the death of Christ on the cross, the malignant nature of sin, and the righteousness of God in justifying the believer in Jesus, on condition of his future obedience to the statutes of God's government in heaven and earth. *Review and Herald*, April 24, 1888.

Sanctification Is Living Justification

Sanctification is the *obedient* walk. Christ's righteousness does not cover known, unforsaken sin:

Why cannot those who claim to understand the Scriptures, see that God's requirement under grace is just the same He made in Eden—perfect obedience to His law. . . . God requires of all His subjects obedience, entire obedience to all His commandments. He demands now as ever perfect righteousness as the only title to heaven. . . . His righteousness is imputed only to the obedient. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1072.

There is no provision made for willful blindness. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 1145.

When we bring our lives to complete obedience to the law of God . . . God will work in our behalf. This is a righteousness of faith . . . This obedience works out for us the divine will. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 1118.

Satan leads many to believe that God will overlook their unfaithfulness in the minor affairs of life; but ... He will in no wise sanction or tolerate evil. . . . God will not cast off those who have been deceived and tempted and betrayed into sin, but who have returned

THEOCRACY

unto Him with true repentance. *The Great Controversy*, 620-621.

Imputed righteousness is associated with transformation:

Jesus loves His children, even if they err. They belong to Jesus and we are to treat them as the purchase of the blood of Jesus Christ. Any unreasonable course pursued toward them is written in the books as against Jesus Christ. He keeps His eye upon them, and when they do their best, calling upon God for His help, be assured the service will be accepted, although imperfect. Jesus is perfect. Christ's righteousness is imputed unto them, and He will say. Take away the filthy garments from him, and clothe him with change of raiment. Jesus makes up for our unavoidable deficiencies. Where Christians are faithful to each other, true and loyal to the Captain of the Lord's host, never betraying trusts into the enemy's hands, they will be transformed into Christ's character. Jesus will abide in their hearts by faith. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, 184.

Both justification and sanctification are "by grace ... through faith." Ephesians 2:8:

When through repentance and faith we accept Christ as our Saviour, the Lord pardons our sins, and remits the penalty prescribed for the transgression of the law. The sinner then stands before God as a just person; he is taken into favor with Heaven, and through the Spirit has fellowship with the Father and the Son.

Then there is yet another work to be accomplished, and this is of a progressive nature. The soul is to be sanctified through the truth. And this also is accomplished through faith.

For it is only the grace of Christ, which we receive through faith, that the character can be transformed. *Selected Messages*, book 3, 191.

But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for

THEOCRACY

man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul. *Ibid.*, book 1, 366.

According to the above, when we are in known disobedience to Christ's directives as to how to operate His work, and how to live for Him, we are not justified nor sanctified, and we are not under His theocracy:

In order to let Jesus into our hearts, we must stop sinning.
The Signs of the Times, March 3, 1890.

Dead to Self

How is the obedient walk attained? We must die fully to self and do so daily:

Oh, how many flatter themselves that they have goodness and righteousness ... In their gross darkness they view themselves with complacency; but let the law of God be revealed to their consciences . . . and they would see that they are sold under sin and must die to the carnal mind. Self must be slain. *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 475.

Self-annihilation is a hard process, for self struggles for existence, and dies hard. *The Upward Look*, 322.

The battle which we have to fight—the greatest battle that was ever fought by man—is the surrender of self to the will of God. *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 141.

Why is it so hard to lead a self-denying, humble life? Because professed Christians are not dead to the world. It is easy living after we are dead. *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 131.

Those who trust in self are easily defeated. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1102.

There are few really consecrated men among us, few who have fought and conquered in the battle with self. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 82.

THEOCRACY

Sanctification and justification are inseparable. Some have tried to separate them by justifying man in sin and making sanctification a very little thing to be bestowed on man just before the second coming of Christ. This error is the teaching of the New Theology, and all who believe they cannot overcome by the Holy Spirit's power are believing in the New Theology. This is deadly heresy, for God says the truth is otherwise.

Kept From Falling

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Jude 24.

Listen to these powerful, inspired statements:

How can we reach the perfection specified by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—our Great Teacher? Can we meet His requirement and attain to so lofty a standard? We can, else Christ would not have enjoined us to do so. He is our righteousness. In His humanity He has gone before us and wrought out for us perfection of character. We are to have the faith in Him that works by love and purifies the soul. Perfection of character is based upon that which Christ is to us. If we have constant dependence on the merits of our Saviour, and walk in His footsteps, we shall be like Him, pure and undefiled.

Our Saviour does not require impossibilities of any soul. He expects nothing of His disciples that He is not willing to give them grace and strength to perform. He would not call upon them to be perfect if He had not at His command every perfec-

tion of grace to bestow on the ones upon whom He would confer so high and holy a privilege. He has assured us that He is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children.

Our work is to strive to attain in our sphere of action the perfection that Christ in His life on the earth attained in every phase of character. He is our example. In all things we are to strive to honor God in character. In falling day by day so far short of the divine requirements, we are endangering our soul's salvation. We need to understand and appreciate the

THEOCRACY

privilege with which Christ invests us, and to show our determination to reach the highest standard. We are to be wholly dependent on the power that He has promised to give us. *That I May Know Him*, 130.

It is not enough that now and then you offer a prayer, and now and then deal righteously. You are to have the attributes of an abiding Christ working out in your life constantly. How many of us have this experience? Yet we may have it, and having it, we will be the happiest people on the face of the earth. With Christ's Word abiding in us, we shall give evidence that we have wholly received Him who in His humanity lived a sinless life. In the strength of divinity we shall overcome every tendency to evil. . . .

Christ took humanity and bore the hatred of the world that He might show men and women that they could live without sin, that their words, their actions, their spirit, might be sanctified to God. We can be perfect Christians if we will manifest this power in our lives. When the light of heaven rests upon us continually, we shall represent Christ. *The Upward Look*, 303.

Those who acknowledge reproof and correction as from God, and are thus enabled to see and correct their errors, are learning precious lessons, even from their mistakes. Their apparent defeat is turned into victory. They stand trusting not to their own strength, but to the strength of God. *Review and Herald*, December 16, 1890.

Perfect Overcomers

God demands of us perfect obedience to His law—the expression of His character. . . . This law is the echo of God's voice, saying to us. Holier, yes, holier still. Desire the fullness of the grace of Christ; yea, long—hunger and thirst—after righteousness. The promise is, "Ye shall be filled." . . .

It is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, having

THEOCRACY

escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. God has plainly stated that He requires us to be perfect; and because He requires this. He has made provision that we may be partakers of the divine nature. Only thus can we gain success in our striving for eternal life. The power is given by Christ. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." John 1:12. *Selected Messages*, book 3, 202- 203.

Christians, who understand the mystery of godliness, who have a high and sacred sense of the atonement, who realize in the sufferings of Christ in the wilderness a victory gained for them . . . would be greatly strengthened by earnestly and frequently comparing their lives with the true standard, the life of Christ. . . . The amusements which lead to levity and forgetfulness of God, can find no sanction in the example of Christ, the world's Redeemer, the only safe pattern for man to copy if he would overcome as Christ overcame. . . . Man now has the advantage over Adam in his warfare with Satan; for he has Adam's experience in disobedience and his consequent fall to warn him to shun his example. Man also has Christ's example in overcoming appetite, and the manifold temptations of Satan, and in vanquishing the mighty foe upon every point, and coming off victor in every contest.

The habits of eating and drinking are the most difficult to overcome because Satan binds you securely to his chariot car.

All who give themselves to the service of Christ will follow the example of Christ, and will be perfect overcomers. *Sons and Daughters of God*, 141.

Here lies the secret of a full surrender and true conversion:

The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God and being clothed with humility, possessing that love that is pure, peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of gentleness and good fruits, is not an easy attainment. And yet it is his privilege and his duty to be a perfect overcomer here. The soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in knowledge and true holiness. The holy life and character of Christ

THEOCRACY

is a faithful example. His confidence in His heavenly Father was unlimited.

His obedience and submission were unreserved and perfect. *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 106-107.

By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 312.

Say not with a smile, "It is not expected that any man can be perfect;" that you do not claim to be inspired. This is a pitiable mask. What is the need of the Holy Spirit, if it teaches you only what your finite judgment already assents to? In His providence, God has followed up His written Word with testimonies of warning to lead you to the truths of His Word. . . He has given you warnings and reproofs to save you. But you have made light of the warnings and entreaties, and have refused to heed them. *Review and Herald*, December 16, 1890.

Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 214.

Those who are preaching and writing that sin is a broken relationship with God and not transgression of the law, that conversion is to let Christ do the driving while they relax in the other seat, that trying to keep the commandments is legalism, are preaching the counterfeit doctrine of salvation. This counterfeit gospel has spread through our ranks by tapes, books, and preaching, and will be responsible for many of our people being lost for eternity. Those responsible for such doctrine do not believe the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy. What a tragedy!

THEOCRACY

Man Works and God Works

Will man take hold of divine power, and with determination and perseverance resist Satan, as Christ has given him example in His conflict with the foe in the wilderness of temptation?

God cannot save man against his will from the power of Satan's artifices. Man must work with his human power, aided by the divine power of Christ, to resist and to conquer at any cost to himself. In short, man must overcome as Christ overcame. And then, through the victory that it is his privilege to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, he may become an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ. This could not be the case if Christ alone did all the overcoming. Man must do his part; he must be victor on his own account, through the strength and grace that Christ gives him. Man must be a co-worker with Christ in the labor of overcoming, and then he will be partaker with Christ in His glory.

The Saviour overcame to show man how he may overcome. All the temptations of Satan, Christ met with the Word of God. By trusting in God's promises, He received power to obey God's commandments, and the tempter could gain no advantage. *Sons and Daughters of God*, 156.

Those who come out from the world, to stand distinct from worldlings in words and works, those who realize that it is an honor to bear God's sign, will receive power to become His sons. The Lord will have men who can be depended on. No one will enter the courts above who does not bear the sign of God. Those who in this sin-cursed earth bear this sign in holy boldness, looking upon it as an honor, will be recognized and honored by Christ in the courts above. . . .

In a little while every one who is a child of God will have His seal placed upon him. O that it may be placed upon our foreheads! *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 969.

Human effort will be efficient in the work of God just according to the consecrated devotion of the worker—by revealing the power of the grace of Christ to transform the life. We are to be distinguished from

THEOCRACY

the world because God has placed His seal upon us, because He manifests in us His own character of love. .

..
God can use every person just in proportion as He can put His Spirit into the soul temple. The work that He will accept is the work that reflects His image. *The Ministry of Healing*, 37.

We cannot do anything to be saved, but if we do not do something, we shall be lost! We do not obey to be saved, we do what God has asked us to do because He is saving us. We love Him so much we keep His commandments because that is what He wants:

In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom. The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself. True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God. *The Desire of Ages*, 466.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1 John 2:3^1.

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. . . . Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 1 John 3:4, 9.

THEOCRACY

Surrendering the Will

Pure religion has to do with the will. ... It is for you to yield up your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession and work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your whole nature will then be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ, and even your thoughts will be subject to Him. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 513-514.

Until the soul-temple is fully surrendered to God, it is the stronghold of the enemy. *Review and Herald*, November 28, 1899.

Everything depends on the right action of the will. Desires for goodness and purity are right, so far as they go; but if we stop here, they avail nothing. Many will go down to ruin while hoping and desiring to overcome their evil propensities. They do not yield the will to God. They do not *choose* to serve Him. *The Ministry of Healing*, 176. (Emphasis in the original.)

When the will is fully surrendered—moment by moment—God has the life because He has the mind and thoughts: What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. *Steps to Christ*, 47.

The will must be brought into complete harmony with the will of God. When this is done, no ray of light that shines into the heart and chambers of the mind will be resisted. The soul will not be barricaded with prejudice, calling light darkness and darkness light. The light from heaven is welcomed, as light filling all the chambers of the soul. This is making melody to God. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 823.

The 1888 Message Rejected

The 1888 message was rejected by the brethren because they did not submit themselves to become one with Christ. That message is still being rejected today by our refusal to make it a vital part of our daily living. When we accept it by experience,

THEOCRACY

and not merely by theory, we will finish the work, and the resulting persecution will come from within as well as from without. See *Selected Messages*, book 1,122; *The Great Controversy*, 48,608; *Testimonies*, vol. 5,450,463.

Our prophet, looking back on this tragedy of the rejection of the 1888 message of righteousness by faith, wrote in *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 450 in 1900, "Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving to the world the message of mercy, Christ would, ere this, have come to the earth, and the saints would have received their welcome into the city of God."

Who Is Responsible?

The Lord has shown me that men in responsible positions are standing directly in the way of His work because they think the work must be done and the blessing must come in a certain way, and they will not recognize that which comes in any other way. My brethren, may the Lord place this matter before you as it is. God does not work as men plan, or as they wish; He "moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." Why reject the Lord's methods of working, because they do not coincide with our ideas? God has His appointed channels of light, but these are not necessarily the minds of any particular set of men. When all shall take their appointed place in God's work, earnestly seeking wisdom and guidance from Him, then a great

advance will have been made toward letting light shine upon the world. When men shall cease to place themselves in the way, God will work among us as never before. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 726.

The people need to be aroused in regard to the dangers of the present time. The watchmen are asleep. We are years behind. Let the chief watchmen feel the urgent necessity of taking heed to themselves, lest they lose the opportunities given them to see the dangers.

If the leading men in our conferences do not now accept the message sent them by God, and fall into line for action, the churches will suffer great loss. When the watchman, seeing the sword coming, gives the trumpet a certain sound, the people along the line will echo the warning, and all will have opportunity to

THEOCRACY

make ready for the conflict. But too often the leader has stood hesitating, seeming to say: "Let us not be in too great haste. There may be a mistake. We must be careful not to raise a false alarm." The very hesitancy and uncertainty on his part is crying: "'Peace and safety.' Do not get excited. Be not alarmed. There is a great deal more made of this religious amendment question than is demanded. This agitation will all die down." Thus he virtually denies the message sent from God, and the warning which was designed to stir the churches fails to do its work. The trumpet of the watchman gives no certain sound, and the people do not prepare for the battle. Let the watchman beware lest, through his hesitancy and delay, souls shall be left to perish, and their blood shall be required at his hand. *Ibid.*, 715-716.

I do not find rest in spirit. Scene after scene is presented in symbols before me, and I find no rest until I begin to write out the matter. At the center of the work matters are being shaped so that every other institution is following in the same course. And the General Conference is itself becoming corrupted with wrong sentiments and principles. In the working of plans, the same principles are manifest that have controlled matters at Battle Creek for quite a length of time.

I have been shown that the Jewish nation were not brought suddenly into their condition of thought and practice. From generation to generation they were working on false theories, carrying out principles opposed to the truth, and combining with their religion thoughts and plans that were the product of human minds. Human inventions were made supreme. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 359.

God Will Take the Reins Into His Own Hands

Unless those who can help in _ are aroused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things,

THEOCRACY

and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world.

God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 300.

Ellen White writes in *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 80-81:

God has promised that where the shepherds are not true He will take charge of the flock Himself. . . . Every wind of doctrine will be blowing. Those who have rendered supreme homage to “science falsely so called” will not be the leaders then. . . . Those who have proved themselves unfaithful will not then be entrusted with the flock. . . . They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and He cannot use them. The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view.

That whole page certainly needs to be prayerfully contemplated.

THEOCRACY

CHAPTER 4

A GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT FROM MINISTRY AND LAITY

Consequently, the revival long looked for, and much overdue, will come from the grassroots of Adventism. Notice these statements:

We are made sad as we see in many places so much left undone that should be done. But the Lord will use in the accomplishment of His work means that we do not now see. He will raise up from among the common people, men and women to do His work, even as of old He called fishermen to be His disciples. There will soon be an awakening that will surprise many. Those who do not realize the necessity of what is to be done, will be passed by, and the heavenly messengers will work with those who are called the common people, fitting them to carry the truth to many places. Now is the time for us to awake and do what we can. *Loma Linda Messages*, 131-132.

The awakening (revival) therefore will come from the common people, which the dictionary defines as “people without rank”:

The Lord must be given an opportunity to show men their duty and to work upon their minds. No one is to bind himself to serve for a term of years under the direction of one group of men or in one specified branch of the Master’s work, for the Lord Himself will call men, as of old He called the humble fishermen, and will Himself give them instruction regarding their field of labor and the methods they should follow. He will call men from the plow and from other occupations, to give the last note of warning to perishing souls. There are many ways in which to work for the Master, and the Great Teacher will open the understanding of these workers, enabling them to see wondrous things in His Word. *Counsels on Health*, 395.

THEOCRACY

Representations have been made to me, showing that the Lord will carry out His plans through a variety of ways and instruments. It is not alone the most talented, not alone those who hold high positions of trust, or are the most highly educated from a worldly point of view, whom the Lord uses to do His grand and holy work of soulsaving. He will use simple means; He will use many who have had few advantages to help in carrying forward His work. He will, by the use of simple means, bring those who possess property and lands to a belief of the truth, and these will be influenced to become the Lord's helping hand in the advancement of His work. Letter 62, 1909. *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, 128.

The old truths, given us at the beginning, are to be heralded far and near. The lapse of time has not lessened their value. It is the constant effort of the enemy to remove these truths from their setting, and to put in their place spurious theories. But the Lord will raise up men of keen perception, who with clear vision will discern the intrigues of Satan, and will give these truths their proper place in the plan of God. *Review and Herald*, August 20, 1903.

God will carry on His work through wholly consecrated workmen. If His ministers fail of representing Christ, He will turn to others, many of whom have not been prepared for the

work by a regular course of study, and will put a message into their lips, even the last message of warning. He will call men from their various employments, and at His bidding they will go forth to proclaim present truth. *Ibid.*, December 9, 1902.

THEOCRACY

If men of talent and influence trust in themselves, then Jesus leaves them, and He will employ the weakest instruments and the simplest means to do His work, as in the case of Gideon and in the taking of Jericho. It is not man that is to be the object of attraction. It is not man that is to lift up himself. It is not man that is to glory or receive praise or glory, but the Lord God of Israel." *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 934.

Those who engage in the solemn work of bearing the third angel's message, must move out decidedly, and in the Spirit and power of God, fearlessly preach the truth, and let it cut. They should elevate the standard of truth, and urge the people to come up to it. It has been lowered down to meet the people in their condition of darkness and sin. It is the pointed testimony that will bring up the people to decide. A peaceful testimony will not do this. The people have the privilege of listening to this kind of teaching from the pulpits of the day. But God has servants to whom he has entrusted a solemn, fearful message, to bring out and fit up a people for the coming of Christ. *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, 299-300.

In the very courts of the temple scenes will be enacted that few realize. God's people will be proved and tested, that He may discern between him that serve th God, and him that serveth Him not.

Vengeance will be executed against those who sit in the gate, deciding what the people should have. *The Paulson Collection*, 55.

The Lord has faithful watchmen on the walls of Zion to cry aloud and spare not, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show His people their transgression and the house of Jacob their sins. The Lord has permitted the enemy of truth to make a determined effort against the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. He designs by this means to awaken a decided interest in that question which is a test for the last days. This will open the way for the third angel's message to be proclaimed with power.

THEOCRACY

Let not one who believes the truth, be silent now. None should be careless now; let all urge their petitions at the throne

of grace, pleading the promise, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." John 14:13. It is a perilous time now. If this land of boasted liberty is preparing to sacrifice every principle which enters into her Constitution, making decrees to suppress religious freedom, and for the enforcing of papal falsehood and delusion, then the people of God need to present their petitions in faith to the Most High. There is every encouragement, in the promises of God, for those who put their trust in Him. The prospect of being brought into personal danger and distress, need not cause despondency, but should quicken the vigor and hopes of God's people; for the time of their peril is the season for God to grant them clearer manifestations of His power. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 370.

The Hour Is Late

Let us remember that the church will seem as about to fall, but will not fall. See *Selected Messages*, book 2, 380 (Letter 55, 1886). The reason it does not fall, is because God's very small remnant (see Isaiah 1:9) are willing to be made willing to come under God's rule—His theocracy—which will soon bring the sealing and the latter rain. If the judgment of the living is not yet a reality, it soon will be:

Then let no more time be lost in dwelling on the many things which are not essential and which have no bearing upon the present necessities of God's people. Let no more time be lost in exalting men who know not the truth, "for the time is at hand." There is no time now to fill the mind with theories of what is popularly called "higher education." The time devoted to that which does not tend to assimilate the soul to the likeness of Christ is so much time lost for eternity. This we cannot afford, for every moment is freighted with eternal interests. Now, when the great work of judging the living is about to begin, shall we allow unsanctified ambition to take possession of the heart and lead us to neglect the education required to meet the needs in this day of peril?

THEOCRACY

In every case the great decision is to be made whether we shall receive the mark of the beast or his image, or the seal of the living God. And now, when we are on the borders of the eternal world, what can be of so much value to us as to be found loyal and true to the God of heaven? What is there that we should prize above His truth and His law? What education can be given to the students in our schools that is so necessary as a knowledge of “What saith the Scriptures?” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 130-131.

As trials thicken around us, both separation and unity will be seen in our ranks. Some who are now ready to take up weapons of warfare will in times of real peril make it manifest that they have not built upon the solid rock; they will yield to temptation. 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. But, on the other hand, when the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd’s voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together and present to the enemy a united front. In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease; there will be no disputing as to who shall be accounted greatest. No one of the true believers will say: “I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas.” The testimony of one and all will be: “I cleave unto Christ; I rejoice in Him as my personal Saviour.” *Ibid.*, 400- 401.

Remember Lot’s Wife

While escaping from Sodom, Lot’s wife showed that she loved the world more than the truth. Her instantaneous destruction by God is an example of all those who have known the truth, but have placed their love for the world above the love of truth and God. Listen

THEOCRACY

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain. The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. 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. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. James 4:4-10.

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. James 5:7-8.

The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath: but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land. Zephaniah 1:14-18.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children,

THEOCRACY

and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say. Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people . Where is their God? Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people. ... Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. Joel 2:15-18, 23.

Reviving the Straight Testimony

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Isaiah 58:1.
Cry aloud and spare not, is the message for this crisis hour:

According to the light that God has given me in vision, wickedness and deception are increasing among God's people who profess to keep His commandments. Spiritual discernment to see sin as it exists, and then to put it out of the camp, is decreasing among God's people; and spiritual blindness is fast coming upon them. The straight testimony must be revived, and it will separate those from Israel who have ever been at war with the means that God has ordained to keep corruptions out of the church. Wrongs must be called wrongs. Grievous sins must be called by their right name. All of God's people should come nearer to Him and wash their robes of character in the blood of the Lamb. Then will they see sin in the true light and will realize how offensive it is in the sight of God. *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 324.

THEOCRACY

The End Is Come

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying. Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel; An end, the end is come upon the four comers of the land. Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations. And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come. An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come. The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains. Ezekiel 7:1-7.

The abominations of the eighth chapter of Ezekiel are now among us. This is the very last apostasy—the Omega. The ninth chapter introduces the sealing of God’s people. The abominations of the eighth chapter demand the sealing angel to begin his work:

And the LORD said unto him. Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. Ezekiel 9:4.

Only the sighing and crying, faithful and obedient ones, who will let God rule their lives in the experience of theocracy, will receive the latter rain and be sealed:

The leaven of godliness has not entirely lost its power. At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world. . . .

The command is: “Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry

THEOCRACY

for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.” These sighing, crying ones had been holding forth the words of life; they had reproved, counseled, and entreated. Some who had been dishonoring God repented and humbled their hearts before Him. But the glory of the Lord had departed from Israel; although many still continued the forms of religion. His power and presence were lacking. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 209-210.

What a contrast between man’s rule—hierocracy—and God’s rule—theocracy. The church seems about to fall under a hierocracy— man’s rule, with confusion over the gospel. How different, under the latter rain experience, are God’s sealed, purified people who are then under the theocracy. Scriptures describe their experience with these inspired words:

Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.... Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners? Song of Solomon 6:4, 10.

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. Isaiah 60:1.

The Lord's messenger describes the loyal, obedient soldiers of Christ, who have survived the terrible shaking, and have been willing to be ruled by God—the theocracy:

Said the angel, "List ye!" Soon I heard a voice like many musical instruments all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard, seeming to be full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being. Said the angel, "Look ye!" My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet

THEOCRACY

their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude and holy, sacred joy.

The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their places were immediately filled by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Evil angels still pressed around them, but could have no power over them.

I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. Many had been bound; some wives by their husbands, and some children by their parents. The honest who had been prevented from hearing the truth now eagerly laid hold upon it. All fear of their relatives was gone, and the truth alone was exalted to them. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth; it was dearer and more precious than life. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, "It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel." *Early Writings*, 270-271.

THEOCRACY

CHAPTER 5

THE LATTER RAIN

As we have seen, when God's leaders and people are willing to be made willing to be obedient to God without compromise, they will again be under the theocracy as it was at Pentecost. The requirements for returning to the theocracy and receiving the latter rain are presented in the following inspired statement:

Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be

bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realize his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.

At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the fact

THEOCRACY

that without the latter rain, to fill out the ears and ripen the grain, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain. Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. There is no place for us to rest in a careless attitude. We must never forget the warnings of Christ, "Watch unto prayer," "Watch . . . and pray always." A connection with the divine agency every moment is essential to our progress. We may have had a measure of the Spirit of God, but by prayer and faith we are continually to seek more of the Spirit. It will never do to cease our efforts. If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 507-508

When the third angel's message shall go forth with a loud voice, and the whole earth shall be lightened with his glory, the Holy Spirit is poured out upon God's people. The revenue of glory has been accumulating for this closing work of the third angel's message. Of the prayers that have been ascending for the fulfillment of the promise — the descent of the Holy Spirit — not one has been lost. Each prayer has been accumulating, ready to overflow and pour forth a healing flood of heavenly influence and accumulated light all over the world. *Manuscript Releases*, vol.2,206.

Revival and Reformation Will Precede the Latter Rain

A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions

THEOCRACY

upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. While the people are so destitute of God's Holy Spirit, they cannot appreciate the preaching of the Word; but when the Spirit's power touches their hearts, then the discourses given will not be without effect. Guided by the teachings of God's Word, with the manifestation of His Spirit, in the exercise of sound discretion, those who attend our meetings will gain a precious experience, and returning home, will be prepared to exert a healthful influence.

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.

There are persons in the church who are not converted, and who will not unite in earnest, prevailing prayer. We must enter upon the work individually. We must pray more, and talk less. Iniquity abounds, and the people must be taught not to be satisfied with a form of godliness without the spirit and power.

If we are intent upon searching our own hearts, putting away our sins, and correcting our evil tendencies, our souls will not be lifted up unto vanity; we shall be distrustful of ourselves, having an abiding sense that our sufficiency is of God.

We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world. Unbelievers have a right to expect that those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will do more than any other class to promote and honor, by their consistent lives, by their godly example and their active influence, the cause which they represent. But how often have the professed advocates of the truth proved the greatest obstacle to its advancement! The unbelief indulged, the doubts expressed, the darkness cherished, encourage the presence of evil angels, and open the way for the

THEOCRACY

accomplishment of Satan's devices.

The adversary of souls is not permitted to read the thoughts of men; but he is a keen observer, and he marks the words; he takes account of actions, and skillfully adapts his temptations to meet the cases of those who place themselves in his power. If we would labor to repress sinful thoughts and feelings, giving them no expression in words or actions, Satan would be defeated; for he could not prepare his specious temptations to meet the case. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 121-123.

Satan Fears the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church and an impenitent congregation. If Satan had his way, there would never be another awakening, great or small, to the end of time. But we are not ignorant of his devices. It is possible to resist his power. When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the blessing will come. Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God's people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth. Wicked men and devils cannot hinder the work of God, or shut out His presence from the assemblies of His people, if they will, with subdued, contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins, and in faith claim His promises. Every temptation, every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." Zechariah 4:6.

We are in the great day of atonement, when our sins are, by confession and repentance, to go beforehand to judgment. God does not now accept a tame, spiritless testimony from His ministers. Such a testimony would not be present truth. The message for this time must be meat in due season to feed the church of God. But Satan has been seeking gradually to rob this message of its power, that the people may not be prepared to stand in the day of the Lord. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 124-125

THEOCRACY

In many hearts there seems to be scarcely a breath of spiritual life. This makes me very sad. I fear that aggressive warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil has not been maintained. Shall we cheer on, by a half-dead Christianity, the selfish, covetous spirit of the world, sharing its ungodliness and smiling on its falsehood? —Nay! By the grace of God let us be steadfast to the principles of truth, holding firm to the end the beginning of our confidence. We are to be “not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord” (Romans 12:11). One is our Master, even Christ. To Him we are to look. From Him we are to receive our wisdom. By His grace we are to preserve our integrity, standing before God in meekness and contrition, and representing Him to the world.

Sermons have been in great demand in our churches. The members have depended upon pulpit declamations instead of on the Holy Spirit. Uncalled for and unused, the spiritual gifts bestowed on them have dwindled into feebleness. If the ministers would go forth into new fields, the members would be obliged to bear responsibilities, and by use their capabilities would increase.

God brings against ministers and people the heavy charge of spiritual feebleness, saying, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Revelation 3:15-18. God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.

A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers

THEOCRACY

of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.
The Review and Herald, February 25, 1902.

The Seal of God

Jesus, our High Priest, still lingers in the Most Holy Place. The censer is still in His hand. He wants to cut His work short in righteousness; this has been His great desire for over a hundred years, but because the church has chosen to be under the rule of man instead of the theocracy of God, we are responsible for the long delay:

What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mold and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth—these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity.

Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 216.

God never forsakes people or individuals until they forsake Him. Outward opposition will not cause the faith of God's people, who are keeping His commandments, to become dim. The neglect to bring purity and truth into practice will grieve the Spirit of God and weaken them because God is not in their midst to bless. Internal corruption will bring the denunciations of God upon this people as it did upon

THEOCRACY

Jerusalem. Oh, let pleading voices, let earnest prayer be heard, that those who preach to others shall not themselves be castaways. My brethren, we know not what is before us, and our only safety is in following the Light of the world. God will work with us and for us if the sins which brought His wrath upon the old world, upon Sodom and Gomorrah and upon ancient Jerusalem, do not become our crime. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 378-379.

It is with reluctance that the Lord withdraws His presence from those who have been blessed with great light and who have felt the power of the word in ministering to others. They were once His faithful servants, favored with His presence and guidance; but they departed from Him and led others into error, and therefore are brought under the divine displeasure.

The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land. Those who link in sympathy with the world are eating and drinking with the drunken and will surely be destroyed with the workers of iniquity. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Already a few drops of God's wrath have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent and find shelter. No atoning blood will then wash away the stains of sin. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 212.

Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. *Ibid.*, 214.

The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling

THEOCRACY

figures show that the time for God's visitation has about come. Although loath to punish, nevertheless He will punish, and that speedily. Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; but they are not to sit in quiet, unconcerned expectancy of the ruin, comforting themselves with the belief that God will shelter His people in the day of visitation. Far

from it. They should realize that it is their duty to labor diligently to save others, looking with strong faith to God for help.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

The leaven of godliness has not entirely lost its power. At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world. *Ibid.*, 209-210.

I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully.

I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of "refreshing" and the "latter rain" to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. *Early Writings*, 71.

Weighed in the Balances

The following inspired *Testimonies* show that if we do not turn this church back from where it is now to where God designed it should be, the same destruction that came to Jerusalem will come to us. God's messenger warns the church today:

In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed. She will be judged

THEOCRACY

by the privileges and advantages that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced the sentence: "Found wanting." By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be judged. *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 247.

Jerusalem is a representation of what the church will be if it refuses to walk in the light that God has given. Jerusalem was favored of God as the depository of sacred trusts. But her people perverted the truth, and despised all entreaties and warnings.

They would not respect His counsels. The temple courts were polluted with merchandise and robbery. Selfishness and love of mammon, envy and strife, were cherished. Everyone sought for gain from his quarter. Christ turned from them, saying: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," how can I give thee up? "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matthew 23:37.

So Christ sorrows and weeps over our churches, over our institutions of learning, that have failed to meet the demand of God. He comes to investigate in Battle Creek, which has been moving in the same track as Jerusalem. The publishing house has been turned into desecrated shrines, into a place of unholy merchandise and traffic. It has become a place where injustice and fraud have been carried on, where selfishness, malice, envy, and passion have borne sway. Yet the men who have been led into this working upon wrong principles are seemingly unconscious of their wrong course of action. When warnings and entreaties come to them, they say: "Doth she not speak in parables?" Words of warning and reproof have been treated as idle tales.

When Christ looked down from the crest of Olivet, He saw this state of things existing in every church. The warnings come down to all that are following in the tread of the people of Jerusalem, who had such great light. This people is before us as a warning. By

THEOCRACY

rejecting God's warnings in this our day, men are repeating the sin of Jerusalem. The Lord sees what the human agent does not see and will not see—the outcome of all the human devising in Battle Creek. He has done all that a God could do. He has flashed light before the eyes of the people, that their sins might not reach the boundary where repentance cannot be felt. But by a long process of departure from just and righteous principles, men have placed themselves where light and truth, justice and mercy, are not discerned. This course has become part of their very nature.

I call upon all who have united in a course of action that is wrong in principle, to make a decided reformation and forever after walk humbly with God. .

..

These are no idle tales, but truth. Again I ask: On which side are you standing? "If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." 1 Kings 18:21. Ibid., 67-68.

These Bible and Spirit of Prophecy quotations are from God. He inspired them for the leadership and laity for this very hour. To disregard them any longer is to choose darkness instead of light—eternal death instead of eternal life.

May God help us!

True Conversion Needed

We are now entering into the end-time—the most dangerous and awesome time in the history of the church. In this time, the church seems about to fall, but does not fall. The signs of the times are now ominous, both in the world and in the church. Listen to God speak through His last-day prophet:

The least transgression of God's law brings guilt upon the transgressor, and without earnest repentance and forsaking of sin he will surely become an apostate. . . . Let us as a people, as far as possible, cleanse the camp of moral defilement and aggravating sins. When sin is making its march upon the people who claim to be elevating the moral standard of righteousness, how can we expect God to turn His power in our behalf and save us as a people that did righteousness? ... If as a people we do not keep ourselves in the faith and not only advocate with pen and voice the commandments

THEOCRACY

of God, but keep them every one, not violating a single precept knowingly, then weakness and ruin will come upon us. It is a work that we must attend to in every one of our churches. Each man must be a Christian.

Let the sin of pride be put away, let all superfluities of dress be overcome, and repentance toward God be exercised for the highhanded robbery toward Him which has withheld money which should flow into the treasury to sustain the work of God in its mission fields. Let the work of reformation, of true conversion, be set before and urged upon the people. Let our works, our deportment, correspond with the work for this time, that we may say, "Lollow me as I follow Christ." Let us humble our souls before God by humiliation, fasting and prayer, repentance of sin and putting it away.

The voice of the true watchman needs now to be heard all along the line, "The morning cometh, and also the night" (Isaiah 21:12). The trumpet must give a certain sound for we are in the great day of the Lord's preparation. . . . There are many doctrines current in our world. There is many a religion current that numbers its thousands and tens of thousands, but there is

but one that bears the superscription and the stamp of God. There is a religion of man and a religion of God. We must have our souls riveted to the eternal Rock. Everything in God's world, both men and doctrines and nature itself, is fulfilling God's sure word of prophecy and accomplishing His grand and closing work in this world's history.

We are to be ready and waiting for the orders of God. Nations will be stirred to their very center. Support will be withdrawn from those who proclaim God's only standard of righteousness, the only sure test of character. And all who will not bow to the decree of the national councils and obey the national laws to exalt the sabbath instituted by the man of sin, to the disregard of God's holy day, will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast.

THEOCRACY

Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and arrayed in the righteousness of Christ.

The remnant that purify their souls by obeying the truth gather strength from the trying process, exhibiting the beauty of holiness amid the surrounding apostasy. All these. He says, “I have graven . . . upon the palms of my hands” (Isaiah 49:16). They are held in everlasting, imperishable remembrance. We want faith now, living faith. We want to have a living testimony that shall cut to the heart of the sinner. There is too much sermonizing and too little ministering. We want the holy unction. We need the spirit and fervor of the truth. Many of the ministers are half paralyzed by their own defects of character. They need the converting power of God.

That which God required of Adam before his fall was perfect obedience to His law. God requires now what He required of Adam, perfect obedience, righteousness without a flaw, without shortcoming in His sight. God help us to render to Him all His law requires. We cannot do this without that faith that brings Christ’s righteousness into daily practice. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 379-381.

At Ease in Zion

Those who are at ease in Zion need to be aroused. Great is their accountability who bear the truth and yet feel no weight or burden for souls. Oh, for men and women professing the truth to arouse, to take on the yoke of Christ, to lift His burdens. There are wanted those who will not have merely a nominal interest but a Christlike interest, unselfish—an intense ardor that will not flag under difficulties or cool because iniquity abounds.

THEOCRACY

I want to speak to the ears of our people in America in every church. Awake from the dead, and Christ will give you life. Souls are perishing for the light of truth as it is in Jesus. We are standing upon the very borders of the eternal world. Fair-weather Christians will not be wanted for this work. The sentimental and tasteful religion is not needed for this time. There must be intensity brought into our faith and in the proclamation of truth. I tell you, a new life is proceeding from satanic agencies to work with a power we have not hitherto realized. And shall not a new power from above take possession of God's people? The truth, sanctifying in its influence, must be urged upon the people. There must be earnest supplications offered to God, agonizing prayer to Him, that our hopes as a people may not be founded on suppositions, but on eternal realities. We must know for ourselves, by the evidence of God's Word, whether we are in the faith, going to heaven or not.

The moral standard of character is God's law. Do we meet its requirements? Are the Lord's people bringing their property, their time, their talents, and all their influence into the work for this time? Let us arouse. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Colossians 3:1. Ibid., 382-383.

Ready and Waiting

Letter 55, 1886 gives the final appeal to the remnant church. In *Selected Messages*, book 3, 385 we see the picture of a sanctified ministry. (The following paragraphs from this letter were omitted when *Selected Messages*, book 2, just quoted, was compiled.)

All the struggles to carry our appeals to the highest authorities in our land, however earnest and strong and eloquent may be the pleas in our favor, will not bring about that which we desire, unless the Lord works by His Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who claim to believe the truth. We may struggle as a mighty man in swimming against the current of Niagara, but we shall

THEOCRACY

fail unless the Lord pleads in our behalf. God will be honored among His people. They must be pure, they must be divested of self, steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. . . .

We are to be ready and waiting for the orders of God. Nations will be stirred to their very center. Support will be withdrawn from those who proclaim God's only standard of righteousness, the only sure test of character. And all who will not bow to the decree of the national councils, and obey the national laws to exalt the sabbath instituted by the man of sin to the disregard of God's holy day, will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast. . . .

The great issue so near at hand will weed out those whom God has not appointed and He will have a pure, true, sanctified ministry prepared for the latter rain. . . .

A new life is proceeding from satanic agencies to work with a power we have not hitherto realized. And shall not a new power from above take possession of God's people? *Selected Messages*, book 3, 385.

THEOCRACY

CHAPTER 6

THE FINAL PHASE

The final phase of the great controversy is now just before us. Inspiration draws a vivid picture:

When Christ shall come the second time, the whole world will be represented by two classes, the just and the unjust, the righteous and the unrighteous. Preceding the great sign of the coming of the Son of man, there will be signs and wonders in the heavens. . . .

Already sprinklings from the vials of God's wrath have been let fall upon land and sea, affecting the elements of the air. The causes of these unusual conditions are being searched for, but in vain.

God has not restrained the powers of darkness from carrying forward their deadly work of vitiating the air, one of the sources of life and nutrition, with a deadly miasma. Not only is vegetable life affected, but man suffers from pestilence. . . .

These things are the result of drops from the vials of God's wrath being sprinkled on the earth, and are but faint representations of what will be in the near future .

Earthquakes in various places have been felt, but these disturbances have been very limited. . . . Terrible shocks will come upon the earth, and the lordly palaces erected at great expense will certainly become heaps of ruins.

The earth's crust will be rent by the outbursts of the elements concealed in the bowels of the earth. These elements, once broken loose, will sweep away the treasures of those who for years have been adding to their wealth by securing large possessions at starvation prices from those in their employ.

And the religious world too, is to be terribly shaken, for the end of all things is at hand. . . . All society is ranging into two great classes, the obedient and the disobedient. *Selected Messages*,; book 3, 391-392.

THEOCRACY

Persecution will rage in the church and from the world. Satan will impersonate Christ, and the whole world will then wonder after him. See *The Great Controversy*, 624-625; *Testimonies to Ministers*, 62, 411; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 80-81.

All things in nature and in the world at large are charged with intense earnestness. Satan, in cooperation with his angels and with evil men, will put forth every effort to gain the victory, and will appear to succeed. But from this conflict, truth and righteousness will come forth triumphant in victory. Those who have believed a lie will be defeated, for the days of apostasy will be ended. *Selected Messages*, book 3, 393.

Sealed Under the Theocracy

Now God's faithful, loyal, and obedient saints will be sealed, and the latter rain will bring them again under the theocracy. Everything that can be shaken will be shaken, that those things which cannot be shaken will remain:

Under the showers of the latter rain the inventions of man, the human machinery, will at times be swept away, the boundary of man's authority will be as broken reeds, and the Holy Spirit will speak through the living, human agent, with convincing power. No one then will watch to see if the sentences are well rounded off, if the grammar is faultless. The living water will flow in God's own channels. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 58-59.

The Godly Will Suffer Persecution

Conscientious obedience to the Word of God will be treated as rebellion. Blinded by Satan, the parent will exercise harshness and severity toward the believing child: the master or mistress will oppress the commandment-keeping servant. Affection will be alienated; children will be disinherited and driven from home. The words of Paul will be literally fulfilled: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12. As the defenders of truth refuse to honor the Sunday - sabbath, some of them will be thrust into prison, some will be exiled, some will be treated as slaves. To

THEOCRACY

human wisdom all this now seems impossible, but as the restraining Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from men, and they shall be under the control of Satan, who hates the divine precepts, there will be strange developments. The heart can be very cruel when God's fear and love are removed.

As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.

In this time of persecution the faith of the Lord's servants will be tried. They have faithfully given the warning, looking to God and to His Word alone. God's Spirit, moving upon their hearts, has constrained them to speak. Stimulated with holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they entered upon the performance of their duties without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord had given them. They have not consulted their temporal interests, nor sought to preserve their reputation or their lives. Yet when the storm of opposition and reproach bursts upon them, some, overwhelmed with consternation, will be ready to exclaim: "Had we foreseen the consequences of our words, we would have held our peace." They are hedged in with difficulties. Satan assails them with fierce temptations. The work which they have undertaken seems far beyond their ability to accomplish. They are threatened with destruction. The enthusiasm which animated them is gone; yet they cannot turn back.

Then, feeling their utter helplessness, they flee to the

THEOCRACY

Mighty One for strength. They remember that the words which they have spoken were not theirs, but His who bade them give the warning. God put the truth into their hearts, and they could not forbear to proclaim it.

...

As the opposition rises to a fiercer height, the servants of God are again perplexed; for it seems to them that they have brought the crisis. But conscience and the Word of God assure them that their course is right; and although the trials continue, they are strengthened to bear them. The contest grows closer and sharper, but their faith and courage rise with the emergency. Their testimony is: We dare not tamper with God's Word, dividing His holy law; calling one portion essential and another nonessential, to gain the favor of the world. The Lord whom we serve is able to deliver us. Christ has conquered the powers of earth; and shall we be afraid of a world already conquered?" *The Great Controversy*, 608-610.

Let us now remember that Jesus said that many are called, but very few will be chosen — judged fit for eternal life. Only those who will accept the rule of God in the theocracy will be chosen. They will obey God rather than man:

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said. We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5:29.

The latter rain will fall only upon those who are complete overcomers by the power of the Holy Spirit:

God can breathe new life into every soul that sincerely desires to serve Him, and can touch the lips with a live coal from off the altar, and cause them to become eloquent with His praise. Thousands of voices will be imbued with the power to speak forth the wonderful truths of God's Word. The stammering tongue will be unloosed, and the timid will be made strong to bear courageous testimony to the truth. May the Lord help His people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain such a close connection with Him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out. *Review and Herald*, July 20, 1886.

THEOCRACY

Thousands Join the Theocracy

Under God's rule—the theocracy—thousands will accept the pure gospel and by God's grace receive the victory over all temptation and sin:

Their teaching was a second edition of the teachings of Christ, the utterance of simple, grand truths that flashed light into darkened minds, and converted thousands in a day. The disciples began to understand that Christ was their Advocate in the heavenly courts, and that He was glorified. They could speak because the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1056.

Just as surely as the first Pentecost brought the disciples and the church under God's rule—the theocracy—the second Pentecost—the latter rain—will bring God's faithful Seventh-day Adventists under God's theocracy. This will bring prison and martyrdom to many. See *Maranatha*, 197-199; Revelation 20:1¹.

The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840⁴ was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel.

The work will be similar to that of the Day of Pentecost. As the "former rain" was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the upspringing of the precious seed, so the "latter rain" will be given at its close for the ripening of the harvest. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:3. "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and

THEOCRACY

rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain." Joel 2:23. "In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:17,21.

The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are "the times of refreshing" to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus." Acts 3:19-20.

Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. See Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side. *The Great Controversy*, 611-612.

THEOCRACY

.Character Perfection Essential

The mark of the beast will be given to the unfaithful Seventh-day Adventists (see *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 976) who have not developed a perfect character by the power of the Holy Spirit:

"When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church.

When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (see 2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 69.

The Lord has a great work to be done, and He will bequeath the most in the future life to those who do the most faithful, willing service in the present life. The Lord chooses His own agents, and each day under different circumstances He gives them a trial in His plan of operation. In each true-hearted endeavor to work out His plan. He chooses His agents not because they are perfect but because, through a connection with Him, they may gain perfection.

God will accept only those who are determined to aim high. He places every human agent under obligation to do his best. Moral perfection is required of all. Never should we lower the standard of righteousness in order to accommodate inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong-doing. We need to understand that imperfection of character is sin. All righteous attributes of character dwell in God as a perfect, harmonious whole, and every one who receives Christ as a personal Saviour is privileged to possess these attributes.

And those who would be workers together with

THEOCRACY

God must strive for perfection of every organ of the body and quality of the mind. True education is the preparation of the physical, mental, and moral powers for the performance of every duty; it is the training of body, mind, and soul for divine service. This is the education that will endure unto eternal life.

Of every Christian the Lord requires growth in efficiency and capability in every line. Christ has paid us our wages, even His own blood and suffering, to secure our willing service. He came to our world to give us an example of how we should work, and what spirit we should bring into our labor. He desires us to study how we can best advance His work and glorify His name in the world, crowning with honor, with the greatest love and devotion, the Father who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

But Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected.

Let no one say, I cannot remedy my defects of character. If you come to this decision, you will certainly fail of obtaining everlasting life. The impossibility lies in your own will. If you will not, then you can not overcome. The real difficulty arises from the corruption of an unsanctified heart, and an unwillingness to submit to the control of God. . . .

Set Your Mark High

Remember that you will never reach a higher standard than you yourself set. Then set your mark high, and step by step, even though it be by painful effort, by self-denial and sacrifice, ascend the whole length of the ladder of progress. Let nothing hinder you. Fate has not woven its meshes about any human being so firmly that he need remain helpless and in

THEOCRACY

uncertainty. Opposing circumstances should create a firm determination to overcome them. The breaking down of one barrier will give greater ability and courage to go forward. Press with determination in the right direction, and circumstances will be your helpers, not your hindrances.

Be ambitious, for the Master's glory, to cultivate every grace of character. In every phase of your character building you are to please God. This you may do; for Enoch pleased Him though living in a degenerate age. And there are Enochs in this our day.

Stand like Daniel, that faithful statesman, a man whom no temptation could corrupt. Do not disappoint Him who so loved you that He gave His own life to cancel your sins. He says, "Without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. Remember this. If you have made mistakes, you certainly gain a victory if you see these mistakes and regard them as beacons of warning. Thus you turn defeat into victory, disappointing the enemy and honoring your Redeemer.

A character formed according to the divine likeness is the only treasure that we can take from this world to the next. Those who are under the instruction of Christ in this world will take every divine attainment with them to the heavenly mansions. And in heaven we are continually to improve. How important, then, is the development of character in this life.

The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To everyone engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you. *Ibid.*, 330-332.

What a God is our God! He rules over His kingdom with diligence and care, and He has built a hedge—the Ten Commandments—about His subjects to preserve them from the results of transgression. In requiring obedience to the laws of His kingdom, God gives His people health and happiness, peace and joy. He teaches them that the perfection of character He requires can be attained only by becoming familiar with His Word. *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 454.

THEOCRACY

By Every Word

Whenever men choose their own way, they place themselves in controversy with God. They will have no place in the kingdom of heaven, for they are at war with the very principles of heaven. In disregarding the will of God, they are placing themselves on the side of Satan, the enemy of God and man. Not by one word, not by many words, but by every word that God has spoken, shall man live. We cannot disregard one word, however trifling it may seem to us, and be safe. There is not a commandment of the law that is not for the good and happiness of man, both in this life and in the life to come. In obedience to God's law, man is surrounded as with a hedge and kept from the evil. He who breaks down this divinely erected barrier at one point has destroyed its power to protect him; for he has opened a way by which the enemy can enter to waste and ruin. *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 52.

Perfection of character is attained through exercise of the faculties of the mind, in times of supreme test, by obedience to every requirement of God's law. *Medical Ministry*, 168.

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I

love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Revelation 3:18-19. . . .

The Lord takes no pleasure in seeing us spiritually weak. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." We have conflicts and trials to meet, but we need not fail or be discouraged. *The Upward Look*, 99

THEOCRACY

Obedience Without Compromise

So, the requirement of salvation is obedience to all known truth without compromise. Repentance and confession brings justification and sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit:

God requires perfection of His children. His law is a transcript of His own character, and it is the standard of all character. This infinite standard is presented to all that there may be no mistake in regard to the kind of people whom God will have to compose His kingdom. The life of Christ on earth was a perfect expression of God's law, and when those who claim to be children of God become Christlike in character, they will be obedient to God's commandments. Then the Lord can trust them to be of the number who shall compose the family of heaven. Clothed in the glorious apparel of Christ's righteousness, they have a place at the King's feast. They have a right to join the blood-washed throng. . . .

The righteousness of Christ will not cover one cherished sin. A man may be a law-breaker in heart; yet if he commits no outward act of transgression, he may be regarded by the world as possessing great integrity. But God's law looks into the secrets of the heart. Every act is judged by the motives that prompt it. Only that which is in accord with the principles of God's law will stand in the judgment. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 315-316.

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law. That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise. Say not in thine heart. Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The

THEOCRACY

word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith. Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith. Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:1-17.

There is a great promise to the overcomer:

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. Revelation 3:5.

All those who refuse to come under God's rule—His theocracy—who believe that they cannot overcome every sin and temptation, have not the faith required to enter the city of God:

This experience every one who is saved must have. In the day of judgment the course of the man who has retained the frailty and imperfection of humanity will not be vindicated. For him there will be no place in heaven; he could not enjoy the perfection of the saints in light. He who has not sufficient faith in Christ to believe that He can keep him from sinning, has not the faith that will give him an entrance into the kingdom of God. *Review and Herald*, March 10, 1904.

THEOCRACY

A Small Remnant

Isaiah tells us that only a very small remnant will choose to be ruled by the theocracy and be saved:

Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah. Isaiah 1:9.

God requires now what He required of Adam, perfect obedience, righteousness without a flaw, without shortcoming in His sight. God help us to render to Him all His law requires. We cannot do this without that faith that brings Christ's righteousness into daily practice. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 381.

God requires perfection of His children. His law is a transcript of His own character . . . The life of Christ on earth was a perfect expression of God's law, and when those who claim to be children of God become Christlike in character, they will be obedient to God's commandments. Then the Lord can trust them to be of the number who shall compose the family of heaven. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 315.

When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. *Ibid.*, 69.

Christ has left us a perfect, sinless example. His followers are to walk in His footsteps. If they are not transformed in character, they can never dwell with Him in His kingdom. Christ died to elevate and ennoble them, and those who retain hereditary tendencies to wrong can not dwell with Him. He suffered all that it is possible for human flesh to suffer and endure, that we might pass triumphantly through all the temptations Satan may invent to destroy our faith. *Sons and Daughters of God*, 294.

The Christian life is constantly an onward march. Jesus sits as a refiner and purifier of His people ; and when His image is perfectly reflected in them, they are perfect and holy, and prepared for translation. A great work is required of the Christian. We are exhorted to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and

THEOCRACY

spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Here we see where the great labor rests. There is a constant work for the Christian. Every branch in the parent vine must derive life and strength from that vine, in order to yield fruit. *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 340.

The word of Christ will fall with living power upon obedient hearts; and through the application of divine truth the perfect image of God will be reproduced, and in heaven it will be said: “Ye are complete in him.” Colossians 2:10. *Ibid.*, vol. 6, 167.

When Peter said, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29), the disciples were under the theocracy.

Sighing and Crying

Our perfect character is the only thing we will take from this world to the next. Let us strive—agonize daily through study and prayer to reach the high standard of righteousness under the direction of the Holy Spirit—that we will accept God’s rule for our life. God’s theocracy will again rule His beloved Seventh-day Adventist Church. The church will go through to the end, shaken and purified. The condition of the sealed are portrayed in the following statements:

Of the Amorites the Lord said: “In the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” Although this nation was conspicuous because of its idolatry and corruption, it had not yet filled up the cup of its iniquity, and God would not give command for its utter destruction. The people were to see the divine power manifested in a marked manner, that they might be left without excuse. The compassionate Creator was willing to bear with their iniquity until the fourth generation. Then, if no change was seen for the better. His judgments were to fall upon them.

With unerring accuracy the Infinite One still keeps an account with all nations. While His mercy is tendered with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when the figures reach a certain amount which God has

THEOCRACY

fixed, the ministry of His wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. There is no more pleading of mercy in their behalf.

The prophet, looking down the ages, had this time presented before his vision. The nations of this age have been the recipients of unprecedented mercies. The choicest of heaven's blessings have been given them, but increased pride, covetousness, idolatry, contempt of God, and base ingratitude are written against them. They are fast closing up their account with God.

But that which causes me to tremble is the fact that those who have had the greatest light and privileges have become contaminated by the prevailing iniquity. Influenced by the unrighteous around them, many, even of those who profess the truth, have grown cold and are borne down by the strong current of evil. The universal scorn thrown upon true piety and holiness leads those who do not connect closely with God to lose their reverence for His law. If they were following the light and obeying the truth from the heart, this holy law would seem even more precious to them when thus despised and set aside. As the disrespect for God's law becomes more manifest, the line of demarcation between its observers and the world becomes more distinct. Love for the divine precepts increases with one class according as contempt for them increases with another class.

The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling figures show that the time for God's visitation has about come. Although loath to punish, nevertheless He will punish, and that speedily. Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; but they are not to sit in quiet, unconcerned expectancy of the ruin, comforting themselves with the belief that God will shelter His people in the day of visitation. Far from it. They should realize that it is their duty to labor diligently to save others, looking with strong faith to God for help. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

The leaven of godliness has not entirely lost its power. At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more

THEOCRACY

especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world.

The earnest prayers of this faithful few will not be in vain. When the Lord comes forth as an avenger. He will also come as a protector of all those who have preserved the faith in its purity and kept themselves unspotted from the world. It is at this time that God has promised to avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them.

The command is: "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." These sighing, crying ones had been holding forth the words of life; they had reproved, counseled, and entreated. Some who had been dishonoring God repented

and humbled their hearts before Him. But the glory of the Lord had departed from Israel; although many still continued the forms of religion. His power and presence were lacking.

In the time when His wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings. While others try to throw a cloak over the existing evil, and excuse the great wickedness everywhere prevalent, those who have a zeal for God's honor and a love for souls will not hold their peace to obtain favor of any. Their righteous souls are vexed day by day with the unholy works and conversation of the unrighteous. They are powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity, and hence they are filled with grief and alarm. They mourn before God to see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. They lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church. The Spirit of God, which prompts to reproof, is trampled underfoot, while the servants of Satan triumph. God is dishonored, the truth made of none effect. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 208-21

THEOCRACY

CHAPTER 7 STUDENTS OF GOD'S WILL

By study and prayer, and surrendering the will, we will be victorious in Christ. See *Steps to Christ*, 47; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 513-514.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
2 Timothy 2:15.

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. John 5:39.

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Acts 17:11.

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13.

No Neutrality

No one can occupy a neutral position; there is no middle class, who neither love God nor serve the enemy of righteousness. Christ is to live in His human agents and work through their faculties and act through their capabilities. Their will must be submitted to His will; they must act with His Spirit. Then it is no more they that live, but Christ that lives in them. He who does not give himself wholly to God is under the control of another power, listening to another voice, whose suggestions are of an entirely different character. Half-and-half service places the human agent on the side of the enemy as a successful ally of the hosts of darkness. When men who claim to

THEOCRACY

be soldiers of Christ engage with the confederacy of Satan, and help along his side, they prove themselves enemies of Christ. They betray sacred trusts. They form a link between Satan and the true soldiers, so that through these agencies the enemy is constantly working to steal away the hearts of Christ's soldiers.

The strongest bulwark of vice in our world is not the iniquitous life of the abandoned sinner or the degraded outcast; it is that life which otherwise appears virtuous, honorable, and noble, but in which one sin is fostered, one vice indulged. To the soul that is struggling in secret against some giant temptation, trembling upon the very verge of the precipice, such an example is one of the most powerful enticements to sin. He who, endowed with high conceptions of life and truth and honor, does yet willfully transgress one precept of God's holy law, has perverted His noble gifts into a lure to sin. Genius, talent, sympathy, even generous and kindly deeds, may become decoys of Satan to entice other souls over the precipice of ruin for this life and the life to come.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." 1 John 2:15,16. *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 94-95.

Many have tried neutrality in a crisis, but they have failed in their purpose. No one can maintain a neutral position. Those who endeavor to do this will fulfill Christ's words, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Those who begin their

Christian life by being half and half, will at last be found enlisted on the enemy's side, whatever may have been their first intentions. And to be an apostate, a traitor to the cause of God, is more serious than death; for it means the loss of eternal life.

Double-minded men and women are Satan's best allies. Whatever favorable opinion they may have of themselves, they are dissemblers. All who are loyal to God and the truth must stand firmly for the right

THEOCRACY

because it is right. To yoke up with those who are unconsecrated, and yet be loyal to the truth, is simply impossible. We cannot unite with those who are serving themselves, who are working on worldly plans, and not lose our connection with the heavenly Counselor. We may recover ourselves from the snare of the enemy, but we are bruised and wounded, and our experience is dwarfed. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." *Review and Herald*, April 19, 1898.

If God abhors one sin above another, of which his people are guilty, it is of doing nothing in a case of emergency. Indifference or neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime; and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God. *Ibid.*, September 30, 1873.

Strive to Enter In

Then said one unto him. Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Luke 13:23-24.

We are to strive, to agonize, to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. *Review and Herald*, July 5, 1892.

When we read that many will seek to enter in and shall not be able, then we want to understand what we shall do in order to succeed. This to us is a mournful statement, that there are those who will fail to enter in at the strait gate because they only seek to enter in, and do not strive. *In Heavenly Places*, 263.

Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians; but they made no earnest effort, therefore they will be weighed in the balances and found wanting. The will must be

exercised in the right direction. I *will* be a wholehearted Christian. I *will* know the length and breadth, the height and depth, of perfect love. *Maranatha*, 46 (emphasis in original).

THEOCRACY

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure .”
Philippians 2:12-13.

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” What does this mean? It means that every day you are to distrust your own human efforts and wisdom. You are to fear to speak at random, fear to follow your own impulses, fear that pride of heart and love of the world and lust of the flesh shall exclude the precious grace the Lord Jesus is longing to bestow upon you.

Man’s working, as brought out in the text, is not an independent work he performs without God. His whole dependence is upon the power and grace of the Divine Worker. Many miss the mark here, and claim that man must work his own individual self, free from divine power. This is not in accordance with the text. Another argues that man is free from all obligation, because God does it all, both the willing and the doing. The text means that the salvation of the human soul requires the will power to be subjective to the divine will power. . . . And it is the very hardest, sternest conflict which comes with the purpose and hour of great resolve and decision of the human to incline the will and way to God’s will and God’s way.

Man is allotted a part in this great struggle for everlasting life: he must respond to the working of the Holy Spirit. It will require a struggle to break through the powers of darkness, but the Spirit that works in him can and will accomplish this. But man is no passive instrument to be saved in indolence. He is called upon to strain every muscle in the struggle for immortality, yet it is God that supplies the efficiency.

Here are man’s works, and here are God’s works. . . . With these two combined powers, man will be victorious, and receive a crown of life at last. ... He puts to the stretch every spiritual nerve and muscle that he may be a successful overcomer in this work, and that he may obtain the precious boon of eternal life.
Our High Calling, 91.

THEOCRACY

A Battle and a March

To be a part of God's final rule—His theocracy—will be a battle and a march every day:

The Christian life is a battle and a march. But the victory to be gained is not won by human power. The field of conflict is the domain of the heart. The battle which we have to fight—the greatest battle that was ever fought by man—is the surrender of self to the will of God, the yielding of the heart to the sovereignty of love. The old nature, born of blood and of the will of the flesh, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up. ...

The victory is not won without much earnest prayer, without the humbling of self at every step. Our will is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. The stronghold of Satan would not be broken. The will must be placed on the side of God's will. You are not able, of yourself, to bring your purposes and desires and inclinations into submission to the will of God; but if you are "willing to be made willing," God will accomplish the work for you, even "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5. Then you will "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2:12-13.

But many are attracted by the beauty of Christ and the glory of heaven, who yet shrink from the conditions by which alone these can become their own. There are many in the broad way who are not fully satisfied with the path in which they walk.

They long to break from the slavery of sin, and in their own strength they seek to make a stand against their sinful practices.

They look toward the narrow way and the strait gate; but selfish pleasure, love of the world, pride,

THEOCRACY

unsanctified ambition, place a barrier between them and the Saviour. To renounce their own will, their chosen objects of affection or pursuit, requires a sacrifice at which they hesitate and falter and turn back. Many "will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13:24. They desire the good, they make some effort to obtain it; but they do not choose it; they have not a settled purpose to secure it at the cost of all things.

The only hope for us if we would overcome is to unite our will to God's will and work in co-operation with Him, hour by hour and day by day. We cannot retain self and yet enter the kingdom of God. If we ever attain unto holiness, it will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of Christ.

Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified. Are we willing to pay the price required of us? Are we willing to have our will brought into perfect conformity to the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace of God cannot be manifest upon us.

The warfare which we are to wage is the "good fight of faith." "I also labour," said the apostle Paul, "striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." Colossians 1:29. *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 141-144.

Let us remember, "It is through the will that sin retains its hold upon us." *Ibid.*, 61. God has made provisions that we may become like Him. See *Ibid.*, 76-78; *My Life Today*, 318.

Every day that you remain in sin, you are in Satan's ranks; and should you sicken and die without repentance, you would be lost. *Review and Herald*, December 24, 1889.

God's Rule, Not Man's
If Christ is to be our Redeemer, He must also be our Ruler:

Let this point be fully settled in every mind: If we accept Christ as a Redeemer, we must accept Him as a Ruler. We cannot have the assurance and perfect confiding trust in Christ as our Saviour until we acknowledge Him as our King and are obedient to His commandments. Thus we evidence our allegiance to God. We have then the genuine ring in our faith, for it

THEOCRACY

is a working faith. It works by love. Speak it from your heart: "Lord, I believe Thou hast died to redeem my soul. If Thou hast placed such a value upon the soul as to give Thy life for mine, I will respond. I give my life and all its possibilities, in all my weakness, into Thy keeping." *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 823.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us now renounce our laodicean condition and pray for the latter rain. It is coming soon! Let us now prepare our characters by daily prayer and study of the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy. Let us cast off the rule of man and obey God first:

Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. Jeremiah 17:5.

There is a curse on those who disobey God and accept the words—the rule—of men, when it is contrary to His Word. The latter rain will bring the faithful under the direct rule of God. In closing, we must again turn to the inspired Testimony, which previews the closing scenes of the great controversy:

Oh, that the Lord might guide you! You should never in a single instance allow hearsay to move you to action, and yet you have sometimes done this. Never take action to narrow and circumscribe the work unless you know that you are moved to do so by the Spirit of the Lord. Our people are doing work for foreign missions, but there are home missions that need their help just as much as these foreign missions. We should make efforts to show our people the wants of the cause of God, and to open before them the need of using means that God has entrusted to them to advance the work of the Master both at home and abroad.

Unless those who can help in _ are aroused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will

THEOCRACY

always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness. Those who are accounted good workers will need to draw nigh to God, they will need the divine touch. They will need to drink more deeply and continuously at the fountain of living water, in order that they may discern God's work at every point. Workers may make mistakes, but you should give them a chance to correct their errors, give them an opportunity to learn caution, by leaving the work in their hands. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 299-300.

When God again takes the reins of His beloved Seventh-day Adventist Church, we will be under His rule—His theocracy:

This, oh this is what is needed in the hearts of all our institutions! It is the knowledge of God; and men must not lift up themselves in their own finite wisdom, as did ancient Israel — take themselves out of the hands of God, and think in their human wisdom and supposed smartness they can do much better when left to their own imaginings. Thus thought the inhabitants of the world

destroyed by a flood. When they fully decided that they had no need of God, then the Lord decided He had no need of them, and they and all their wicked works perished in the waters of the flood. Oh God, make us know Thy ways and to choose to be led and guided by Thy unerring counsel. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 777.

May that be the prayer of each and every one of us.