

Dear friend of Secrets Unsealed,

It has certainly been a while since our last newsletter. We have received numerous calls, emails and letters wondering the reason for the delay so I will explain. This year's Anchor Schools of Theology were particularly taxing. I had to translate a 600-page syllabus from English to Spanish as well as prepare a 250-page syllabus in English on the Hebrew Feasts. The job was so intensive that I had to put many things on the backburner. However, the good news is that we are now on track again and you can expect to receive our newsletter on a timely basis. Thanks for your understanding.

My article in this newsletter is part three of a four part series (part four in our next newsletter "Reflections on the Papal Socialist Game Plan"). The first two articles dealt with the papal strategy for these last days and articles #3 and 4 continue and conclude the series. I trust that you will enjoy this article on how the papacy is strategizing to enlist the civil powers of the world for the final battle against the remnant.

We so appreciate your prayers and financial support that help us continue carrying Present Truth to the church and the world. Please be assured of our prayers and I leave you with the glorious promise: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."



In the Blessed Hope, Shupaul Bah

Pastor Stephen P. Bohr President and Speaker, Secrets Unsealed

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I first saw your sermons on an Internet TV-Station called "Light Channel" in the late night hours.

I really liked what I heard. Later I tried to get more in the Internet and found loads of presentations on YouTube. Since many months I'm working myself through the large collection. The way you present God's Word is amazing, so inspiring and very helpful. I have several friends who found you too on their own and are very enthused about the message. What I really appreciate, is your chronological method like in the series Cracking the Genesis Code. It inspired me to my first sermon which I held last Sabbath! Thank you so much! The sisters and brothers really liked it and I got a lot of positive remarks! The theme was God's reliability, trust-worthiness and love throughout the Old Testament for protecting the promised seed, the controversy between the seed of the woman and the seed of the snake and that this liability of God will carry us through the end-time."

Bun, Cambodia

"Thanks brother Bohr for all your other videos. You and another pastor help me to leave the Catholic faith and come back to the faith! Forty years was enough of the big lie! I used to see some of your videos on cable, and now on YouTube Hallelujah. I'm even back to reading Ellen White's Steps to Christ which I love and The Great Controversy."

"I couldn't explain it. It shouldn't have been possible since the TV wasn't connected to the cable and I didn't have an antenna on it! But the picture and sound were sharp and clear. Somehow I was receiving Better Live TV! Stephen Bohr was talking about the importance of studying the heavenly sanctuary and he mentioned a lady by the name of Ellen White. I learned about Steps to Christ and I have so many things I wrote down from that one day. Then I started reading the Bible. I understood that I could do nothing of myself. It brought me to my knees."

RANDY, OREGON

"My husband and I just got to know a woman who is so grateful for your ministry."

IRIS, GERMANY



"I just wanted to thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend the Secrets Unsealed Summit through sponsorship. The whole program was a blessing to me! I appreciate your generosity and all the hard work you all do for this ministry. May God continue to bless all of you and your efforts."

KARINA, CALIFORNIA

"Recently, I viewed His Way Is In the Sanctuary on the internet. It took a while to digest all of the vital information contained in just the first of the series. Now I can't wait to order the study guides that stride with these lessons. Although I have been an Adventist for almost 40 years, I have never realized the importance of this study before. My hope is to delve into this study, then gradually persuade my church to teach this as well. On a note, I shared my experience with another church member. She did not realize that the church taught this subject. Nevertheless grasp the truth contained. Please pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide."

KATHIE

"Today, Alexandria and Elvis were baptized. The Holy Spirit led them to the truth and out of the evangelical church. They discovered the truth of the Sabbath and through your preaching on the internet they have been studying. One month ago they arrived at our Adventist church and today both made their decision despite having been baptized in their old church. Glory to God, thank you for being an instrument of the Lord."

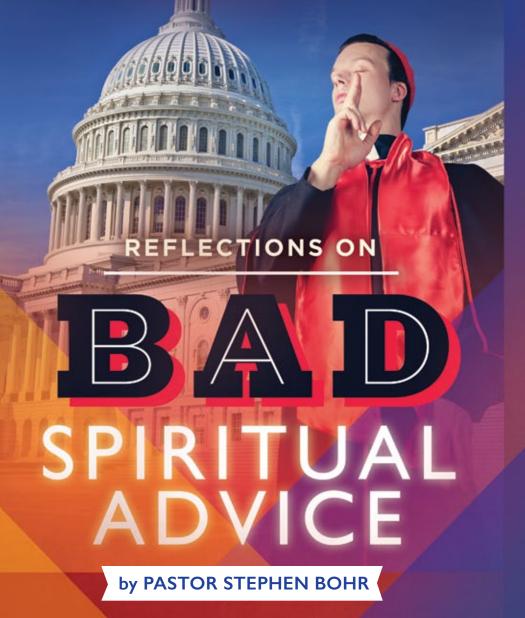
José, Venezuela

"I live in New Zealand and love all the teachings I have followed of Pastor Bohr. I thank God for you Pastor and pray for you every day. I am now studying *His Way Is In the Sanctuary*. Just did *The Sanctuary Shall Be Cleansed, Part 1* about Daniel 8. Next week, God willing, I will do Part 2. It is wonderful that you explain the Hebrew words so in detail and it makes it so much more real. What a wonderful time we live in; being taught by someone on the other side of the world."

MARTHIE, NEW ZEALAND

"I received the *Hebrew Religious Calendar* syllabus today. In my opinion, there never will be a more detailed, more complete, more definitive compilation of fabulous quotations about the subject than what is found in this syllabus. It's beyond comparison and a work that belongs in every Christian home, especially in homes of Seventhday Adventists willing to read it carefully from cover to cover to shield them from SDA parasites."

RICHARD, CALIFORNIA



The Dangers of Prophetic Speculation

t was November of 1960. I was living in Caracas, Venezuela where my parents were missionaries and although I was only 10 years old at the time, (now I have given away my age!) I well remember that the attention of Seventh-day Adventist church members was riveted upon the historic United States presidential election. For the first time in the country's history, John F. Kennedy, a Roman Catholic, had won the presidency and those well versed in Seventh-day Adventist eschatology, were quite certain that the national Sunday law was right around the corner. Pre-

dictions were certain and preparations for the imminent time of trouble made.

However, for some strange reason, the prophets in our midst seemed to ignore or brush aside an eloquent speech that John F. Kennedy had given to the Houston Ministerial Alliance on September 12, 1960. The Protestant ministers in Texas had expressed serious misgivings about whether Kennedy would obey the United States Constitution or the Pope of Rome and therefore the ministerial alliance invited him to explain his beliefs on the separation of church and state.

John F. Kennedy

Although a Roman Catholic, John F. Kennedy showed in his speech that he clearly understood the foundational principles upon which the United States was built and he assured the Protestant pastors in Texas that if he became president, he would follow the Constitution rather than the Pope. In his usual eloquent style, Kennedy said:

"I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is <u>absolute</u>; where no Catholic prelate would tell the President—should he be Catholic—how to act, and no Protestant minister would tell his parishioners for whom to vote; where no church or church school is granted any <u>public funds</u> or political preference, and where no man is denied <u>public office</u> merely because his religion differs from the President who might appoint him, or the people who might elect him.

I believe in an America that is officially neither Catholic, Protestant nor Jewish; where no public official either requests or accepts instructions on public policy from the Pope, the National Council of Churches or any other ecclesiastical source; where no religious body seeks to impose its will directly or indirectly upon the general populace or the public acts of its officials, and where religious liberty is so indivisible that an act against one church is treated as an act against all."

The fact that Kennedy lived up to his word, shows that we must be careful about predicting with specificity, what presidents will or will not do. Some conspiracy theorists even believe that Kennedy's firm stance on the separation of church and state cost him his life. Who knows?

The Trump Card?

Fast forward to 2017. Various Seventhday Adventists have proposed all sorts of speculative scenarios about President Donald Trump's future actions. Some see him as an instrument in the hands of the Jesuits while others strongly differ. Some have predicted that Trump will issue an executive order forcing everyone to keep Sunday (in spite of the fact that his son-in-law is a Jew and his daughter is a Jewish convert). However, we need to be careful about specific predictions lest we turn out to be false prophets. There is no doubt that we can know the general contours of how prophecy will fulfill but we must be extremely careful about predicting the precise things that specific presidents will do. So, what do we know for sure about the future of the United States? Following is a summary that we will flush out in this article.

We know that the papacy will once again receive the support of the political systems of the world (Revelation 13:3; 17:1, 2). We know that because of increasing social, economic and natural calamities, Protestant ministers will influence their church members to lobby members of Congress for a National Sunday Law (The Great Controversy, pp. 589, 590). We know that the Roman Catholic papacy will encourage Protestants in the endeavor, and in the end, the United States will make an image of what the papacy was during the 1,260 years, uniting church and state. We also know that eventually every country on the globe will follow the example of the United States.

Some have pointed out that a lion's share of President Trump's advisors are Jesuits or have studied in Jesuit institutions. This is true. However, a word of caution is in order. Trump seems to be at odds with Pope Francis on almost every issue. President Trump favors capitalism with few regulations and the Pope is a socialist. Trump favors **nationalism** ('America First') while the Pope favors a New World Order. Trump's budget allows for a huge military buildup (by billions of dollars) while the Pope is for disarmament. Trump strongly opposes illegal immigration (building a wall along the southern border) but the Pope is for open borders. Trump is highly skeptical about climate change (signing the Keystone pipeline executive order and deregulating the coal industry) while the Pope has made climate change his top agenda item. Trump does not favor spreading the wealth of the United

States to poorer nations while the Pope favors a redistribution of wealth from the rich nations to the poorer ones. Trump claims to be a convert to **social conservatism** (against abortion, gay marriage, transgender, etc.) but the Pope has placed these social issues on the back burner of his pontificate. Thus, the policy differences between Trump and the Pope appear to be as broad and deep as the Grand Canyon!

On the other hand, Trump does seem to have a love affair with the evangelicals who supported him overwhelmingly (in spite of his moral failings!) in the election. Trump has stated that he plans to get rid of the 1954 Johnson rule that forbids non-profit religious organizations from endorsing and lobbying for any particular political party (see the article on p. 28 of this newsletter). Several remarks by Trump during the campaign reveal that his views on the separation of church and state are deficient.

The differences between Trump and the pope, and Trump's tendency to court the Evangelicals leads one to wonder what role Trump will personally play in the fulfillment of end-time events. Will he personally fall in line with the papacy's global aspirations? Will he cave to the desires of the Protestant clergy for a Sunday law? The answer is that we do not yet know, but we should keep our eyes wide open and be vigilant. There is an abundance of pro-Sunday legislation chatter in the media these days and yet at the same time, lawmakers are striking Sunday Blue Laws from the books right and left. How does this fit with our prophetic scenario? We do not yet know but one thing is certain: The nations of the world and the United States will draw up and enforce a Sunday law <u>following the advice</u> of the papacy and apostate Protestantism.

Samson's Secret

There is a story in the Bible that might serve as an analogy of what is ahead for the United States. We are all acquainted with the story of the muscleman, Samson. There was a secret to his power and strength, his obedience to God in not cutting his long hair. However, a relentless harlot woman was successful in enticing him into an illicit sexual relationship, and as a result, she discovered his secret, cut his hair and it led to his ruin.

Likewise, the United States has a secret of its power and prosperity: "Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity. The oppressed and downtrodden throughout Christendom have turned to this land with interest and hope. Millions have sought its shores, and the United States has risen to a place among the most powerful nations of the earth." GC, p. 441

Unfortunately, the government of the United States will also repudiate the secret of its power and prosperity by allowing a spiritual harlot to entice the nation into an illicit relationship with the state. The result will be that the relentless harlot will lead the nation to repudiate the secret of its power and prosperity and the result will be a national apostasy that will lead to national ruin. Ellen White wrote:

"Roman Catholic principles will be taken under the care and protection of the state. This national apostasy will speedily be followed by national ruin." The Review and Herald, June 15, 1897

The Exceptionalism of the United States

Alexis de Tocqueville, French political thinker and historian, toured the United States from 1831 to 1833 and after careful observation of its political system wrote the famous two-volume set, **Democracy in America**. When he interviewed American political thinkers as to why there was so much peace and prosperity in the United States, they told him that it was mainly because of the separation of church and state. In his own words:

"... all attributed the peaceful dominion of religion in their country mainly to separation of church and state. I do not hesitate to confirm that during my stay in America I did not meet a single individual, of the clergy of the laity, who was not of the same opinion." (Democracy in America, volume 1, p. 308)

The founding Fathers of the United States lived during the period of the French Revolution at the conclusion of which the papacy received its deadly wound. The memory of the sordid history of the 1,260-year period was fresh in their minds and they knew all about the evils of the harlot church, using the power of the state to further its own agenda.

<u>Thomas Jefferson</u> wrote to Jeremiah Moore (a Baptist minister and evan-

gelist) on August 14, 1800 about the dangers of the clergy getting involved in the political process: "The clergy, by getting themselves established by law and ingrafted into the machine of government, have been a very formidable engine against the civil and religious rights of man."

In a letter to Horatio G. Spafford (an American lawyer and elder of the Presbyterian Church) dated March 14, 1814, Thomas Jefferson warned about the nefarious results of the clergy uniting with the civil power: "In every country and in every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty. He is always in alliance with the Despot abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own."

James Madison, in a letter to Alexander von Humboldt (a Prussian geographer, naturalist, and explorer) on December 6, 1813 added his own testimony: "History, I believe furnishes no example of a priest-ridden people maintaining a free civil government. This marks the lowest grade of ignorance, of which their civil as well as religious leaders will always avail themselves for their own purposes."

Ellen White, who was born only 29 years after the papacy received its deadly wound remarked about the thinking of the founding fathers: "The founders of the nation wisely sought to guard against the employment of secular power on the part of the church, with its inevitable result—intolerance and persecution." GC, p. 442

And, she warned: "The union of the church with the state be the degree <u>neverso slight</u>, while it may appear to bring

the world nearer to the church, does in reality but bring the <u>church nearer to</u> <u>the world</u>." The Great Controversy, p. 297

Dangerous Counsel

The crucial question is this: What would lead politicians in the United States to repudiate the secret of its power and prosperity? The answer is that the Protestant clergy will **counsel and influence** the civil government to enact a National Sunday Law, thus officially trampling on the Fourth Commandment of God's Law. Ellen White described it this way:

"The <u>clergy</u> will put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light lest it should shine upon their flocks." GC, p. 607

"Ministers who deny the obligation of the divine law will present from the pulpit the duty of yielding obedience to the civil authorities as ordained of God. In legislative halls and courts of justice, commandment keepers will be misrepresented and condemned. A false coloring will be given to their words; the worst construction will be put upon their motives." GC, p. 592

In the Multitude of Counselors

The wise man, Solomon, once wrote the well-known words: "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the <u>multitude</u> <u>of counsellors</u> there is safety." (Proverbs 11:14, KJV)

We must take this statement, of course, with a grain of salt. It is true that in the multitude of counselors there is safety, as long as the counselors

are wise! There are many examples where a multitude of <u>unwise</u> counselors of kings and rulers has led to the ruin of individuals and nations.

Scripture has many examples. Who can forget the 400 false prophets of Ahab who counseled him to go to war to his own demise and the wicked

religious counselors that enticed King Nebuchadnezzar to set up his golden image? In addition, what about the wicked advisors of King Darius who were intent on destroying Daniel and the evil counselors who suggested to the civil power that Jeremiah should be put to death? Even further, we see the mean-spirited religious leaders who strong-armed Pilate to execute Jesus and the Sanhedrin that voted to put Peter and John to death.

History has shown that when religious leaders deviously and deceitfully counsel the civil power to enforce their beliefs and practices, the result has been persecution against those who dissent. However, history also reveals that not infrequently, the political power later repudiates its religious counselors and turns against them.

The Establishment Clause

In Romans 13, the apostle Paul admonished believers to obey the secular powers because God appointed them to preserve the civil order. Christians are to be exemplary citizens, and can practice civil disobedience only when



the civil power interferes with their freedom of conscience. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God admonished Israel to submit to the authority of King Nebuchadnezzar, and yet God did not require their submission to be unconditional.

The story of Daniel 3 illustrates when it is allowable to disobey the ruling authorities. King Nebuchadnezzar, the civil ruler, raised up an image and commanded all nations and languages to bow down and worship it. Notably, the idea to build this image came from the advice of the Chaldeans, who were the religious leaders of Babylon:

"The <u>wise men</u> of his realm, taking advantage of this and of his <u>return to</u> <u>idolatry</u>, proposed that he make an image similar to the one seen in his dream, and set it up where all might behold the head of gold, which had been interpreted as representing his kingdom." <u>PK</u>, p. 504

Thus, by the <u>bad advice</u> of the religious leaders, the civil power <u>established</u> a religious observance and when it did, the result was persecution and the loss of civil rights for those who did not comply. In addition, when the three

young Hebrews refused to worship the image, the religious leaders once again accused them before the king.

The three young Hebrew men were exemplary citizens and obeyed all the king's <u>legitimate</u> laws. It was only when the king followed the <u>evil advice</u> of his religious advisors in violating their conscience that they practiced civil disobedience.

When the religious leaders of Babylon gave the king <u>bad advice</u>, the lives of the faithful remnant appeared to be in hopeless jeopardy. However, the central theme of Daniel 3 is <u>deliverance</u>. When the king boasted: "Who is the God who will <u>deliver</u> you from my hands?" the young men replied, "our God whom we serve is able to <u>deliver</u> us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will <u>deliver</u> us from your hand, O king."

When the king cast the young men into the fiery furnace, the Son of God in person, came to <u>deliver</u> His servants. Notably, Nebuchadnezzar realized that the Son of God was <u>the Angel of the LORD</u> (Daniel 3:25, 28), another name for Michael the Archangel, the deliverer of His people at the end of time (Daniel 12:1).

Although the king did not immediately turn against his deceitful religious advisors, he did warn them that if they spoke anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego he would turn against them, chop them up and raze their houses to the ground!

"Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this." (Daniel 3:28, 29)

Daniel 3 teaches us some important lessons about what will occur spiritually and globally in the end of time. Revelation 13:11-18 describes a land beast that will establish religion by raising up an image and commanding everyone to worship it on pain of death. The fulfillment of this will come when the Protestant ministers in the United States will give bad advice to the state influencing it to make an image of/to the papacy and to withdraw the civil rights of those who practice civil disobedience.

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States has three clauses. The first two guarantee religious liberty and the third guarantees civil liberties. The first clause forbids the civil government to <u>establish</u> religion and the second forbids it from curtailing its <u>free exercise</u>. The religious and civil clauses are closely related. The founding fathers well knew that a violation of the establishment and free exercise clauses of the Constitution would eventually lead to the loss of civil liberties as well.

Ellen White wrote that the trial in the Valley of Dura would take place once more on a global scale: "Satan has taken the world captive. He has introduced an <u>idol sabbath</u>, apparently giving to it great importance. He has stolen the homage of the Christian world away from the Sabbath of the Lord for this <u>idol sabbath</u>. The world bows to a tradition, a <u>manmade commandment</u>. <u>As</u> Nebuchadnezzar <u>set up his golden</u>

<u>image</u> on the plain of Dura, and so exalted himself, so Satan exalts himself in this false sabbath, for which he has stolen the livery of heaven." <u>The Review and Herald</u>, March 8, 1898

This story of Daniel 3 will repeat on a global scale with spiritual Israel in the crisis ahead. Daniel 11:40-12:1 vividly describes the trial that God's faithful people will face in the end time. The king of the north (the papacy) will recover the power it lost, when the clergy in the United States will advise the state to establish the observance of Sunday and forbid the observance of the Sabbath. A fiery time of trouble will ensue for God's people. To all human appearances, God's faithful people would be wiped off the face of the earth. However, when all seems lost, Michael the Archangel will stand up to defend His people and deliver them from certain death (Daniel 12:1):

"At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who <u>stands watch</u> over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time and at that time your people <u>shall</u> <u>be delivered</u>, everyone who is found written in the book."

The Free-Exercise Clause

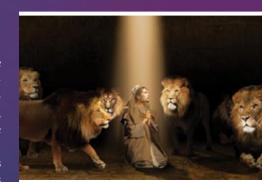
The story of Daniel 6 is similar to the one in Daniel 3, but there is a difference. Whereas the king in Daniel 3 **established** a religious observance, King Darius in Daniel 6 forbade the **free exercise** of religion.

The story is well known. Daniel was an exemplary citizen and his enemies

could find no accusation against him with regard to the legitimate civil laws of the kingdom. Therefore, they decided to <u>influence the king</u> to forbid Daniel from the <u>free exercise</u> of his religious practices. In their own words: "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God." (Daniel 6:5)

However, Daniel's enemies had a problem. They knew that the king loved Daniel and would never make any decree that would jeopardize his religious practices and much less his life. Therefore, they deviously and wickedly deceived the king, advising him to make a decree that would curtail Daniel from praying to his God. It is important to realize that this law did not prescribe or establish a certain prayer but rather forbade Daniel's free exercise right to pray to His God:

"All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions." (Daniel 6:7)



When Daniel heard about the religious decree given by the civil power, he practiced civil disobedience. He stared death in the face with unflinching loyalty to God. Ellen White remarks: "In all cases where the king had a right to command, Daniel would obey; but neither the king nor his decree could make him swerve from allegiance to the King of kings." Prophets and Kings, p. 542

As in the story of Daniel 3, the central concept of chapter 6 is deliverance. We are told that the king did all that he could to deliver Daniel, but he was bound by his own law (Daniel 6:14). After all human avenues for deliverance were exhausted, the king told Daniel: "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you." When the king came to the lion's den in the morning, he exclaimed, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" to which Daniel answered:

"My God <u>sent His angel</u> and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you." Daniel 6:22

It should not surprise us that the <u>Angel</u> (Michael the Archangel) who delivered the three young Hebrews from the fiery furnace also came to deliver Daniel from the mouths of the lions.

However, the deliverance of Daniel from the lion's den is not the climax to the story. The civil ruler, who had been deceived into giving the decree by the instigation of his evil advisors, turned on them and had them thrown into the

lion's den: "Thus was the servant of God delivered and the snare which his enemies had laid for his destruction proved to be their own ruin. At the command of the king they were cast into the den, and instantly devoured by the wild beasts." The Sanctified Life, p. 45

The question frequently comes up: Why did God allow Daniel and his friends to face death? Here is the answer: "God did not prevent Daniel's enemies from casting him into the lions' den; He permitted evil angels and wicked men thus far to accomplish their purpose; but it was that He might make the deliverance of His servant more marked, and the defeat of the enemies of truth and righteousness more complete. 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee' (Psalm 76:10), the psalmist has testified. Through the courage of this one man who chose to follow right rather than policy, Satan was to be defeated, and the name of God was to be exalted and honored." Prophets and Kings, p. 543, 544

Why did God intervene to deliver His faithful remnant? The text of Scripture gives us an unequivocal answer. Daniel served his God **continually** (Daniel 6:16, 20) and he had **faith** in his God (Daniel 6:23). The book of Hebrews tells us that through faith Daniel and his friends 'stopped the mouths of lions and quenched the violence of fire' (Hebrews 11:33, 34).

Their loyalty to their God was more important than life itself: "Those who would rather die than perform a wrong act are the only ones who will be found faithful." Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 53

In the Days of Esther

The story of Esther also illustrates the dire consequences of bad religious advice. King Ahasuerus had a trusted advisor whose name was Haman and the king had commanded all his subjects to bow before him (Esther 3:1, 2). The homage that Haman demanded was far more than simple bowing out of courtesy and respect. The homage that he expected was one of reverential worship and this kind of worship Mordecai was not willing to render (Esther 3:2): "Mordecai had done Haman no harm, but had simply refused to show him worshipful reverence." PK, p. 600

When Mordecai refused to obey the king's order to bow before Haman, Haman went to complain to the king and advised him to give a decree to destroy Mordecai and his people. Notably, Haman deviously and deceitfully kept the identity of the people secret. Here are Haman's arguments to the king:

"There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people, and they do not keep the king's laws therefore, it is not fitting for the king to let them remain. If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed." (Esther 3:8, 9)

Like the enemies of Daniel, Haman gave the king bad religious advice and the king bought his story, thinking that it was for the security and prosperity of the nation: "Misled by the false statements of Haman, Xerxes was induced to issue a decree providing for the massacre of all the Jews 'scattered abroad

and dispersed among the people in all the provinces' of the Medo-Persian kingdom. Little did the king realize the farreaching results that would have accompanied the complete carrying out of this decree." <u>PK</u>, p. 600

"Satan himself, the hidden instigator of the scheme, was trying to <u>rid</u> the earth of those who preserved the <u>knowledge of the true God</u>." PK, pp. 600, 601

As in the days of Daniel, all power appeared to be in the hands of the Haman. However, through Esther, Israel's mediator and advocate, Haman's wicked plot was unmasked before the king. When the king realized that his 'trusted' advisor had deceived him, he was enraged against him and the very weapon that was to destroy Mordecai, destroyed Haman:

"Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine and went into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king ... Then the king said, 'Hang him on it!' So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's wrath subsided." (Esther 7:7-10)

The Spirit of Prophecy clearly predicted a repetition of the story of Esther with spiritual Israel on a global scale at the end of time: "History repeats itself. The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is now at work to gain control of the fallen churches, that through them he may condemn and put to death all who will not worship the idol sabbath ... But if the people of God will put their trust in

Him and by faith rely upon His power the devices of Satan will be defeated in our time <u>as signally as in the days of</u> <u>Mordecai.</u>" Christ Triumphant, p. 366

The 1,260 Years

Multiple sources have documented the sad story of the 1,260 years of papal dominion. During this time, the religious leaders of the church advised the strong arm of the state to persecute and torture those who did not agree with its doctrines and practices. Millions upon millions were tortured, tried and slaughtered simply for following the convictions of their conscience. The evil dignitaries of the Church poisoned the minds of the kings of Europe leading them to think that the stability of their kingdoms was at risk as long as they allowed the 'heretics' to live. Concerning the papacy's evil influence upon the kings of Europe, Ellen White wrote:

"In strict justice they [the horrors of the French Revolution] are to be charged upon the church. Popery had poisoned the minds of kings against the Reformation, as an enemy to the crown, an element of discord that would be fatal to the peace and harmony of the nation. It was the genius of Rome that by this means inspired the direst cruelty and the most galling oppression that proceeded from the throne." GC, p. 276, 277

Ellen White described how the wicked counsel of the Catholic priests and prelates <u>advised</u> the state and the populace to massacre the Huguenots in France: "But blackest in the black catalogue of crime, most horrible among

the fiendish deeds of all the dreadful centuries, was the St. Bartholomew Massacre. The world still recalls with shuddering horror the scenes of that most cowardly and cruel onslaught. The king of France, urged on by Romish priests and prelates, lent his sanction to the dreadful work. A bell, tolling at dead of night, was a signal for the slaughter. Protestants by thousands, sleeping quietly in their homes, trusting to the plighted honor of their king, were dragged forth without a warning and murdered in cold blood." GC, p. 272

The apostle Paul wrote the wellknown dictum: "Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). This dictum not only applies to individuals but also to nations. The backlash eventually came when, in the French Revolution, the state and the proletariat turned against the Church leadership, and they reaped what they had sown. The populace was sick and tired of having the Church control the state to the detriment of the people, and the religious leaders reaped what they had sown when they were killed in the very place where God's people had been mercilessly mowed down:

"Unhappy France reaped in blood the harvest she had sown. Terrible were the results of her submission to the controlling power of Rome. Where France, under the influence of Romanism, had set up the first stake at the opening of the Reformation, there the Revolution set up its first guillotine. On the very spot where the first martyrs to the Protestant faith were burned in the sixteenth century, the first victims were guillotined in the eighteenth." GC, p. 282

"The example of persecution which the <u>clergy of France</u> had exhibited for so many ages was now <u>retorted upon them</u> with signal vigor. The scaffolds ran red with the <u>blood of the priests</u>. The galleys and the prisons, once crowded with Huguenots, were now filled with their persecutors. Chained to the bench and toiling at the oar, the <u>Roman Catholic clergy</u> experienced all those woes which <u>their church</u> had so freely inflicted on the gentle heretics." GC, p. 283

A Repetition of History

As every knowledgeable Seventh-day Adventist knows, the Protestant clergy in 1888 were attempting to strong arm the Congress of the United States to draft a national Sunday law. They desired all of the Protestant churches to come together (some even suggested recruiting the Catholics to help in the endeavor) to put pressure on their congressional representatives to enact and enforce Sunday as the national day of rest.

One of the leaders of the movement, Sam Small, preached a sermon in Kansas City in January of 1888 where he stated: "I want see the day come when the church shall be the arbiter of all legislation, State, national, and municipal; when the great churches of the country can come together harmoniously, and issue their edict, and the legislative powers will respect it, and enact it into laws." A. T. Jones, Civil Government and Religion, p. 63

The Elgin Convention argued that a Sunday law would be natural, biblical, civil, American and patriotic. The implication was that whoever opposed the law was against nature, the Bible, the government and patriotism:

"Resolved, that we recognize the Sabbath as an institution of God, revealed in nature and the Bible, and of perpetual obligation on all men; and also as a civil and American institution, bound up in vital and historical connection with the origin and foundation of our Government, the growth of our polity, and necessary to be maintained in order for the preservation and integrity of our national system, and therefore as having a sacred claim on all patriotic American citizens." A. T. Jones, Civil Government and Religion, p. 94

In his book, Civil Government and Religion, A. T. Jones documented several cases of Seventh-day Adventists who were fined and imprisoned for not complying with state and local Blue Laws. Although the 1888 push for a national Sunday law was defeated, the evil spirit that prompted it did not die in 1888. Prophecy foretells a revival of the Sunday law movement in the United States just before the close of probation.

The Papal Role and the 2030 Agenda

The Spirit of Prophecy has clearly outlined the papacy's end game. The first step is to gain the trust and support of the civil powers of the world because the Sunday law will eventually be universal.

Malachi Martin, the Roman Catholic Jesuit exorcist, wrote in 1986 that since the French Revolution, the major secular powers of Europe have placed a restraint upon the papacy:

"[For] fifteen hundred years and more, [papal] Rome had kept as strong a hand as possible in each local community around the wide world. By and large, and admitting some exceptions, that had been the Roman view [Ellen White calls it the 'Roman element' GC, p. 581] until two hundred years of inactivity had been imposed upon the papacy by the major secular powers of the world." Quoted in Christianity Today (November 21, 1986), p. 26.

In order for the papacy to recover from its straight jacket, the civil powers of the world must once again lend the papacy their support. Ellen White predicted that when the restraint of the secular governments is removed, the papacy will once again behave as it did in the past.

"Let the <u>restraints</u> now imposed by secular <u>governments</u> [plural] be removed and Rome be <u>reinstated</u> in her former power, and there would speedily be a <u>revival</u> of her tyranny and persecution." <u>GC</u>, p. 564

Along with gaining the support of the civil powers of the world, the papacy aims to overcome Protestantism by uniting with them on common points of doctrine:

"The clergy will put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command, they will endeavor to suppress the discussion of these vital questions. The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and, in this work [of the church appealing to the strong arm of civil power], papists and Protestants unite." GC, p. 607

Little do the members of the Protestant churches realize the dangers of compromising and conceding to the aspirations of the papacy! Rude will be their awakening when they realize that their religious leaders have deceived them (see below).

"Protestants have tampered with and patronized popery; they have made compromises and concessions which papists themselves are surprised to see and fail to understand. Men are closing their eyes to the real character of Romanism and the dangers to be apprehended from her supremacy. The people need to be aroused to resist the advances of this most dangerous foe to civil and religious liberty." GC, p. 566

Having gained the trust and support of the Protestants in the United States, the papacy will then encourage them to lobby Congress for a national Sunday law: "When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result." GC, p. 445

"Then the <u>Catholics bid the Protestants</u> to go forward, and issue a decree that all who will not observe the first day of the week, instead of the seventh day, shall be slain, and the Catholics, whose numbers are large, will <u>stand by the Protestants</u>. The <u>Catholics will give their power</u> to the image of the beast and the Protestants will work as their mother worked before them to destroy

the saints." Ellen G. White, <u>Spaulding</u> <u>Magan Collection</u>, pp. 1, 2.

Finally, every country on the globe will follow the example of the United States: "History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image of Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath.... The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 976

"As America, the land of religious liberty shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example." 6T, volume 6, p. 18

"The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which <u>all the world</u> will act a part." <u>6T</u>, volume 6, p. 352

"Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world." 6T, volume 6, p. 395

"The substitution of the false for the true is the last act in the drama. When this <u>substitution becomes universal</u> God will reveal Himself. When the laws of men are exalted above the laws of God, when the powers of this earth try to force men to keep the first day of the week, know that the time has come for God to work." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 980

Papal To-Do List

The key item on the papal to-do list is to win the trust and confidence of the civil powers of the world (especially the United States) and then <u>advise</u> them to implement its agenda. In order to accomplish this, the papacy has recognized that it must change its traditional talking points.

During the conservative pontificates of John Paul II and Benedict XVI, the papal talking points focused primarily on marriage between a man and a woman, euthanasia, abortion, and other conservative social causes. Of course, the political leaders of the world and the secular media frowned upon these causes so the papacy needed to implement a more liberal agenda.

It is a fact that ever since the sixties. the Jesuits have been chipping away at the idea that church dogma is set in stone. They realize that in order for the papacy to gain the trust of the political leaders of the world, it must embrace the causes that they stand for. This is the real reason why Pope Benedict was strong-armed to 'retire' from the papal throne. The papacy needed a liberal Pope who would not focus on the orthodoxy of church dogma but rather on the causes that pleased the politicians of the world. A fascinating read in this regard is the book by Malachi Martin, The Iesuits where he documents the steady slide of the Roman Catholic hierarchy from conservative to liberal.

Ellen White hit the nail on the head when she compared the papacy to a chameleon: "It is a part of her policy to

assume the character which will best accomplish her purpose; but beneath the variable appearance of the chameleon she conceals the invariable venom of the serpent." The Great Controversy, p. 571

This shift away from church dogma (and the Bible) in order to please the contemporary liberal, post-modern mind is seen in an interview of Giuseppe Rusconi with Father Arturo Sosa Abascal, the recently elected Superior of the Jesuit Order. When Rusconi reminded Abascal that Cardinal Gerhard Muller (the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, formerly the Office of the Inquisition) had stated that the words of Jesus concerning marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman were clear, and that 'no power in heaven and on earth, neither an angel nor the Pope, neither a council nor a law of the bishops had the faculty to modify them', (Matthew 19:4-6) Abascal responded that the words of Jesus were never recorded and therefore there is no basis for a 'black and white' church doctrine on lifelong marriage between one man and one woman.

In Abascal's own words: "Over the last century in the Church there has been a great blossoming of studies that seek to understand exactly what Jesus meant ... That is not relativism, but attests that the word is relative, the Gospel is written by human beings, it is accepted by the church, which is made up of human persons ... So it is true that no one can change the word of Jesus, but one must know what it was!"

During the pontificate of Francis I,

the first Jesuit Pope in history, the traditional social talking points have all but faded from view. The topics of discussion now are climate change, poverty, spreading the wealth of the rich to the poor and immigration, which are causes that political leaders and the United Nations can identify with. The politicians of the world revealed their enthusiastic approval of these causes when the 193 nations represented gave the Pope a thunderous standing ovation when he finished his inaugural speech at the 70th anniversary of the General Assembly of the United Nations in September of 2015.

Revelation and the End Game

Revelation 17 describes, in living color, the fulfillment of an earlier passage, Revelation 13:11-18. Chapter 17 portrays a harlot woman whose name is **Babylon** (17:5). She sits on many waters, that is, upon nations, multitudes, tongues and people (17:1, 15). She sustains an adulterous spiritual relationship with the kings of the earth (17:2) and they seem to enjoy the relationship because they gladly drink her fermented wine of false doctrine (17:2) and proclaim decrees against those who refuse to drink with them. She is clothed in purple and scarlet, gold and precious stones (17:4) and has daughters that were born from her because she is the 'mother of harlots' (17:5). She is also deeply involved in the world economy (Revelation 18), and most significantly, she sheds the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus (17:6). In herself, the harlot has

no power to destroy the saints of the Most High because she has no military might. However, if she can <u>deceive</u> the civil powers of the world to do her bidding, then she will exert global power by using them for her evil purposes.

Ellen White described the wrath of the kings against God's people when they drink the harlot's fermented wine: "It is a wrath which is created by false doctrines, and when kings and presidents drink this wine of the wrath of her fornication, they are stirred with anger against those who will not come into harmony with the false and satanic heresies which exalt the false sabbath, and lead men to trample underfoot God's memorial." TM, p. 61

The wise man, Solomon, once warned about the danger of kings drinking wine: "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes intoxicating drink; lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the justice of all the afflicted." (Proverbs 31:4-5)

The Hebrew word that is translated 'law' in the KJV ('decreed' in most recent versions) is not the common word, Torah, but rather a much less used word in the Old Testament. The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament states that the word 'has the primary meaning of cutting in or engraving in stone' (from Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. Copyright © 1980 by, the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago). We can hardly ignore the fact that God engraved the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone. When the kings drink the wine of Babylon, they forget the law and pervert the justice of all the afflicted—in other words there is no justice for the oppressed!

The Role of the United States

As we have previously indicated, one of the prime objectives of the papacy is to influence Protestants in the United States to employ the power of the state to support, and eventually to enforce, their religious observances, primarily the observance of Sunday as the national day of rest:

"The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor [instigated by their religious leaders], will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected." GC, p. 592

Ellen White has described the influence of Protestants upon the political leadership in the healing of the papacy's deadly wound: "When the land which the Lord provided as an asylum for His people, that they might worship Him according to the dictates of their own consciences, the land over which for long years the shield of Omnipotence has been spread, the land which God has favored by making it the depository of the pure religion of Christ—when that land shall, through its legislators [it will be done by Congress], abjure

the principles of Protestantism, and give countenance to Romish apostasy in tampering with God's law—it is then that the final work of the man of sin will be revealed. **Protestants** will throw their whole influence and strength on the side of the Papacy; by a national act [this is an act of Congress] enforcing the false sabbath, they will give life and vigor [the United States helps the wound to heal by giving the sword back] to the corrupt faith of Rome, reviving [giving her life again so she must have been dead] her tyranny and oppression of conscience. Then it will be time for God to work in mighty power for the vindication of His truth." Maranatha, p. 179

The Spirit of Prophecy has described how the process will work. The religious leaders of the Protestant churches of the United States will influence their members to clamor to Congress for a national Sunday law and the rulers and legislators, in order to keep their positions will yield to the popular demand. This in turn will lead to national apostasy that will then end in national ruin.

Satan well knows that if he can get church members to have blind trust in their religious leaders he can then use these leaders to influence the people according to his will: "Satan is constantly endeavoring to attract attention to man in the place of God. He leads the people to look to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology, as their guides, instead of searching the Scriptures to learn their duty for themselves. Then, by controlling the minds of these leaders, he can influence the multitudes according to his will." GC, p. 595

A Drastic Turn of Events

Prophecy tells us that for a while, the kings of the earth will follow the advice of the mother of harlots and her daughters. However, at the climactic moment, when the harlot appears to be seated queen and that she will not see widowhood, the political leaders of the earth will awaken from the harlot's deception and turn on her for they "will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire" (Revelation 17:16, 17). Thus, the kings will slay the mother and her daughters with the sword that they intended to use to slay the saints.

However, not only will the political rulers turn on their deceitful religious advisors. The multitudes whom the religious leaders have deceived will also turn on them: "The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of **God** and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. 'We are lost!' they cry, 'and you are the cause of our ruin;' and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies.

Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed." GC, pp. 655, 656

Pilate's Dilemma: A Warning for Civil Rulers

The political leaders of the world might well learn an ancient lesson from the times of Christ.

A few months before the crucifixion. the Sanhedrin called a special emergency session to deal with what they considered a matter of national security. Multitudes were following Jesus and the religious leaders were losing their popularity (John 12:11). In fact, they complained, 'the whole world has gone after Him' (John 12:19). Caiaphas suggested that if they allowed Jesus to continue preaching, everyone would believe in Him, the Jewish religion would lose its relevance and the Romans would finally destroy the nation. Therefore, in order to seemingly save the nation from ruin, Caiaphas suggested that Jesus should die (John 11:48-50), and from that day forward the apostate church plotted to put Jesus to death (John 11:53).

Now fast forward to the evening before the crucifixion. After the temple guard arrested Jesus in Gethsemane, they took Him before the Sanhedrin for an ecclesiastical trial. To make a long story short, after a mockery of a trial, the Sanhedrin condemned Jesus to death (Matthew 26:25, 26).

However, the apostate church had a problem. The church could not execute the death penalty (John 18:31) so it needed the aid of the state! Therefore, the religious leadership took Jesus to Pontius Pilate in the hopes that the

state would carry out their wicked desires (Matthew 27:1, 2).

Pilate did his utmost to curb their evil intentions. Three times he went out to the Jews to tell them that he could find no reason to condemn Jesus to death (John 18:38; 19:4, 6). But the Jewish leadership were intent on destroying Him so they finally used 'the loss of political office' card: "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar" (John 19:12).

As a last resort, Pilate hoped that the Jewish leadership would ask for the release of Jesus and the crucifixion of Barabbas but to no avail. One cannot help but notice that the parishioners clamored for the release of Barabbas because their spiritual leaders counseled and instigated them to do so:

"But the chief priests and elders <u>persuaded the multitudes</u> that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus." Matthew 27:20

After the crowd chose Barabbas over Jesus, Pilate brought Jesus out and introduced Him to the angry mob saying: 'Behold your king', to which they replied, 'we have no king but Caesar'. In this way, they chose the ruler of the state as their king over the King of kings! This was high treason against the government of heaven!

In the heat of the moment, Pilate faced a dilemma. He knew that Jesus was innocent. He could see the kindness and serenity on His face. Would Pilate, the civil ruler, obey the voice of his conscience or the clamor of the religious leaders and their parishioners? Was he willing to risk his political



career to deliver an innocent man from death? As he was deliberating on what to do, he received a message from his wife that was God's last-ditch attempt to lead him to make the right choice. Regarding this message, Ellen White remarks:

"Even now Pilate was not left to act blindly. A message from God warned him from the deed he was about to commit. In answer to Christ's prayer, an angel from heaven had visited Pilate's wife, and in a dream she had beheld the Savior and conversed with Him. Pilate's wife was not a Jew, but as she looked upon Jesus in her dream, she had no doubt of His character or mission." The Desire of Ages, p. 732

The irony of the whole story is that the religious leaders thought that by destroying Christ they would save their nation from ruin, but by crucifying Christ, they caused what they wished to prevent. The very Romans that they had used to crucify Christ came and destroyed their city and their nation. That is to say, national apostasy led to national ruin.

As we have already seen, something similar to this will occur in the future when the kings of the earth and the deceived multitudes will hate the Roman Catholic harlot and her daughters during the sixth plague (Revelation 17:16).

A Repetition of History

In the Upper Room Jesus warned his disciples that the day would come when those who professed to serve God would seek to kill them in the name of the God whom they claimed to serve:

"These things I have spoken to you that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. And these things they will do to

you because they have not known the Father nor Me." (John 16:1-3)

However, the words of Jesus apply in a special sense to the faithful remnant that will live at the very end of time.

The political leaders of the world at the end will have to make a choice similar to the one that faced Pilate. Will they condemn the faithful remnant to death to please the religious leaders and the crowd and to save their political careers or will they refuse to go along at the risk their political future? This will be a life and death choice for the secular powers of the world and it will be an informed choice. They will have heard the final loud cry warning and therefore they will be far more responsible than was the pagan ruler Pilate.

"The forces of the powers of darkness will unite with human agents who have given themselves unto the control of Satan, and the same scenes that were exhibited at the trial, rejection and crucifixion of Christ will be revived. Through yielding to satanic influences men will be merged into fiends, and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an apostate race his masterpiece of evil—men who reflect his own image." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 5, p. 1136

"He [Satan] will work in as subtle a manner as we near the end of earth's history. All his deceiving power will be brought to bear upon human subjects, to complete the work of deluding the human family. So deceptive will be his

working that men will do as they did in the days of Christ; and when asked: Whom shall I release unto you, Christ or Barabbas? The almost universal cry will be, Barabbas, Barabbas! And when the question is asked, 'What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?' the cry again will be, 'Crucify him!' Christ will be represented in the person of those who accept the truth, and who identify their interest with that of their Lord. The world will be enraged at them in the same way that they were enraged at Christ, and the Disciples of Christ will know that they are to be treated **no** better than was their Lord. But Christ will surely identify his interest with that of those who accept him as their personal Savior. Every insult, every reproach, every false accusation made against them by those who have turned their ears away from the truth and are turned unto fables, will be charged upon the guilty ones as done to Christ in the person of his saints." The Review and Herald, April 14, 1896

Our Task: Preach to Kings

After the great disappointment of 1844, God commanded His faithful remnant to prophesy again 'before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings' (Revelation 10:11). This prophetic message in Revelation 14:6-12 must be preached to 'every nation, **tribe**, tongue and people'.

The perceptive reader will notice a slight difference between Revelation 10:11 and Revelation 14:6. Whereas both texts describe preaching to 'peo-

ples, nations and tongues,' Revelation 10:11 replaces the word 'tribe' with the word 'kings'. Why does Revelation 10:11 add the word 'kings'? The answer is in Revelation 18:1-5 where we find the final warning that denounces the fornication of the kings of the earth with the harlot and her daughters.

Not only must the Seventh-day Adventist Church warn those who are in the apostate churches to come out from them, it must also warn the political leaders of the world about the dangers of allowing apostate religion to influence their decisions. The loud cry of Revelation 18 is not only for church members in the apostate denominations, but also for the political rulers of the world who are fornicating with them! This is the reason why the Seventh-day Adventist Church publishes Liberty Magazine and becomes involved in religious liberty cases in the various legislatures of the United States. Many political leaders, when crunch time comes, will take their stand on the Lord's side because of the work of the religious liberty branch of our church.

Ellen White explained: "Many will have to stand in the <u>legislative courts</u>; some will have to stand before <u>kings</u> and before the <u>learned</u> of the earth to answer for their faith. Those who have only a superficial understanding of truth will not be able clearly to expound the Scriptures and give definite reasons for their faith. They will become confused and will not be workmen that need not to be ashamed. Let no one imagine that he has no need to study because he is not to preach in the sacred desk. You know not

what God may require of you." <u>Fundamentals of Christian Education</u>, p. 217

"Many a lad of today, growing up as did Daniel in his Judean home, studying God's word and His works, and learning the lessons of faithful service, will yet stand in legislative assemblies, in halls of justice, or in royal courts, as a witness for the King of kings." Education, p. 262.

We must pray for our political leaders and treat them with dignity and respect, and that includes Donald Trump. Really? We might not agree with a politician's party or policies but we are to see in them candidates for the kingdom. Is it just possible that sometimes we get so caught up in our politics that we forget that God longs for the salvation of all the lost, including political leaders not of our liking?

Daniel is an example worthy to follow. Nebuchadnezzar was a megalomaniac and egomaniac. He was a despot who thought not twice about executing whoever crossed him. His intention was to make Babylon great again (sound familiar?) (Daniel 4:30). He spent huge amounts of money on infrastructure and gave laws that restricted religious liberty and yet Daniel loved the king, prayed for him and longed for his salvation. Did God give up on the tyrant? No! God worked with Him relentlessly, doing all that he could to save him and in the end, He was successful. We are told that Nebuchadnezzar "was finally thoroughly converted and learned to 'praise and extol and honor the King of heaven" (The Review and Herald, January 11, 1906).

Many of the Roman emperors were

bloodthirsty and depraved despots, and yet the apostle Paul admonished believers to show them honor and respect (Romans 13:1-10). Clearly, Christians did not agree with the policies and conduct of the emperors, however, they prayed for them and longed for them to make a decision for the Lord as we can see in Paul's speeches to Felix, Aggripa and Nero.

A Valuable Lesson

The political rulers of the world can learn a valuable lesson from the example of the civil rulers in the days of Jeremiah. The nationalistic false prophets and priests of Israel were incensed against Jeremiah because he had spoken gloom and doom upon the apostate city. Therefore, the religious leaders went before the princes (the political leadership) and the people to counsel them to execute the prophet:

"And the <u>priests and the prophets</u> spoke <u>to the princes</u> and all the people, saying: This man deserves to die! For he has <u>prophesied against this city</u>, as you have heard with your ears" Jeremiah 26:11.

Jeremiah then gave a speech before the princes where he admonished those who listened to amend their ways and doings in order to avert the coming disaster: "Then Jeremiah spoke to all the princes and all the people, saying: The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city with all the words that you have heard. Now therefore, amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; then the Lord will relent concerning the doom that He

has pronounced against you" Jeremiah 26:12, 13.

Jeremiah warned them that if they spilled his innocent blood they would bring upon themselves the very doom that they wished to avert by killing him: "As for me, here I am, in your hand; do with me as seems good and proper to you but know for certain that if you put me to death, you will surely bring innocent blood on yourselves, on this city, and on its inhabitants; for truly the Lord has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing" Jeremiah 26:14-15.

The result was amazing! The rulers and the people, instead of following the evil counsel of the priests and false prophets exonerated Jeremiah: "So the princes and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, This man does not deserve to die. For he has spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God" Jeremiah 26:16.

Will the political leaders of the world have the courage to do what the princes did in the days of Jeremiah? Will they pay heed to the warning in Revelation 18? Perhaps not all, but many will heed the words of God's faithful remnant and be saved in the kingdom. To this end, we must work and pray!



Pastor Stephen Bohr



How Abolishing the JOHNSON AMENDMENT Would Harm RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

BY GREG HAMILTON / FEBRUARY 9, 2017

ast week at the annual National Prayer Breakfast, the newly inaugurated President of the United States repeated his campaign vow to repeal the Johnson Amendment, the 1954 provision in the U.S. tax code that prohibits all 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations from endorsing political candidates.

WHAT IS THE JOHNSON AMENDMENT?

The Johnson Amendment was an IRS tax reform bill that was successfully passed in Congress by Senator Lyndon Johnson in 1954, the same man who would later become President in 1963 following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Churches can invite a candidate to speak at their local church if it invites the opposing candidate; and ministries, houses of worship, denominations and religious individuals can speak out on the moral and spiritual issues of the day, including getting involved in ballot referenda. But the Johnson Amendment is a prohibition on churches and other houses

of worship to prevent churches from publicly favoring or endorsing one candidate over another. This includes the strict prohibition on financing them or organizing to campaign for them.

Just to be clear, the attempt to repeal the Johnson Amendment is not about restoring "free speech" but rather about politicians receiving taxdeductible campaign financing from churches in return for giving churches unprecedented political power. As I explain below, I believe that repealing this Amendment will be instrumental in creating the prophetic combination of church and state that we as Adventists have been warning about for many years, and I am extremely concerned about where this is heading.

ADIVISIVE PROPOSITION

If you donate money to your favorite candidate for public office, that donation is not tax-deductible. But under one of the bills in Congress that would do away with the Johnson Amendment, churches could use up to 25 percent of their church budget to endorse

candidates and campaign for them. That means that if your church decided to campaign for a candidate, a significant portion of your offerings could

Can you imagine

what it would be like

if your church made

an awkward choice

to endorse a slate of

Imagine the potluck

either Democrats

or Republicans?

discussion!

go straight to a political candidate that your pastor or church board decided to support.

Donations will begin to pour into churches that will choose to take on a political mission, as big-time donors try to find ways to "launder" their otherwise taxable campaign donations, and moneygrubbing politi-

cians will be knocking on the doors of every church to capture large amounts of "blessed" campaign money.

Even putting the prophetic warning aside, practically speaking, as people who live in the real world, we all hold political views, and there is a good chance that you know somebody in your local church that you disagree with when it comes to politics. Can you imagine what it would be like if your church made an awkward choice to endorse a slate of either Democrats or Republicans? Imagine the potluck discussion! It would make social media seem tame in comparison.

And if you think the current political climate has divided this nation, just wait until pastors and congregations start to argue over which candidate will get 25 percent of their church's

money. Saturday and Sunday mornings may never be the same!

While many organizations, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church,

> speak out boldly on the issues of the day and get involved in ballot referenda related to policies that could affect us, the repeal of the Johnson Amendment crosses the line because it involves endorsing or opposing particular candidates for office. These are the people who

> need more money

than ever before to run their campaigns, and who will come knocking on the door of your church asking for an endorsement.

GUTTING CHURCH COFFERS

Now, it is easy to think that nonprofit organizations would love to be able to use the power of the purse to influence candidates, but it would actually diminish giving and put church missions at risk. Last week, Tim Delaney, president and CEO of the National Council of Nonprofits released the following statement:

"Nonprofits are already free to exercise their First Amendment rights to advocate for their missions. Allowing political operatives to push for endorsements would put nonprofits in a posi-

tion where they become known as Democratic charities or Republican charities and put missions at risk.

Furthermore, those who donate to nonprofits want those contributions to go toward advancing the mission, not toward advancing the careers of politicians or lining the pockets of political consultants. Getting involved in supporting or opposing candidates will have a chilling effect on contributions on which many nonprofits rely." (https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/article/national-council-of-nonprofits-opposes-latest-efforts-politicize-charitable-nonprofits-and)

With the repeal of the Johnson Amendment now on the table, either by congressional action, or an executive order of the President to the IRS not to enforce it, the Adventist Church is taking a very serious look at this issue, and we plan on following Ellen White's counsel to steer clear of divisive political endorsements. But there is little doubt that the ability to use taxfree donations to endorse candidates will give the churches huge amounts of political power — and this is not a good thing.

THE TEMPTATION OF POWER AND A PROPHETIC WARNING

In fact, I would go as far as to say that without the Johnson Amendment, some churches will gain huge amounts of political power and will manipulate, dominate, and eventually control the government at all levels through the electoral and policy-making process.

A lot of good Christian people probably think that it would be wonderful

if their church had more pull in Washington, but this movement has serious prophetic implications that many people will not see until it is too late. Note Ellen White's prophetic observation in The Great Controversy regarding Revelation 13:11-15:

"In order for the United States to form an image of the beast [that is, in the likeness of Papal Rome during a 1,260-year period in which the Church manipulated, dominated and controlled both kings and emperors], the religious power [or "powers"] must so control the civil government that the authority of the state will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends." (The Great Controversy, p. 443, commentary added.)

And what happens when the church gets this kind of power?

"Whenever the church has obtained secular power, she has employed it to punish dissent from her doctrines. Protestant churches that have followed in the steps of Rome by forming alliance with worldly powers, have manifested a similar desire to restrict liberty of conscience. An example of this is given in the long-continued persecution of dissenters by the Church of England. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, thousands of non-conformist ministers were forced to leave their churches, and many, both of pastors and people, were subjected to fine, imprisonment, torture, and martyrdom." The Great Controversy, p. 443.

Could that happen in America? Will churches seek to use the power of the state to punish those who dissent from their doctrines? We can already see that some churches would love to have



Repealing the Johnson Amendment: ★★★ WHAT IT MEANS ★★

FOR POLITICIANS

- ➤ a plan by politicians to grab your tax-deductible offering money
- politicians being able to claim their political campaigns have God's stamp of approval

FOR THE CHURCH

- ▶ more political power
- ➤ fulfillment of church-state power predicted in Revelation 13 as an image to the first beast
- less donations

this power and White warns us that we will one day experience similar, if not much more severe, persecution in America. That is why this matters and why we need to work now to preserve liberty of conscience.

Repealing the Johnson Amendment is not about giving pastors "freedom of speech." Pastors are already able to speak to issues. It is about giving churches the financial power to influence elections using tax-deductible donations. When it is gone, pity the politician who does not have a large congregation willing to fund a political campaign and who has to rely on traditional taxable donations.

AN APPEAL TO CHRIST'S KINGDOM

Before 1954, American churches were fairly disparate, disunited, and pretty much politically isolated, but today Evangelical Protestants and Catholics are very much united on many issues—issues that even we can and do agree with regarding shared concerns. This is, therefore, shaping up to be a prophetically explosive trend. If we fail to ascertain the larger prophetic picture at stake here, we will fail to be the voice of prophetic warning in our otherwise well-meaning attempts to champion and preserve religious freedom, which

includes not only the constitutional guarantee to the free exercise of religion, but also the constitutional guarantee that church and state will remain separate.

Once the Johnson Amendment is gone, politicians who want to maintain power will be asking large churches to commit their resources to their elections, and church members will feel religiously compelled to support them. The resulting centers of combined religious and political influence will become the most powerful entities in America, capable of calling on politicians to enforce their plans just as White predicted in The Great Controversy.

Do not fall for the hype that the Johnson Amendment is necessary to restore your pastor's freedom of speech and see the attempt to repeal it for what

it is — a plan by politicians to grab your tax-deductible offering money. Politicians would love to be able to claim a church's stamp of approval as "God's favorite candidate" in return for giving churches more political power. And yes, I believe we are watching the seeds being planted in America for the combined church-state power that we have been warned about in Revelation 13.

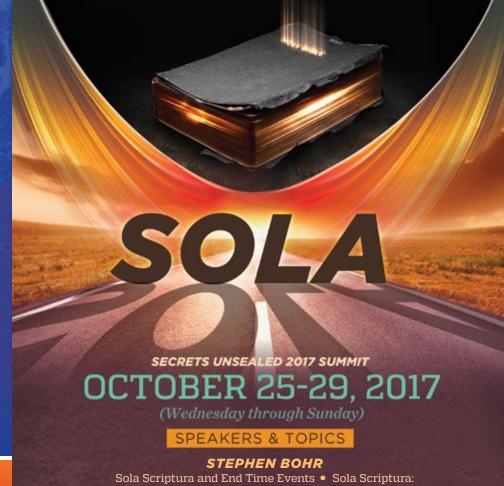
With tremendous events happening around us on a nearly daily basis, we are the front row of history. We also have the benefit of Bible prophecy and we know where this is going, but that knowledge is not enough. We need to work to preserve liberty of conscience so that we can continue to preach, not a message of political power, but the gospel of Jesus Christ who taught us that His Kingdom is not of this world. **





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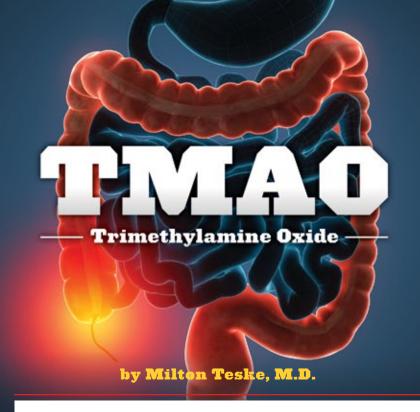
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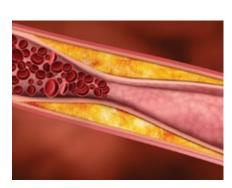
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hen we look at the blood of heart attack victims for a clue as to what might be responsible for this number one cause of death, it is not cholesterol or saturated fat or sugar that stands out. The highest correlation is found with a substance named trimethylamine oxide (TMAO).



Heart attack victims have high levels of TMAO and if you prospectively follow patients, there is a direct correlation between their TMAO level and their likelihood of going on to have a heart attack. And those with the highest levels of TMAO have way more heart attacks than those with lower levels.

This toxic chemical is not something that should normally be a part of healthy human blood. TMAO is made in the liver. It is in the liver that trimethylamine (TMA) is oxidized into TMAO in an attempt to destroy the TMA.

So where did the TMA come from? Certain bacteria that can live in our intestines make TMA. These particular bacteria can metabolize creatine in our food into TMA, which is then absorbed into the blood that then goes to the liver that tries to get rid of it by oxidizing it into TMAO.

Creatine Metabolism in the Gut

Creatine is a substance that our bodies normally make and use as a fast energy source for the mitochondria particularly in our muscles. In the diet it is found in high concentrations in red meat (the cow's muscle). When we eat red meat, these particular bacteria in our gut metabolize the creatine in the meat into TMA, which we then absorb. And so begins this toxic chain reaction eventually leading to a heart attack.

After eating a steak we can watch the blood and see an immediate spike as the TMAO level shoots up. And we know it is due to these certain bacteria in the gut because we can wipe them out with a short course of antibiotics and then feed a steak and there is no TMAO produced at all. But after a few weeks when the bacteria have been allowed to recolonize the gut, eating a steak will again cause the production of TMAO.

Interestingly, we can feed that same steak to a vegan and surprisingly there is no TMAO produced! When we live on an exclusively plant-based diet, our gut is full of vegan bacteria that are feeding on fiber and plants. Those steakeating bacteria that metabolize creatine have been starved out and are not there, so no TMAO will be produced from an

occasional dose of creatine.

Besides red meat, today we find creatine being added to energy drinks and certain athletic supplements because of its role in rapid energy production. But when tested, we find the same results — regular use will result in the production of TMAO. These supplements should therefore be avoided.

Choline

There has been a popular health fad in recent years to reduce red meat consumption. This is usually done by substituting chicken, turkey or fish for red meat in the diet. While we avoid the creatine found in the red meat by doing this, we are no better off because white meat is full of choline.

Choline is a substance found in very high amounts in the white meats as well as dairy products and eggs. Chemically, the structure of choline is very similar to the creatine found in red meats, and the same bacteria that transform creatine into TMA transform choline into TMA. So the results are the same — you can substitute a couple of hard-boiled eggs for your steak and the TMAO levels in the blood go up just the same.

Incidentally we use choline in our bodies in a number of ways, and our bodies makes all the choline we need. So we don't need it in our diet, feeding a population of harmful microbes that we would be better off without.

Atherosclerosis

TMAO is a very inflammatory substance and is a key aggravator of the inflammatory response in the artery walls where the macrophages turn into

Even as little as **one egg every three days** is enough to **double** the risk of **cancer** progression.

large, fat-filled foam cells. We actually build up little pustules under the endothelium. It's sort of like arterial wall acne. This is the disease that will progress to rupture and cause clot formation that results in a heart attack or stroke.

Many researchers now believe that TMAO production is the underlying reason that atherosclerotic heart disease is consistently correlated with diets high in meat, eggs and dairy products. And this would explain why plant-based diets free of animal products are consistently correlated with reduction of atherosclerotic disease.

Cancer

Diets high in meat, dairy and eggs are also consistently correlated with cancer. And researchers are seeing the role of TMAO as key in this disease process as well. The inflammatory action of this toxic substance signals the transformation of the cell to a more uncontrolled reproduction and spreading state that overrides the normal restraints built into the cells of the various organs and tissues of the body.

Take prostate cancer as an example. The benign early stages of prostate cancer are no problem until they start to spread and metastasize throughout the body. A lot of study has been done to try to locate the risk factors that cause some to make this deadly transformation and others to remain benign for years and decades. What did they find? Eggs seem to be the big dietary

risk factor.

and they think it is the choline. Even as little as one egg every three days is enough to double the risk of cancer progression. The only higher risk factor than eggs was eating chicken.

Your Microbiome

The microbiome refers to the multitude of single cell life forms that live on and in us. Most of them live inside our gastro-intestinal tract and we are only beginning to understand their importance to our health. They are intimately a part of us and we could not survive without them. In terms of numbers, they outnumber our human cells 10 to one!

Although they vastly outnumber our human cells, yet because of their very small size they make up only about two quarts of our total volume. But if you start thinking about genetics (these each have their own genetic code), our human genome makes up a minute fraction of the different DNA codes found in us and influencing and controlling the various biological and biochemical processes going on inside us. There are over 10,000 different species of microbes living in us. Some estimates place that number as high as 35,000 and each of these with their own DNA.

For every human gene in your DNA there are hundreds of non-human genes present and being expressed, carrying out their unique contribution to the totality of life activities going on inside of us.

We now realize that these microbes communicate and have controlling influences over most organs in our bodies. They participate in a wide variety of physiological functions, including our immune system where they play a very major role. They are involved in detoxification, inflammation, vitamin production, nutrient absorption, signaling our appetite center, utilization of carbohydrates, fats and other nutrients. They make neurotransmitters and send signals to our brain and can affect our mood and emotional state, the clarity of our thoughts, our energy level and our perception of the world. How we feel emotionally and physically really depends on the state of our microbiome. Is it healthy and dominated by friendly, beneficial bacteria? Or is it sick and overrun by bad, unfriendly and even pathological microbes?

We are all populated by vastly different microbial communities, which to a large degree determine the state of our health or sickness. So how can we get good, healthy, friendly bacteria to live in us and get rid of the bad ones? There are many probiotic supplements available on the market, many containing a dozen or two of some of the most common healthy bacteria species. This can help to make a good start at recolonization of the gut if you have destroyed your healthy bacteria with antibiotics or other medications or bad foods. But far more important than probiotics is what you feed your microbes!

Remember there are over 10,000 different bacteria needed in your microbiome and the ones you feed are the ones that will grow and live and the ones you don't feed will die off. It is now becoming abundantly clear that

a high-fiber, whole, plant-food diet is the perfect diet to grow and maintain a healthy microbiome in your gut. Animal foods and junk foods feed different populations of bacteria and thus promote serious disruptions and pathological imbalances in the populations of bacteria that inhabit your gut. If you want the right species of bacteria living in you and influencing your life you have to feed them the right foods —whole plant foods.

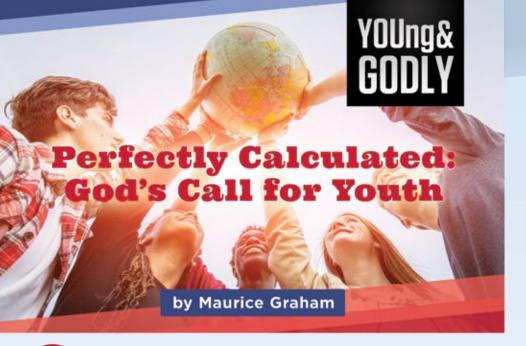
So as we have seen in our study of TMAO at the beginning of this article, the major cause of death in our country today all comes down to feeding the right bacteria in our microbiome with the right food. Perhaps as we continue to understand more deeply the great complexities of the web of life God has created with all of its interconnecting dependencies, we may find that proper nutrition is not so much about which nutrients our bodies need but rather which nutrients the microbiome living within us needs.

At the creation of this world God looked at all that He had made and behold, it was very good. Then He told man what was to be his food and described exactly what the microbiome living within him needed to keep him healthy. May we continue to respect the divine wisdom of our Creator by obeying His

instructions.



MILTON TESKE, MD



n October 14, 2012, Australian skydiver Felix Baumgartner did the unthinkable! He rode a helium balloon into the stratosphere and jumped! His 24 mile, 843.6 mph free fall landed him in the record books. During his 127,852-foot free fall, he surpassed the speed of Mach 1, making him the first human to break the sound barrier outside of a vehicle. Fortunately for Felix, when he pulled his chute, it opened. Though I will not be signing up to join Felix on his next jump, his story reminded me of an important lesson.

Suppose you were with Felix during his free fall. As you are falling toward the earth, he points out a flock of rare birds flying by. You are awed and completely speechless! As you continue your free fall, your speed rapidly increases and just then, he points out the most amazing cloud formation that you had ever seen. You are captivated by the precious truths about the

birds and the clouds. Moments later, onlookers from the ground witnesses a sonic boom as you blast through the sound barrier! Just then, you discover something that changes your experience and your focus in an instant! In the chaos of the moments leading to the jump, you grabbed your backpack filled with homework instead of the backpack with your parachute.

What would your response be, if during that crisis as you fell toward the earth at over 800 mph, Felix said to you, "Look at all those beautiful blue whales in the ocean beneath us?"

If you're like most people, you'd probably find it hard to pay attention to the information about the blue whales. Even if you loved whales and somehow managed to focus on Felix's precious truth about the whales, you would not have much time to enjoy them.

In those few moments before impact, the most relevant thing that Felix could share would be information about how to survive the present crisis. This timely information is often referred to as **present truth.**

This story reminds me of the relationship between present truth and precious truth. Both are important, but messages of present truth are time-sensitive messages. Throughout Scripture, there (have/has) always been messages of precious truth and present truth. Young people have been instrumental in proclaiming these messages down through the ages. Let's take a look.

In Noah's time, there were many truths. One of them is in Jude 1:14, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." Though there were many precious truths during the time of Noah, the present truth message was the message about the flood. The ark of safety was prepared by the young and the old working together. In Exodus, God had a time-sensitive message for the children of Israel as they left Egypt and journeyed to the promised land. Greybearded Noah along with young Joshua both served in the carrying out of God's plan. God had a special call for many other young people. Jeremiah, Daniel, Nehemiah, John and others responded to the call, and God used them to do great things during their time.

Young reader, your time has come! As we consider Biblical history, we discover that the preaching and accepting of the messages of present truth were often a matter of life or death. It determined whether people stood in truth or fell into deception. Down through the ages, God has had a special call to both young and old to proclaim these

special messages together. The wisdom and experience of the old paired with the innovation and zeal of the young is a powerful force for good when guided by the Spirit of God. Since the timely messages of present truth have been of such great importance through the ages, we should know what the present truth for today is and allow God to help us to **Know It - Live It - Share It.**

"There are many precious truths contained in the Word of God, but it is 'present truth' that the flock needs now. *I have seen the danger of the messengers* running off from the important points of present truth, to dwell upon subjects that are not calculated to unite the flock and sanctify the soul. Satan will here take every possible advantage to injure the cause. But, such subjects as the sanctuary, in connection with the 2300 days, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, are perfectly calculated to explain the past Advent movement and show what our present position is, establish the faith of the doubting, and give certainty to the glorious future. These, I have frequently seen, were the principal subjects on which the messengers should dwell." Early Writings, p. 63

The 2,300 days, commandments of God, and faith of Jesus can be summarized as the Three Angels' Messages. This message is "perfectly calculated" to help our church to be "united," "sanctified," and "confident" in facing the future! It will help people to stand in the truth and not fall into deception in the last days. God has a special call for YOU, the young, to **Know** - **Live** and **Share** this message. You are needed now, more than ever before!



LESSON 22

Matthew 13:45-46; Mark 10:28-30; Philippians 3:7-8; Revelation 21:21; *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 115-121

The parable of the priceless pearl is one of many found in Matthew 13. Like so many other parables of Jesus, this one has more than one meaning. We will find in our study that the pearl, in one sense, represents Jesus Christ. But in another sense it represents us. Let's see what we can learn from this magnificent parable.

The First Meaning of the Parable The PEARL and ITS VALUE

THE FEARL UI	IU IIS VALUE
Who is represented by the pea Himself is the pearl of great price	
pearl? "The glory of the att	be compared to the beauty of a ributes of God is expressed in his
And the second state of the second se	sness of Christ, as a pure, white pearl,
has no defect, no stain. No work of mo	in can improve the great and precious
gift of God. It is without	"(COL 115)

What does the Jesus of the What does the Jesus of the What does the What	he apostle Paul say abou all the ssians 2:3)	ut the value of Jesus? "In whom of wisdom and
the value o	f Jesus? "Foreasmuch	t the apostle Paul says about as ye know that ye were not ings, as silver and,
But with the	onversation received b blood and without	ngs, as silver and, y tradition from your fathers, of Christ, as a lamb without" (1 Peter 1:18-19)
How does I that can	Ellen White describe t	the sufficiency of Christ? "All ds and and for the world to come, is
ine numun soui in	Christ." (COL 115)	_ unu joi the worth to come, is
What made were a	it possible for Jesus to l	become our savior? "Though he by the things de perfect, he became the author at obey him." (Hebrews 5:8-9)
NOTE: A beautiful he oyster and cause hrough much pain	and priceless pearl is formes es it to secrete calcium ca and suffering. Likewise, Je	med when a grain of sand irritates arbonate. Thus the pearl is formed sus, by what he suffered, developed those who are willing to surrender
IDEN'	TIFYING the	MERCHANT
┸ • "The mercha	ntman in the parable	represented by the merchant? represents a
→ What two	which they could re	g the Gentiles were search- eceive as the soul's treasure?(COL 116)
	vell at this point to review o	carefully the story of the conversion Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26-39.

Were there some among the Jews of Christ's day who were dissatisfied with a formal religion and were seeking that which they had

belonged to the latter class. ..."

not? "Christ's chosen

(COL 116)

	rs the ability to see the incalculable value of the pearl, "It is the Holy Spirit that to men the of the goodly pearl." (COL 118)
church and ed, and miserabl anoint thine ey	Christ say is one of the problems of the Laodicean how can the problem be remedied? "Thou art wretche, and poor, and, and naked and es with that thou mayest (Revelation 3:17-18)
which pearls are pa	of goodly pearls must have keen discernment in order to detect articularly valuable. They must have a trained eye or else they s which are priceless.
(Isaiah 53:2). There 1:11). Those among to discern the price the Laodicean chur	e to this world he had "no beauty that we should desire him" fore He came to His own and His own received Him not (John whom Jesus walked had no spiritual discernment. They failed eless beauty of His character. The same problem characterizes rch. It is so busy establishing its own righteousness that it canuty of Christ's righteousness. It needs the eye-salve of the Holy
Were the ble value of	Jews of Christ's day able to discern the incalcula- of Christ? "To whom [Jesus] coming, as unto a living of disallowed indeed of, but chosen of God,
3 Were the	of Christ? "To whom [Jesus] coming, as unto a living
Were the ble value of and NOTE: Peter is refemon's temple. Let's of Solomon was ere entirely prepared at	of Christ? "To whom [Jesus] coming, as unto a living and disallowed indeed of, but chosen of God," (1 Peter 2:4) Therefore, the immense stones for the walls and the foundation were the quarry; after they were brought to the place of building, not to be used upon them; the workmen had only to place them in
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Were the ble value of and NOTE: Peter is referenced by Solomon was ere entirely prepared at	of Christ? "To whom [Jesus] coming, as unto a living of disallowed indeed of, but chosen of God," (1 Peter 2:4) Therefore, the immense stones for the walls and the foundation were the quarry; after they were brought to the place of building, not to be used upon them; the workmen had only to place them in position. For use in the foundation, one stone of unusual size and peculiar shape had been brought; but the workmen could find no place for it, and would not accept it. It was an annoyance to them as it lay unused in their way. Long it remained a rejected stone. But when the builders came to the laying of the corner,

place, and bear the great weight which would rest upon it. Should they make an unwise choice for this important place, the safety of the entire building would be endangered. They must find a stone capable of resisting the influence of the sun, of frost, and of tempest. Several stones had at different times been chosen, but under the pressure of immense weights they had crumbled to pieces. Others could not bear the test of the sudden atmospheric changes. But at last attention was called to the stone so long rejected. It had been exposed to the air, to sun and storm, without revealing the slightest crack. The builders examined this stone. It had borne every test but one. If it could bear the test of severe pressure, they decided to accept it for the cornerstone. The trial was made. The stone was accepted, brought to its assigned position, and found to be an exact fit. In prophetic vision, Isaiah was shown that this stone was a symbol of Christ." (Desire of Ages, pp. 597-598)

The PEARL'S PRICE

merchantman went and sol	w much does the pearl cost? The ld that he had, and 13:46)
Why do some people fail to fire do not make an the	nd the priceless pearl? Because "they surrender of their wrong habits. at Christ may live in them Almost Christians, they seem near to
	nnot there. Almost but
(COL 118)	not almost but lost."
The are as well alchase salvation; for no amount of wo	a blessing that may possess. ble as the to pur- orldly can secure it. It is
obtained by willing His own purchased	, by giving ourselves to Christ as" (COL 117)
His own purchasedNOTE: The cost of the pearl is the same	" (COL 117) for everyone because once everything is ning. But, as we shall see, when we give up
NOTE: The cost of the pearl is the same given, all have the same amount left, nothall that we have Jesus will give us all that What did Jesus say to the rice of salvation? "One thing thou hast, an	" (COL 117) for everyone because once everything is ning. But, as we shall see, when we give up He has-quite a tradeoff! ch young ruler concerning the cost u: go thy way, sell ad give to the poor, and thou shalt have
NOTE: The cost of the pearl is the same given, all have the same amount left, nothall that we have Jesus will give us all that What did Jesus say to the rice of salvation? "One thing thou hast, an	"(COL 117) for everyone because once everything is ning. But, as we shall see, when we give up He has-quite a tradeoff! ch young ruler concerning the cost: go thy way, sell

How much must we be willing to forsake in order to be Christ's disciple? "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not that he hath, he be my disciple." (Luke 14:33)
How much was the apostle Paul willing to forsake in order to win Christ? "Yea, doubtless, and I count things but loss for the of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for
whom I have suffered the of things, and do count them dung, that I may win" (Philippians 3:8)
Since Christ is represented in the Bible as a gift (Jn. 3:16), why are we told in the parable that we must "buy" Him? "He is a, but only to those who give themselves, soul, body, and to Him without All that we are, all the and capabilities we possess, are the, to be consecrated to His service." (COL 116)
What did Jesus mean when he said that we must forsake all our houses, lands, friends, and relatives (Mk. 10:29)? "He that loveth father or mother than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter than me is not worthy of me." (Matthew 10:37)
NOTE: Jesus was not instructing us to get rid of our possessions, friends and relatives, that is, unless these stand between us and Jesus. Our Lord was teaching that all things must be kept in their proper perspective: Jesus must be first and all other things must be last. The teaching of Jesus has to do with the way in which we order our priorities: Nothing must be allowed to stand in the way of our relationship with Jesus. The Master expressed it this way: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness and all these things will be added unto you." (Mt. 6:33) Nothing we have must be allowed to occupy the primary place in our lives. Only Jesus deserves that place.
WHAT'S IN IT for US?
When we give up all in order to purchase the pearl, what to we get in return? "When we thus give ourselves to Him, Christ, with all the of heaven, gives to
us. We obtain the of great price" (COL 116)

According to Jesus, what do we gain when we are willing to give up all we have for His sake? "Verily I say unto you, there is no man that house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or, or wife, or children, or, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with; and in the world to come life." (Mark 10:29-30)
THOUGHT QUESTION: What do you suppose Jesus meant when he said that when we forsake all, we will have now in this time "houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands"? Was he saying that we will be materially rich now in this present world?
According to the apostle Paul, what do we receive as a result of Christ's sacrifice? "He that spared not his own, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not him also freely give us things?" (Romans 8:32)
NOTE: When we give Christ our all, He gives us His all. Purchasing the pearl is not to be seen as an expense but rather as an investment, and quite an investment at that!! Think of it. We give up all that we have that we might gain all that He has. Earlier in Romans 8 the apostle Paul has said that if we accept Jesus we become heirs with Him of all that which belongs to the Father! Instead of earthly possessions, family and friends, we gain heavenly treasures and become members of the heavenly family!
The Second Meaning of the Parable
The MERCHANTMAN What do the merchantman and the pearl represent in the second sense of the parable? "Christ, the heavenly seeking goodly pearls, saw in humanity the pearl of great price." (COL 118)
Did Jesus need special spiritual discernment in order to see value in fallen humanity? "In man, defiled and by sin, He [Jesus] saw the of redemption." (COL 118)

The DEADI'S WALLE

THE FEARLS VALUE
How does the Father look upon sinful humanity? "God looked upon humanity; not as vile and; He looked upon it in, saw it as it might become through
love." (COL 118)
How much was heaven willing to invest in order to purchase lost humanity? "He [Jesus] collected all the riches of the and laid them down in order to the pearl.
And Jesus, having found it, it in His own diadem." (COL 118)
NOTE: Ellen White had much to say about the value of a soul. Notice the following statement: "So great is the value of the human soul that Christ paid an infinite price for the redemption of the race. God gave His Son up to shame and reproach and to an ignominious death that man might have eternal life." (Manuscript 24, 1903)
In another remarkable statement, Ellen White explains how much the Father was willing to give for our redemption: "The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour's life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man's redemption." (Steps to Christ, p. 21)
What two Old Testament texts does Ellen White quote to illustrate the value of Christ's redeemed children?(COL 118)
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
The PEARL and SUFFERING
How does redeemed humanity become "pearly white"? "These are they which came out of great, and have washed their, and made them white in the
of the lamb." (Revelation 7:14)
NOTE: There is no natural beauty in ourselves. But as we are covered with the spot-

tute.

less robes of Christ's righteousness, God looks upon us as if we had never sinned

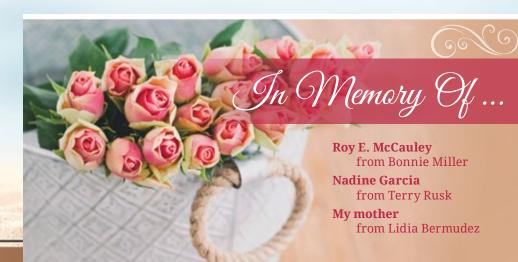
and we are accepted in the Beloved (Eph.

1:6). We need not be concerned about

what the Father thinks of us but rather

what the Father thinks of Jesus, our substi-

What is the only way in which we can enter the kingdom of God? Paul says that "we must through much _____ enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) What are the gates of the holy city composed of? "And the twelve gates • were twelve _____; every gate was of one ____." (Revelation 21:21) NOTE: It is probably no coincidence that God's people will enter the holy city through gates of pearl. As we have previously seen, pearls are formed as the result of an irritant. God's people will enter through the gates into the city after great tribulation. SHARING the PEARL At what time do people particularly seek the pearl of great price? **L** "The time of the Holy Spirit's is the time when in a sense the heavenly gift is sought and found." (COL 119) On what past occasion was the heavenly gift sought and found in a special sense? "But after Christ's ______ His enthronement in His mediatorial kingdom was signalized by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit." (COL 120) What became the passion of those who had purchased the priceless pearl? "On interest prevailed. One object _____ up all others. All hearts beat in ______. The only ambition of believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's ______, and to labor for the enlargement of His ______." (COL 120-121)



the enlargement of His _____



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Bible CROSSWORD test your knowledge

ACROSS

- 7. Israel's salvation the last night in Egypt
- 9. Mother who gave her son to the Lord in service
- 10. Father
- 11. Genealogically recorded 21. Because these people
- 12. Father of seven daughters
- 14. Tether for a Hebrew mobile home
- 15. This aspect of God's wisdom does not eliminate our freedom

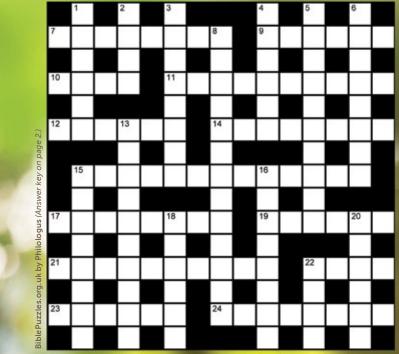
- of choice

 17. Painful or afflicting
- 19. What God did that made the seventh
- day sacred
 21. Because these people
 did not speak up,
 John the Baptist died
- 22. Siloam
- 23. God's law is like a ____ for our sin
- 24. God made Daniel and his three friends

DOWN

- They mocked Jesus
 Paul forbidden to
- 2. Paul forbidden to preach here
- 3. God will do this with our sins if we repent
- 4. When we choose God, we become
- 5. What Jesus does for us
- 6. How we will be if we trust God
- 8. When we believe God, it is counted as ____

- 13. Boaz commanded his _____ to leave extra barley for Ruth
- 15. Number of years taken to build the temple which existed in Jesus' time
- 16. Jesus said the kings exercised it over them
- 18. Hoarded riches are harmful to these people
- 20. Israel's journey out of Egypt
- 22. Symbol of victory



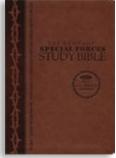


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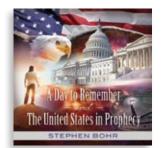
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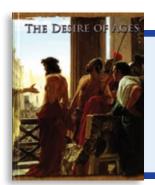
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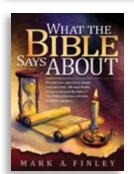
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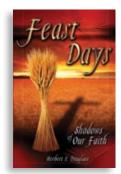
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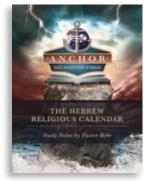
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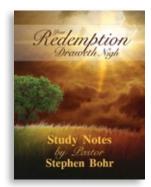
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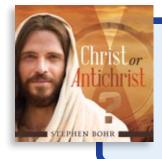
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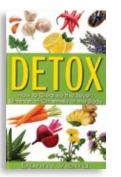


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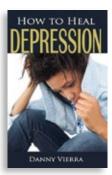


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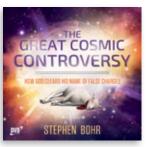
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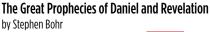
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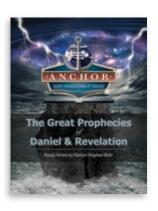
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