

EZEKIEL 8 - LESSONS FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL AND THEIR APPLICATION TO US

We are told that the modern church is repeating the history of Ancient Israel. Quote:

The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ.—Review. and Herald, 1890, No. 7. {Healthful Living page 280. Paragraph 1}

The story of the Israelite, their captivity and their rejection as the repository of the holy oracles has been an allegory to nations and a case study to Bible prophecy students. Since the rejection of the Jewish nation in AD 34 and destruction of their temple in AD 70, those who have believed in Christ as the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world have been drafted in as the Israel of God. Paul writes:

Galatians 6:16: And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Romans 2:25-29: For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 26: Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? 27: And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? 28: For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Galatians 3:28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

We take one of the instances of the captivity of the children of Israel, their behavior and their final end in view of the end-time events and application to the Israel of God. We are admonished:

1 Corinthians 10:11: Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

There are lessons from the experience of the children of Israel that we can glean positively so as not to repeat the wrong paths that trod. The messenger writes under inspiration: -

We want to understand the time in which we live. We do not half understand it. We do not half take it in. My heart trembles in me when I think of what a foe we have to meet, and how poorly we are prepared to meet him. The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, have been presented before me again and again to illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ. How the enemy sought every occasion to take control of the minds of the Jews, and today he is seeking to blind the minds of God's servants, that they may not be able to discern the precious truth. {1888 533.1}

Ezekiel Chapter 8 Overview

This eighth chapter begins a new stage of Ezekiel's prophecies and continues to the end of the eleventh chapter. The connected visions at Eze 3:12-7:27 comprehended Judah and Israel; but the visions (Eze 8:1-11:25) refer immediately to Jerusalem and the remnant of Judah under Zedekiah, as distinguished from the Babylonian exiles. Being brought thence to the gate of the door of the house, Ezekiel saw women weeping for Tammuz or Adonis. As he returned to the court of the priests, between the porch and the altar, he saw twenty-five men with their backs to the sanctuary and their faces towards the east, worshipping the rising sun. This is the substance of the vision contained in the eighth chapter.

We may see from all this what induced the Lord to abandon his people, his city, and his temple; the abominations of the people in public and in private. But because those carried away captives with Jeconiah acknowledged their sins, and their hearts turned to the Lord, God informs them that they shall be brought back and restored to a happy state both in temporal and spiritual matters, while the others, who had filled up the measure of their iniquities, should be speedily brought into a state of desolation and ruin. This is the sum and intent of the vision in these four chapters but in this article, we are only going to deal with the introduction of the vision which is Ezekiel Chapter 8.

Ezekiel 8:1-3: And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me. 2: Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. 3: And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy.

In the sixth year--namely, of the captivity of Jehoiachin, as in Eze 1:2, the "fifth year" is specified. The lying on his sides three hundred ninety and forty days (Eze 4:5, 6) had by this time been completed, at least in vision. That event was naturally a memorable epoch to the exiles; and the computation of years from it was to humble the Jews, as well as to show their perversity in not having repented, though so long and severely chastised. During the captivity of Jehoiachin, Mataniah who was renamed Zedekiah was made king (2 Kings 24:13-17). Zedekiah was the son of Josiah the brother to Johoiakim, the father of Jehoiachin – 1 Chronicles 3:15, 16.

Ezekiel was shown an image of jealousy. Some say it was the image of Baal, which was placed in the temple by Manasses; others, that it was the image of Mars; and others, that it was the image of Tammuz or Adonis. Calmet supports this opinion by the following reasons:

1. *The name agrees perfectly with him. He was represented as a beautiful youth, beloved by Venus; at which Mars, her paramour, being incensed and filled with jealousy, sent a large boar against Adonis, which killed him with his tusks. Hence it was the image of him who fell a victim to jealousy.*
2. *The prophet being returned towards the northern gate, where he had seen the image of jealousy, Ezekiel 8:14, there saw the women lamenting for Tammuz. Now Tammuz, all agree, signifies Adonis; it was that therefore which was called the image of jealousy.*
3. *The Scripture often gives to the heathen idols names of degradation; as Baal-zebul, god of flies; Baal-zebul; god of dung. It is likely that it was Adonis who is called The dead, Le 19:27, 28; De 14:9, because he was worshipped as one dead. And the women represented as worshipping him were probably adulteresses, and had suffered through the jealousy of their husbands. And this worship of the image of jealousy provoked God to jealousy, to destroy this bad people.*

Ezekiel 8:4: And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain.

The Shekinah cloud of Jehovah's glory, notwithstanding the provocation of the idol, still remains in the temple, like that which Ezekiel saw "in the plain" (Eze 3:22,23); not till Eze 10:4,18 did it leave the temple at Jerusalem, showing the long-suffering of God, which ought to move the Jews to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9: The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Ezekiel 8:5: Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry.

The principal avenue to the altar of burnt offering; as to the northern position; 2 Kings 16:14. Ahaz had removed the brazen altar from the front of the Lord's house to the north of the altar which he had himself erected. The locality of the idol before God's own altar enhances the heinousness of the sin.

Ezekiel 8:6-10: 8, He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations. 7: And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. 8: Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. 9: And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. 10: So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about.

It is very likely that these images portrayed on the wall were the objects of Egyptian adoration: the ox, the ape, the dog, the crocodile, the ibis, the scarabaeus or beetle, and various other things. It appears that these were privately worshipped by the Sanhedrin or great Jewish council, consisting of seventy or seventy-two persons, six chosen out of every tribe, as representatives of the people. The images were portrayed upon the wall, as we find those ancient idols are on the walls of the tombs of the kings and nobles of Egypt. Compare with Exodus 20:4

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth

Just like in the worshiping of the golden calf, Israel at this point had bent their hearts to Egypt and nothing could dissuade them. Though it could not be heard aloud from their lips, their actions spake louder:

Exodus 32:1: And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

Ezekiel 8:11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up.

Shaphan was a scribe, or what some call comptroller of the temple, in the days of Josiah; 2 Kings 22:10-14 and Jaazaniah his son succeeded him in this office. He was at the head of this band of idolaters. Eze 8:11. The very name means, "Jehovah hears," giving the lie to the unbelief which virtually said (Eze 9:9), "The Lord seeth us not," &c. (compare Ps 10:11, 14; 50:21; 94:7, 9). The seventy members composing the Sanhedrim, or great council of the nation, the origination of which we find in the seventy elders, representatives of the congregation, who went up with Moses to the mount to behold the glory of Jehovah, and to witness the secret transactions relating to the establishment of the covenant; also, in the seventy elders appointed to share the burden of the people with Moses. How awfully it aggravates the national sin, that the seventy, once admitted to the Lord's secret council (Ps 25:14), should now, "in the dark," enter "the secret" of the wicked (Genesis 49:6), those judicially bound to suppress idolatry being the ringleaders of it! The offering of incense belonged not to the elders, but to the priests; this usurpation added to the guilt of the former. They spared no expense for their idols. Oh, that there were the same liberality toward the cause of God!

Ezekiel 8:12-14: 12, Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth. 13: He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. 14: Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

Tammuz was the 3rd deity in Babylon and formed the 3rd part of the trinity of Nimrod, Semiramis and Tammuz. The trinity doctrine of the papacy comes from these. This is none other than the worship of Catholic Trinitarianism within the church.

"The mystery of the Trinity is the central doctrine of the Catholic Faith. Upon it are based all the other teachings of the Church." Handbook For Today's Catholic, page 16

Adam Clarke's Writes:

This was Adonis. He is fabled to have been a beautiful youth beloved by Venus, and killed by a wild boar in Mount Lebanon, whence springs the river Adonis, which was fabled to run blood at his festival in August. The women of Phoenicia, Assyria, and Judea worshipped him as dead, with deep lamentation, wearing priapi and other obscene images all the while, and they prostituted themselves in honour of this idol. Having for some time mourned him as dead, they then supposed him revived and broke out into the most extravagant rejoicings. Of the appearance of the river at this season, Mr. Maundrell thus speaks:

"We had the good fortune to see what is the foundation of the opinion which Lucian relates, viz., that this stream at certain seasons of the year, especially about the feast of Adonis, is of a bloody colour, proceeding from a kind of sympathy, as the heathens imagined, for the death of Adonis, who was killed by a wild boar in the mountain out of which this stream issues. Something like this we saw actually come to pass, for the water was stained to a surprising redness; and, as we observed in travelling, had stained the sea a great way into a reddish hue." This was no doubt occasioned by a red ochre, over which the river ran with violence at this time of its increase.

Lest this escape our memory, here they were worshipping Tammuz, the son of Nimrod by Semiramis the wife which she claimed she was impregnated by the rays of the Sun, the supposed Nimrod after his disappearance. This was sun-worship. In Jeremiah, they had been worshipping her mother Semiramis. Here we had the worship of the Sun being Nimrod, Semiramis the wife as the Moon and Tammuz their son as the son of the Sun, observe:

Jeremiah 7:4, 14-18: Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these. 14: 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. 15: And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim. 16: Therefore 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. 17: Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? 18: The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger

Here is a description of a whole family gathered together, and acting unitedly in idolatrous worship.

- 1. The children go and collect wood, and bring it to the place of sacrifice.*
- 2. The fathers lay it in order, and kindle a fire.*
- 3. The mother and her maids knead dough, make their batch, and out of it form cakes, and bake them for the honour of the queen of heaven; most probably the moon, though perhaps not exclusive of the sun and planets, generally called the host of heaven.*

Family worship is a most amiable and becoming thing when performed according to truth. What a pity that so few families show such zeal for the worship of God as those apostate Israelites did for that of their idols! Not merely isolated individuals practised idolatry; young and old, men and women, and whole families, contributed their joint efforts to promote it. Oh, that there were the same zeal for the worship of God as there is for error (Jeremiah 44:17, 19; 19:13)!

Cakes were made of honey, fine flour, &c., in a round flat shape to resemble the disc of the moon, to which they were offered. Others read as Margin, "the frame of heaven," that is, the planets generally. The male and female pair of deities symbolized the generative powers of nature; hence arose the introduction of prostitution in the worship. The Babylonians worshipped Ashtoreth as Mylitta, that is, generative. Our Monday, or Moon-day, indicates the former prevalence of moon worship (Isaiah 65:11). This worship of the Father, Mother and Son is pure Roman paganism of the Trinity comprising of Father, Mary and Jesus.

Isaiah 65:11; But ye [are] they that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that number.

This is Mt. Moriah, on which the temple was. The Israelites worshipped "Gad," the Babylonian god of fortune, the planet Jupiter, answering to Baal or Bel; the Arabs called it "the Greater Good Fortune"; and the planet Venus answering to Meni, "the Lesser Good Fortune" [GESENIUS, KIMCHI, &c.]. Tables were laid out for their idols with all kinds of viands, and a cup containing a mixture of wine and honey, in Egypt especially, on the last day of the year [JEROME].

The Lord laments:

1 Kings 11:33 Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.

Jeremiah 7:19: Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?

And why were Israel turned into such pagan worship?!!!!

Jeremiah :44:16-18 16, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. 17: But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. 18: But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.

This was blatant blasphemy. They accused God of not providing for their basic temporal needs. Really?!!! Does God change in his promises? Is God son of man that He should lie?

Malachi 3:6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Matthew 6:25-34: Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26: Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27: Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28: And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30: Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31: Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32: (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34: Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Matthew 5:45: .. for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Their claim that it was lack of God's lack of providence that drove them to idol-worship was turning truth into a lie. This is the path of all that forsake the truth and start running after fables. And to ask, can a dead carved wood bless anyone? Can their idols which spake not answer their prayers or protect them? Who gave them the breath they were praising their idols with? Was it Nimrod, Semiramis or Tammuz?! Had not their sins separated them from God? Isaiah 59:1, 2.

Proverbs 30:11: There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. 12: There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. 13: There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

2 Timothy 3:1-4: This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2: For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3: Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4: Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

Ezekiel 8:15: Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.

The next are "greater abominations," not in respect to the idolatry, but in respect to the place and persons committing it. In "the inner court," immediately before the door of the temple of Jehovah, between the porch and the altar, where the priests advanced only on extraordinary occasions (Joel 2:17), twenty-five men (the leaders of the twenty-four courses or orders of the priests, 1 Chronicles 24:18,19, with the high priest, "the princes of the sanctuary," Isa 43:28), representing the whole priesthood, as the seventy elders represented the people, stood with their backs turned on the temple, and their faces towards the east, making obeisance to the rising sun (contrast 1 Kings 8:44). Sun-worship came from the Persians, who made the sun the eye of their god Ormuzd. It existed as early as Job (Job 31:26; compare De 4:19). Josiah could only suspend it for the time of his reign (2 Kings 23:5,11); it revived under his successors. Inspiration tell us: -

In the sixth year of the reign of Zedekiah, the Lord revealed to Ezekiel in vision some of the abominations that were being practiced in Jerusalem, and within the gate of the Lord's house, and even in the inner court. The chambers of images, and the pictured idols, "every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel"--all these in rapid succession passed before the astonished gaze of the prophet. Ezekiel 8:10. {Prophets and Kings PK 448.2}

Those who should have been spiritual leaders among the people, "the ancients of the house of Israel," to the number of seventy, were seen offering incense before the idolatrous representations that had been introduced into hidden chambers within the sacred precincts of the temple court. "The Lord seeth us not," the men of Judah flattered themselves as they engaged in their heathenish practices; "the Lord hath forsaken the earth," they blasphemously declared. Verses 11, 12. {Prophets and Kings PK 448.3}

There were still "greater abominations" for the prophet to behold. At a gate leading from the outer to the inner court he was shown "women weeping for Tammuz," and within "the inner court of the Lord's house, . . . at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east." Verses 13-16. {Prophets and Kings PK 448.4}

And now the glorious Being who accompanied Ezekiel throughout this astonishing vision of wickedness in high places in the land of Judah, inquired of the prophet: "Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke Me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury: Mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." Verses 17, 18. {Prophets and Kings PK 449.1}

Ezekiel 8:16: And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east. 17: Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.

The children of Israel were told not to worship the heavenly bodies nor pay homage to it in whatever manner or shape: -

Deuteronomy 4:15-19: 15, Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: 16: Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17: The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, 18: The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: 19: And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

Deuteronomy :17:2-6: 2, If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant, 3: And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; 4: And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: 5: Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die. 6: At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

In the building of the sanctuary, the door of the sanctuary was placed in the East so that when the Israelites entered the sanctuary, they could worship facing west so as not to pay obeisance to the heavenly bodies or reflect upon them. Ezekiel 44:1. But would the end-time appointed visible church of God worship the sun? What does it mean to give the sanctuary your back and worship the sun towards the east? The answer may shock you but this is the reality.

When we abandon the pure religion and start worshipping as the fallen churches of Sunday do, then friends we have turned into sun-worship towards the East. In our churches today, we can find jokes on the pulpit, Babylonian music, women ordination, dancing, spiritual formation, rejection of the Spirit of Prophecy and many other heinous apostasies. This is turning our back to the sanctuary and worshipping as the sun-day worshipers, as the Babylonians, worshipping the sun towards the East.

In Dan 8:10-12, the papacy had cast down the sanctuary with its traditions, the same is being repeated amongst us as the people of God. Was this predicted?

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. {Selected Messages Book 1 1SM 204.2}

Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious--to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony.-- Letter 12, 1890. {Selected Messages Book 1 1SM 48.3}

There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded.-- Letter 40, 1890. {Selected Messages Book 1 1SM 48.4}

It is impossible to estimate too largely the work that the Lord will accomplish through His proposed vessels in carrying out His mind and purpose. The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit. {2SM 36.2}

*Those who seek to remove the old **landmarks are not holding fast**; they are not remembering how they have received and heard. Those who try to bring in theories that would remove the **pillars of our faith** concerning the **sanctuary** or concerning the **personality of God or of Christ** are working as blind men. They are seeking to bring in uncertainties and to set the people of God adrift without an anchor. {Ye shall Receive Power YRP 235.4}*

These are just but a dot of apostasy that are going on amidst us. This is a steady road towards rejection of God, his sanctuary and worship of Sun-day:

As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them. {Great Controversy GC 608.2}

In our camp-meetings, the inspired books have been replaced by goody goody books of Sun-day worshipers to lull the reformation continuing. Can you drink from the true cistern and broken cisterns and remain pure?! This is amongst the worship of the Sun towards but folks are afraid to speak of these things.

Ezekiel 8:17: Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.

"This is more proverbial, for "they turn up the nose in scorn," expressing their insolent security [Septuagint]. Not content with outraging "with their violence" the second table of the law, namely, that of duty towards one's neighbor, "they have returned" (that is, they turn back afresh) to provoke Me by violations of the first table [CALVIN]. Rather, they held up a branch or bundle of tamarisk (called barsom) to their nose at daybreak, while singing hymns to the rising sun [STRABO, 1.15, p. 733]. Sacred trees were frequent symbols in idol-worship. CALVIN translates, "to their own ruin," literally, "to their nose," that is, with the effect of rousing My anger (of which the Hebrew is "nose") to their ruin."

Ezekiel 8:18: Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

Jeremiah 11:9-14 9: And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10: They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. 11: Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them. 12: Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble. 13: For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal. 14: Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.

Jeremiah 14:10-12: 10, Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. 11: Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good. 12: When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

The sanctuary is a revelation of every step of human probation. This then will be a key pillar that if rightly understood then our salvation is assured and this is what Satan wants to obscure from Christians.

The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them. {GC 488.3} The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of

man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God. {Great Controversy GC 489.1}

The denial of the sanctuary will be an apostasy of a point of no remedy? The denial of the sanctuary and pollution of it leads to the departing of the Lord amidst His people:

*2 Chronicles 36:14-16: Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted **the house of the LORD** which he had **hallowed** in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was **NO REMEDY**.*

The Jews nation reached a point of no return because by rejecting God as their King and Christ as their Saviour, they lost the significance of the sanctuary. Here is how the Adventists considered the sanctuary importance:

*Each morning at six o'clock [at the Avondale School], Brother Haskell speaks from the Scriptures, giving a Bible lesson. This is free to all, and there is a goodly company out each morning; for it is a blessing to all. This study lasts for one hour. These meetings are intensely interesting. The subject thus far has been the **sanctuary** question, and we are **highly gratified** to see the interest manifested. All are much interested in the way he presents the subject. He speaks in a clear, simple style, and brings in much scripture to sustain every point. He feels that altogether too little has been said upon this subject; for it is the **central pillar that sustains the structure of our position at the present time**.--Letter 126, 1897, p. 4. (To Brother and Sister John Wessels, May 18, 1897.) {Manuscript Releases Volume 4 - 4MR 244.2}*

The typical behaviour of the Jewish towards the sanctuary and their rejection then has to apply anti-typically to the advent movement and its final rejection. Ezekiel is given a glimpse of the typical and anti-typical events that led to sealing and rejection of the professed people of God in Ezekiel 8 and 9. When they rejected the sanctuary, there was no remedy for their sins because it is only in the sanctuary that our sins are transferred and forgiven. Says the Messenger Ellen White: -

*In a representation which passed before me, I saw a certain work being done by medical missionary workers. Our ministering brethren were looking on, watching what was being done, but they did not seem to understand. **The foundation of our faith**, which was established by so much prayer, such earnest searching of the Scriptures, was being taken **down, pillar by pillar**. Our faith was to **have nothing to rest upon--the sanctuary was gone, the atonement was gone**. I realized that something must be done. {Sermon and Talks Volume 1 - 1SAT 344.1}*

She says that, “when the sanctuary is gone then the atonement is gone”. Are we reaching that decisive moment in the history of our movement? Yes. The attack on the sanctuary is the attack on the atonement which is victory over sin. When you turn from that message, you face on the east and idol worship. You just become like the rest of the world.

*In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want **solid pillars** for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no*

sanctuary. *This is one of the points on which there will be a **departing from the faith**. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?-- Review and Herald, May 25, 1905. {Counsel to Writers - CW 53.2}*

The denial of the sanctuary is the departure from the faith, this is apostasy, and it leaves the Lord God with nothing to do but to leave:

Eze 9:3 And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house.

Eze 10:4, 18: Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD's glory. Then the glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims.

Ellen G. Whites says:

God's Spirit has illuminated every page of Holy Writ, but there are those upon whom it makes little impression, because it is imperfectly understood. When the shaking comes, by the introduction of false theories, these surface readers, anchored nowhere, are like shifting sand. They slide into any position to suit the tenor of their feelings of bitterness. . . . Daniel and Revelation must be studied, as well as the other prophecies of the Old and New Testaments. Let there be light, yes, light, in your dwellings. For this we need to pray. The Holy Spirit, shining upon the sacred page, will open our understanding, that we may know what is truth. {Testimony to Ministers - TM 112.1}

While all the abominations and apostasies are happening in the church of God, His presence can still be found in there, but there reaches a time that the mercy of God has to meet the Justice of God. When the sanctuary and atonement is rejected then what follows is the closure of the ministerial work of Christ. There can't be a continual of salvific work when the people to be ministered to turn their back on the sanctuary. When Adam sinned, he was introduced to the plan of salvation by sacrificial of the lamb which depicted Christ. The denial of this made Cain to be accursed. The Sanctuary then has the seal of God in it; a denial of it will warranty the reception of the mark of the beast. Its rejection is the rejection of salvation. There can never be such a greater apostasy than this.

Ezekiel 8 is a depiction of the final steps of the church of God in end-times towards rejection. This is apostasy was led by the Priests who should have been leading the flock into truth. The same is being repeated today. How I pray that may many of us pause and reflect what we have been doing if it is a pure religion or a false religion of turning our backs towards the sanctuary. When the full measure is reached and God reaches His limit, He will leave and He will go in search of the others who have not heard of the truce we have for long enjoyed but abused.

Oh, that the people might know the time of their visitation! There are many who have not yet heard the testing truth for this time. There are many with whom the Spirit of God is striving. The time of God's destructive judgments is the time of mercy for those who have had no opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched; His hand is still stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter. {Testimonies Volume 9 - 9T 97.2}

BLESSINGS