

CHRIST ARRESTED AT MIDNIGHT

“The Saviour **contrasted His own manner of work with the methods of His accusers.** For months they had hunted Him, striving to entrap Him and bring Him before a secret tribunal, where they might obtain by perjury what it was impossible to gain by fair means. Now they were carrying out their purpose. **The midnight** seizure by a mob, the mockery and abuse before He was condemned, or even accused, was their manner of work, not His. **Their action was in violation of the law.** Their own rules declared that every man should be treated as **innocent until proved guilty.** By their own rules the priests stood condemned.” *The Desire of Ages*, 699.

TWO CHARGES AT MIDNIGHT BY THE JEWS [SDA]

“Christ was to be tried formally before the Sanhedrin; but before Annas He was subjected to a preliminary trial. Under the Roman rule the Sanhedrin could not execute the sentence of death. They could only examine a prisoner, and pass judgment, to be ratified by the Roman authorities. **It was therefore necessary to bring against Christ charges that would be regarded as criminal by the Romans. An accusation must also be found which would condemn Him in the eyes of the Jews.** Not a few among the priests and rulers had been convicted by Christ’s teaching, and only fear of excommunication prevented them from confessing Him. The priests well remembered the question of Nicodemus, ‘Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?’ John 7:51. This question had for the time broken up the council, and thwarted their plans. Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus were not now to be summoned, but there were others who might dare to speak in favor of justice. The trial must be so conducted as to unite the members of the Sanhedrin against Christ. There were **two charges which the priests desired to maintain. If Jesus could be proved a blasphemer, He would be condemned by the Jews. If convicted of sedition, it would secure His condemnation by the Romans.** The second charge Annas tried first to establish. He questioned Jesus concerning His disciples and His doctrines, hoping the prisoner would say something that would give him material upon which to work. **He thought to draw out some statement to prove that He was seeking to establish a secret society,** with the purpose of setting up a new kingdom. Then the priests could deliver Him to the Romans as a disturber of the peace and a creator of insurrection.” {DA 698.3}

SEDITION: A factious commotion of the people, a tumultuous assembly of men rising in opposition to law or the administration of justice, and in disturbance of the public peace. Sedition is a rising or commotion of less extent than an insurrection, and both are less than rebellion; but some kinds of sedition, in Great Britain, amount to high treason. In general, sedition is a local or limited insurrection in opposition to civil authority, as mutiny is to military. Webster’s 1828 Dictionary.

MARRIAGE & SABBATH

“Then marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, **twin institutions** for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity. Then, as the Creator joined the hands of the holy pair in wedlock, saying, A man shall ‘leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one,’ He enunciated the law of marriage for all the children of Adam to the close of time. That which the eternal Father Himself had pronounced good was the law of highest blessing and development for man.” *Adventist Home*, 340.

SDA CHURCH CHOOSE BARABBAS OVER CHRIST

“The Prince of Light and the prince of darkness are contending for the victory. When Jesus, the Prince of Life, came forth from Joseph’s sepulcher, his triumph was assured. As he came forth from the grave, and proclaimed himself the resurrection and the life, the end of Satan’s reign on the earth was made certain; but well may the hosts of heaven be astonished to see men exalting him who is the leader of the great rebellion against God. **Those who are choosing to honor Satan by exalting the spurious sabbath are making a choice similar to that which the people made when they rejected Christ, that Barabbas, a robber and murderer, should be given unto them.**” *Signs of the Times*, March 12, 1894.

And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it*. **Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them:** and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified. Matthew 27:23–26

“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 Saviour. 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.” *Review and Herald*, April 14, 1896.

THE FIRST AND THE LAST

“**To the last ruler of Babylon, as in type to its first,** had come the sentence of the divine Watcher: ‘O king, . . . to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.’ Daniel 4:31.” *Prophets and Kings*, 533.

For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, **If they shall fall away,** to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they **crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh,** and put *him* to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. Hebrews 6:4–8.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12.

“The Bible declares that **before the coming of the Lord**, Satan will work ‘with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;’ and they that ‘received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,’ will be left to receive ‘strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.’ 2 Thessalonians 2:9–11. **Not until this condition** shall be reached, **and** the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete. **The change is a progressive one**, and the perfect fulfillment of Revelation 14:8 **is yet future**.

“Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in **the churches which constitute Babylon**, the great body of Christ’s true followers are still to be found in their communion. There are many of these who have never seen the special truths for this time. Not a few are dissatisfied with their present condition and are longing for clearer light. They look in vain for **the image of Christ in the churches with which they are connected**. As these bodies depart further and further from the truth, and ally themselves more closely with the world, **the difference between the two classes will widen**, and **it will finally result in separation**. The time will come when those who love God supremely can no longer remain in connection with such as are ‘lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.’

“Revelation 18 points to the time **when**, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Revelation 14:6–12, **the church** will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and **the people of God still in Babylon** will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work. **When** those that ‘believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness’ (**2 Thessalonians 2:12**), shall be left to receive strong delusion and to believe a lie, **then** the light of truth will shine upon all whose hearts are open to receive it, and all the children of the Lord that remain in Babylon will heed the call: ‘Come out of her, My people’ (Revelation 18:4).” *The Great Controversy*, 389–390.

“It is a fearful thing to treat lightly the truth which has convinced our understanding and touched our hearts. We cannot with impunity reject the warnings which God in mercy sends us. A message was sent from heaven to the world in Noah’s day, and the salvation of men depended upon the manner in which they treated that message. Because they rejected the warning, the Spirit of God was withdrawn from the sinful race, and they perished in the waters of the flood. In the time of Abraham, mercy ceased to plead with the guilty inhabitants of Sodom, and all but Lot with his wife and two daughters were consumed by the fire sent down from heaven. So in the days of Christ. The Son of God declared to the unbelieving Jews of that generation, ‘Your house is left unto you desolate.’ **Looking down to the last days**, the same infinite power declares, concerning those who ‘received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,’ ‘For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.’ **As they reject the teachings of His Word, God withdraws His Spirit, and leaves them to the deceptions which they love.**” *Early Writings*, 46.

GREAT LIGHT AND OPPORTUNITIES

“A new heart will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you.’ I believe with all my heart that the Spirit of God is being withdrawn from the world, and **those who have had great light and opportunities and have not improved them, will be the first to be left.** They have grieved away the Spirit of God. The present activity of Satan in working upon hearts, and upon churches and nations should startle every student of prophecy. The end is near. Let our churches arise. Let the converting power of God be experienced in the heart of the individual members, and then we shall see the deep moving of the Spirit of God. Mere forgiveness of sin is not the sole result of the death of Jesus. He made the infinite sacrifice not only that sin might be removed, but that human nature might be restored, rebeautified, reconstructed from its ruins, and made fit for the presence of God.” *Selected Messages*, book 3, 154.

THE FAITHFUL CITY

“One who sees beneath the surface, who reads the hearts of all men, says of **those who have had great light:** ‘They are not afflicted and astonished because of their moral and spiritual condition.’ Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. **I also will choose their delusions**, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before Mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.’ **‘God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie,’ because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,’ ‘but had pleasure in unrighteousness.’** Isaiah 66:3, 4; 2 Thessalonians 2:11, 10, 12.

“The heavenly Teacher inquired: ‘What stronger delusion can beguile the mind than the pretense that **you are building on the right foundation** and that God accepts your works, when in reality you are working out many things according to worldly policy and are sinning against Jehovah? Oh, it is a great deception, a fascinating delusion, that takes possession of minds when **men who have once known the truth**, mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof; when they suppose that they are rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, while in reality they are in need of everything.’

“God has not changed toward His faithful servants who are keeping their garments spotless. **But many are crying, ‘Peace and safety,’ while sudden destruction is coming upon them.** Unless there is thorough repentance, unless men humble their hearts by confession and receive the truth as it is in Jesus, they will never enter heaven. When purification shall take place in our ranks, we shall no longer rest at ease, boasting of being rich and increased with goods, in need of nothing.

“Who can truthfully say: ‘Our gold is tried in the fire; our garments are unspotted by the world’? I saw our Instructor pointing to the garments of so-called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath. Then He said to me: ‘Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? **‘How is the faithful city become an harlot!’** My Father’s house is made a house of merchandise, a place whence the divine presence and glory have departed! For this cause there is weakness, and strength is lacking.’” *Testimonies*, volume 8, 249–250.

CAPERNAUM

“One matter burdens my soul: The great lack of the love of God, which has been lost through continued resistance of light and truth, and the influence of those who have been engaged in active labor, who, in the face of evidence piled upon evidence, have exerted an influence to counteract the work of the message God has sent. **I point them to the Jewish nation and ask, Must we leave our brethren to pass over the same path of blind resistance, till the very end of probation?** If ever a people needed true and faithful watchmen, who will not hold their peace, who will cry day and night, sounding the warnings God has given, **it is Seventh-day Adventists. Those who have had great light, blessed opportunities, who, like Capernaum, have been exalted to heaven in point of privilege,** shall they by non-improvement be left to darkness corresponding to the greatness of the light given?

“I wish to plead with our brethren who shall assemble at the General Conference to heed the message given to the Laodiceans. What a condition of blindness is theirs! This subject has been brought to your notice **again and again**, but your dissatisfaction with your spiritual condition has not been deep and painful enough to work reform. ‘Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ The guilt of self-deception is upon our churches. **The religious life of many is a lie.**” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 16, 106–107.

HIS OWN CITY

“At Capernaum Jesus dwelt in the intervals of His journeys to and fro, and it came to be known as ‘His own city.’ It was on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and near the borders of the beautiful plain of Gennesaret, if not actually upon it.” *The Desire of Ages*, 252.

GREAT LIGHT & OPPORTUNITY DEFINED

“Among the professed children of God, how little patience has been manifested, how many bitter words have been spoken, how much denunciation has been uttered against those not of our faith. Many have looked upon those belonging to other churches as great sinners, when the Lord does not thus regard them. Those who look thus upon the members of other churches, have need to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. Those whom they condemn may have had but little light, few opportunities and privileges. If they had had the light that many of the members of our churches have had, they might have advanced at a far greater rate, and have better represented their faith to the world. Of those who boast of their light, and yet fail to walk in it, Christ says, ‘But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, **Capernaum [Seventh-day Adventists, who have had great light]**, which art exalted unto heaven [**in point of privilege**], shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.’ At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent [in their own estimation], and hast revealed them unto babes.’

“‘And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; **therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight**, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.’

“The Lord has established among us institutions of great importance, and they are to be managed, not as worldly institutions are managed, but after God’s order. They are to be managed with an eye single to his glory, that by all means perishing souls may be saved. To the people of God the testimonies of the Spirit have come, and yet many have not taken heed to reproofs, warnings, and counsels.

“‘Here now this, **O foolish people**, and without **understanding**; which have **eyes, and see not**; which have **ears, and hear not**: fear ye not me saith the Lord: **will ye not tremble at my presence**, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? but this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. **Your iniquities have turned away these things**, and your sins have withholden good things from you. . . . They judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; **shall not my soul be revenged on such a nation as this?**’

“Shall the Lord be compelled to say, ‘Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee?’ ‘Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain. . . . Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth?’

“Will not those to whom have been committed **the treasures of truth**, consider the superior advantages of **light and privilege** that have been purchased for us by the sacrifice of the Son of God on Calvary’s cross? **We are to be judged by the light that has been given us, and we can find no excuse by which to extenuate our course.** The Way, the Truth, and the Life has been set before us. Many seek to excuse themselves by saying, ‘You must not judge me by some weak trait of character, but consider my character as a whole.’ We always feel deep pain at heart when the sinner seeks to apologize for his sin, to smooth it over, and fails to realize the danger of cherishing one un-Christlike attribute of character. We are to place our will on the side of the Lord’s will, and firmly determine that by his grace we will be free from sin. Sin is the transgression of the law, and it is not the magnitude of the action in iniquity that stamps it as sin. Adam and Eve were prohibited from eating of the tree of good and evil. **The test was a slight one, but the act of disobedience to God was the transgression of his law.**

“The little sins that men think are of so trivial a character that on their account they will not be brought into condemnation, **are very offensive in the sight of God.** Says one, ‘You are too severe, a man must be allowed these little defects of character.’ Let us hear the words of Christ. He says, ‘Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.’ People venture to commit sins that are grievous in the sight of God, and think that they are not to be called to task for them, because they say they are due to nervousness, to a peculiar temperament; but this is simply soothing the conscience, and crying, ‘Peace, peace, when there is no peace.’ **Sin is sin, and it is the delusion of Satan to look upon it in any other light than that it is grievous.**

“We may flatter ourselves that we are free from many things of which others are guilty; but if we have some strong points of character, and but one weak point, there is yet a communion between sin and the soul. The heart is divided in its service, and says, ‘Some of self and some of thee.’ The child of God must search out the sin which he has petted and indulged himself in, and permit God to cut it out of his heart. He must overcome that one sin; for it is not a trifling matter in the sight of God.

“One says, ‘I am not the least jealous, but then I do get provoked and say mean things, although I am always sorry after giving way to temper.’ Another says, ‘I have this fault or that, but then I just despise such and such meanness as is manifested by a certain person of my acquaintance.’ The Lord has not given us a list of graded sins, so that we may reckon some as of little consequence, and say that they will do but little harm, while others are of greater magnitude and will do much harm. A chain is no stronger than is its weakest link. We might pronounce such a chain good on the whole, but if one link is weak, the chain cannot be depended on. The work of overcoming is to be the study of every soul who enters the kingdom of God. That impatient word quivering on your lips must be left unspoken. That thought that your character is not rightly estimated must be put from you; for it weakens your influence, and works out the sure result, making you of light estimation in the minds of others. You should overcome the idea that you are a martyr, and lay claim to the promise of Christ, who says, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee.’”
Review and Herald, August 1, 1893.

JUDGED BY LIGHT

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Daniel 5:5.

“Our position in the world is not what it should be. We are far from where we should have been had our Christian experience been in harmony with the light and the opportunities given us, had we from the beginning constantly pressed onward and upward. Had we walked in the light that has been given us, had we followed on to know the Lord, our path would have grown brighter and brighter. But many of those who have had special light are so conformed to the world that they can scarcely be distinguished from worldlings. They do not stand forth as God’s peculiar people, chosen and precious. It is difficult to discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.

“In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed. **She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had.** If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced the sentence: ‘Found wanting.’ **By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be judged.**” *Testimonies*, volume 8, 247.

“The Redeemer of the world declares that there are greater sins than that for which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Those who hear the gospel invitation calling sinners to repentance, and heed it not, are more guilty before God than were the dwellers in the vale of Siddim. And still greater sin is theirs who profess to know God and to keep His commandments, yet who deny Christ in their character and their daily life. In the light of the Saviour’s warning, the fate of Sodom is a solemn admonition, not merely to those who are guilty of outbreking sin, but to all who are trifling with **Heaven-sent light and privileges.**

“Said the True Witness to the church at Ephesus: ‘I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.’ Revelation 2:4, 5. The Saviour watches for a response to His offers of love and forgiveness, with a more tender compassion than that which moves the heart of an earthly parent to forgive a wayward, suffering son. He cries after the wanderer, ‘Return unto Me, and I will return unto you.’ Malachi 3:7. But if the erring one persistently refuses to heed the voice that calls him with pitying, tender love, he will at last be left in darkness. The heart that has long slighted God’s mercy, becomes hardened in sin, and is no longer susceptible to the influence of the grace of God. Fearful will be the doom of that soul of whom the pleading Saviour shall finally declare, he ‘is joined to idols: let him alone.’ Hosea 4:17. It will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for the cities of the plain than for those who have known the love of Christ, and yet have turned away to choose the pleasures of a world of sin.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 165.

“The rebuke of the Lord is upon His people for their pride and unbelief. He will not restore unto them the joys of His salvation while they are departing from the instructions of His word and His Spirit. He will give grace to those who fear Him and walk in the truth, and He will withdraw His blessing from all that assimilate to the world. Mercy and truth are promised to the humble and penitent, and judgments are denounced against the rebellious.

“The church at Battle Creek might have stood free from idolatry, and her faithfulness would have been an example to other churches. But she is more willing to depart from God's commandments than to renounce the friendship of the world. **She is joined to the idols** which she has chosen; and because temporal prosperity and the favor of a wicked world are hers, she believes herself to be rich toward God. This will prove to many a fatal delusion. Her divine character and spiritual strength have departed from her.

“I counsel this church to give heed to the Saviour's admonition: ‘Remember therefore from whence thou art **fallen**, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.’” *Tetstimonies*, volume 5, 190.

THE TREE

“The Jewish religion with its magnificent display of temple, sacred altars, sacrificial pomp, mitred priests and impressive ceremonies, was but a superficial covering under which pride, oppression and iniquity held sway. The leaves were abundant and beautiful, but the tree bore no goodly fruit. The next morning as they passed by the same orchard, the disciples saw that the fig-tree which Jesus cursed was withered and blasted from root to branch. Jesus presented to his disciples the true condition of the Jews in this striking figure of the barren fig-tree; and, as the tree withered beneath the Saviour's blighting curse, and stood forth sere and blasted, dried up by the roots, so should all pretentious hypocrites be brought low.

“The other trees in the fig-orchard were also destitute of fruit; but their boughs were leafless, therefore they raised no expectations and caused no disappointment. These leafless trees represented the Gentiles, who made no boasts of superior piety. In them the words of the scripture finds an application, ‘the time of figs was not yet.’ But while the Jews in proud self-confidence stood forth assuming superiority to all others, the Gentiles were in a measure feeling their want and weakness, and longing for a better day, a clearer and more certain light to guide their wandering footsteps.

“The Jewish nation were outwardly religious, priding themselves upon their sacred temple, the pomp of priests and the imposing ceremonies of the morning and evening services, gorgeous synagogues and sacrificial offerings. Here were abundant leaves, beautiful and bright, to cover the hollow hypocrisy, malice, and oppression at the heart of all this vain display. The Jews were privileged with the presence of Christ manifested in the flesh. This inestimable blessing which God bestowed upon them should have called forth their devout acknowledgments. But in blind prejudice they refused the mercies offered them by Jesus. His love was lavished upon them in vain, and they regarded not his wondrous works. Sorrow fled at his approach; infirmity and deformity were healed; injustice and oppression shrunk ashamed from his rebuke; while death and the grave humbled themselves in his presence and obeyed his commands. Yet the people of his choice rejected him and his mighty miracles with scorn. The Majesty of Heaven came unto his own, and his own received him not.

“The judgment pronounced upon the barren fig-tree not only symbolizes the sentence passed upon the Jews, but is also applicable to the professed Christians of our time, who have become formal, selfish, boasting and hypocritical. Many who profess godliness stand before the world like the barren fig-tree, displaying pretentious leaves but utterly devoid of fruit. They go through the form of worship, yet have not repentance and faith. In the doom of the fig-tree Christ demonstrated how hateful in his eyes are hypocrisy and hollow pretense. Ever pitiful to the truly penitent, ever ready to receive them and to heal their maladies, he thus evidenced that the open sinner is in a more favorable condition before God than the Christian who bears no fruit to his glory.

“Important events clustered around the close of Christ's ministry. His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, his cleansing of the desecrated temple and the blighting of the barren fig-tree, all pointed to the doom of Jerusalem. The tears of Jesus upon the mount, when he overlooked the city of his love and care, while in the midst of the rejoicing and hosannas of thousands, were the last pleadings of rejected love and compassion.” *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 3, 18, 19.

“‘And now also,’ said the prophet, ‘the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.’ Not by its name, but by its fruit, is the value of a tree determined. If the fruit is worthless, **the name cannot save the tree from destruction**. John declared to the Jews that their standing before God was to be decided by their character and life. Profession was worthless. If their life and character were not in harmony with God's law, they were not His people.” *The Desire of Ages*, 107.

JOINED TO IDOLS

“The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. **A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written.** A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of **the new movement**. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. **Their foundation would be built on the sand**, and storm and tempest would **sweep** away the structure.

“Who has authority to begin such **a movement**? We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth?” *Selected Messages*, book 1, 204, 205.

“The Holy Spirit strives to make apparent the claims of God, but men pay heed only for a moment, and turn their minds to other things: Satan catches away the seeds of truth; the gracious influence of the Spirit of God is effectually resisted. Thus many are grieving away the Holy Spirit for the last time, and they know it not.

“The words spoken by Christ of Jerusalem are, ‘Your house is left unto you desolate.’ What anguish of soul did Jesus feel when all his appeals, his warnings and reproofs, were resisted! At the time he brought them home to the soul, impressions were made; but self-love, self-sufficiency, love of the world, came in and choked the good seed sown. Pride of heart prevented his hearers from humbling themselves before God, and confessing their sin in resisting his Holy Spirit, and reluctantly it left them. On the crest of Olivet, as he beheld the city, he wept over it, saying, ‘If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!’ Here he paused; he was loth to utter the irrevocable sentence. O that Jerusalem would repent! When the fast westering sun should pass out of sight, her day of mercy would be ended. Jesus closed his sentence, ‘But now they are hid from thine eyes.’ On another occasion he lamented the impenitence of the chosen city: ‘O **Jerusalem, Jerusalem**, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, **your house is left unto you desolate.**’ The Lord forbid that this scene should now be repeated in the experience of God’s professed people! ‘**My Spirit,**’ he says, ‘**shall not always strive with man.**’ The time will come when it must be said of the impenitent, ‘Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone.’” *Review and Herald*, December 23, 1890.