

The Spiritual State of “Babylon Fallen”

As most of you know, the CSDA Church has historically had a much easier time convincing worldlings and people of other churches about the errors of the mainstream SDA organization than actual Adventists themselves. It seems that, without a definite doctrine of a soon-to-come judgment, and straight teachings about lifestyle reform, and most of all the beliefs (straight from the Scriptures) about the lifetime walk of sanctification as an integral part of salvation, an atmosphere of Laodicea is a natural consequence.

This is the reason why the very first of the Three Angels’ Message, found in Revelation 14, is a call to awaken to the reality of these things in preparation for the *work* that humans are called to do under the next two divine messengers.

We have generally delineated the core messages of the three revealing angels as these:

- 1) A call to worship Yahweh in Spirit and in truth because of His coming judgment, which is really the same as a call to an acceptance of the true Gospel, including the promise (not threat, as some seem to take it) of Victory Over Sin.
- 2) An announcement that “Babylon is fallen,” which we will be examining in some detail in this study; and we understand Babylon to be a symbol of both confusion (Jer 51:47) and an acceptance of false religions. (Dan 2:2 – in which the term “Chaldeans” signifies the people of Babylon). That being the case, the second Angel is also an announcement of judgment, but not against individuals specifically; rather, it is a decree that false religions, and the confusion that results from them, are about to be destroyed.
- 3) A warning about the “Mark of the Beast,” and the terrible consequences of receiving it. So dangerous, and global in scope, is this Mark that it necessitates all with the love of Christ within them to take up this angel’s message and bear it to others, a message that requires both spiritual power (Zec 4:6) and unity (John 17:20-23) to properly convey.

But you might notice that, just now, I appeared to both praise and criticize non-Adventist religions, saying *first* that it was easier for them to understand our teachings about errors in mainstream Adventism (such as its union with the United States government, and sometimes even their acceptance of the Trinity doctrine), and *second* that they had fallen into a Laodicean state due to their liberal nature.

While this appears to be a paradox, it really isn’t. But it does raise the legitimate question, “Why does Laodicea perceive errors more easily?” Unfortunately, that’s not really what is happening. These other churches are seeing errors easily in a set of beliefs not their own. If you try to convince a Laodicean church of its own shortcomings regarding the Scriptures, you will get a very different response. This is in accord with Christ’s own description of this Laodicean condition: “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.’” (Rev 3:17)

There is nothing wrong with Laodicea’s vision when it comes to the errors and shortcomings of others, and so if you show from the Scriptures that a Christian is not to take others to court, and then that a particular church is suing other organizations and individuals at law, then of course – they can see the hypocrisy and evil of that system. But if they themselves are members of that church... then no, it is not nearly so easy.

But the fact of the matter is that the true Christian disregards personal comfort and safety for the sake of truth. All of us who worship with the CSDA Church have had to go through, or are currently going through, something that the flesh would describe as “uncomfortable” for the sake of this message. Our lives are joyful, and not one of us would ever trade the life that Yahweh has given us for any other life; but at the same time the

joy we receive is tempered by sorrow and trial. As it is even written, “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Yahshua shall suffer persecution.” (2 Tim 3:12)

For SDAs, the cost of admitting the present truth about the Beast and its Image is high, and we need to be sensitive to that. An Adventist is heavily invested, by the very nature of this religion, in “the community of the saints.” An Adventist understands, correctly, and to a greater degree than many churches, the importance of membership in a congregation, the unity of the faith, and the importance of the worldwide organization in taking the message to the world. These are all Biblical doctrines, and the SDA Church takes them seriously. But for an Adventist to come to an understanding that the organization meant to represent all these things, upon which a great emotional and spiritual dependence is necessarily placed, is in error... that is a great trial. It’s a trial most of us know very well, having gone through it ourselves. It is really quite a scary prospect, that even with the wonderful understanding of the Scriptures, and the accurate interpretation of prophecy, and the added blessing of inspired writings by people like Ellen White, even with all these things... if the Church could still fall into such an irredeemable state, what hope can there be for *any* Church to be “right” before Heaven?

If you have been “burned” by a bad history with a particular church, can you really afford to trust another movement again? This is a barrier we encounter quite often in calling people to Christ. But the fall of the mainstream Adventist Church did not just “happen.” It was a slow process, and a subtle one, but it is not as if there were no signposts, no warnings. And furthermore, it was a very specific process, and one that can, and must, be understood, so that we who seek to finish the work of the Three Angels may never repeat the sins of the past. That is why it is always beneficial to go over the teachings of our people from the past (such as chronicled in “The Christ, the Beast, and the Corporation” video that is accessible online) and at the same time to seek new and greater light for the path still before us. In examining the spiritual state of “Babylon fallen,” we will be doing both, by Yah’s great blessing.

The Steps to “Babylon Fallen”

It has always been a burden of mine, right from the beginning of my work in the CSDA Church, to show all our doctrines directly from the Scriptures. It is not that I do not love and appreciate the works of the pioneers, particularly Ellen White, and I often find them helpful in enhancing my own understanding of Yahweh’s word. At the same time, I believe that the Church of Christ will have no true “standard,” no basis for its doctrines, than the Bible itself.

When it comes to a discussion of the Second Angel’s message, which proclaims *the fall* of Babylon, we can most easily speak of these things by referring to Adventist writings, because they have covered the topic of this *fallen Babylon* so well. And yet, we cannot go to the Baptists and Methodists with a copy of *The Great Controversy* and try to show them the truth from this. You can take that from me; in my early days in the mainstream Adventist Church, I tried to convince someone that the Biblical diet was still an obligation of the Christian from one of Ellen White’s books. I thought that since this new knowledge made so much sense to me, and was so obviously inspired by the same Spirit that was at work in the pages of the New Testament, anyone else would also receive it with joy. That didn’t turn out so well.

Regarding Babylon Fallen, the SDA pioneers (not so much the more recent theologians) have done a very good job of outlining the steps for its creation. We can, however, find the main detours from the Highway of Holiness in the Bible... we just have to let Yahweh guide our search. First, in Revelation we find that there is something called “Babylon” that is declared to be fallen. What is it?

We believe that “Babylon” is a condition of a church, some organization that was once, but is no longer, faithful to the teachings of Christ. And you will notice, the Angel does not declare, “The Church is fallen, is fallen.” No, the thing that falls is already something that is described by a word that the Bible uses to mean “confusion.” So then, it is apparent, right from there, that the “fall” is not an unforeseeable event. It is the last step in a process of corruption that had already begun.

To verify this, we must understand how the Scriptures, particularly the Book of Revelation (in which we find the primary reference to this condition and process) uses the term “Babylon.” In some places it is called a “great city.” In another place we read, “So [the angel] carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Yahshua; and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.” (Rev 17:3-6) By the way, that word “admiration” at the end is not necessarily a complimentary term; it simply means “with great amazement.” But here we have a “woman,” and we have established in numerous studies and with numerous verses that a woman in symbolic prophecy is always a church. (Jer 6:2, Hos 3:1-5, Eph 5:25-32)

In one specific place where Yahweh’s people are collectively referred to as a “woman” we read this interesting passage: “And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.” (Isa 1:8, 21) Here we have the very same imagery as John recorded in Revelation. We note a “city” that is also a “woman,” and that, a “harlot” because she has engaged in unlawful congress with sin.

In Revelation, we get a more specific indictment of the “woman,” in that she has committed blasphemy, which is speaking evil of Yahweh, and she is also guilty of persecuting the saints, “the martyrs of Yahshua.” As we read through Revelation 17 we find also this in the verse just before the ones quoted above: “With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” (Rev 17:2)

So this woman, Babylon, is identified by the following features: she is a spiritual organization (a church) that is called a “harlot” because, like the “daughter of Zion,” she has committed sins with the “kings of the earth.” In the process, she has spoken evil of divinity, and ultimately persecuted the saints. As we look over history from a Protestant perspective, what church has there been that has, in conjunction with civil power, become rich (decked with gold and precious stones and pearls) through the abuse of doctrine, and those who would worship God?

It can only be the Church of Rome. In fact, even the Bible tells us this explicitly. Peter, writing from Rome (according to various church historians like Eusebius and Tertullian), actually says, “The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.” (1Pet 5:13) At that time, of course, this congregation was merely *at* Babylon, or Rome, and was not yet united with it. The union of the Christian Church with pagan Rome came much later on, but it is interesting that even back then the identification of Rome with Babylon was already in place.

But now, Babylon has “fallen,” and the Angel in Revelation 14 tells us exactly how and why: “because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” (Rev 14:8b) Babylon sharing her “wine,” the wrath of her fornication with the nations of the earth is not merely a characteristic of the Babylon condition. Instead, it is the specific reason given for *why* Babylon, already evil, world-wealthy and proud, “falls” to an even greater degree of spiritual depravity, one so notable that it calls forth an angel to testify against that fall.

The steps then, directly from the Bible, to decline to the condition of “Babylon fallen” are these:

- 1) A church must exist, accepting of the doctrines taught by Yahweh.
- 2) That church must become worldly in nature, taking on pagan characteristics. As a result, this church will experience a degree of “success” in terms of secular benefits: gold, silver, precious clothing. This stage can happen quickly, or over a long period of time.

3) The state of the church degenerates to the point where it becomes guilty of “blasphemy,” of speaking ill of the Creator. At this point it is fully “Babylon” in nature.

4) In this state of confusion and wickedness, this church commits “fornication” with the nations and kings of the earth. When this takes place, when this unholy union occurs, the Angel announces that this “Babylon” has “fallen.” This fallen condition is characterized by that church becoming a persecuting power; this is necessarily the order, since before it acquires civil power it cannot actively *persecute* the saints of God. All it can do (and all the Bible says a church *can* do rightly) is to remove rebellious individuals from membership.

After a church acquires that civil power, however, it inevitably does descend into actual and active persecution.

There may be, and have been, other specifics added in to help identify these various stages. For example, in Adventist writings the observation is made that when she has been separated from God, a Babylonian church will codify its doctrines into a “creed” and use this to identify heretics and dissenters. When the union with the world is complete, the secular power it obtains is used as a weapon against those who will not conform to its requirements.

In general, however, the four steps listed above – taken directly from the Bible – are sufficient to show the stages through which a church falls to become the wicked entity described in Revelation 14.

The Nature of “Babylon Fallen”

Adventists refer to other organizations than the Roman Catholic Church as “Babylon” as well. We have expanded that term to include other churches with characteristics similar to the Roman organization. Are we justified in doing so? Yes. Clearly, there is more than one “harlot” that the Bible mentions in Revelation. We note that “Babylon the great” is not merely a harlot, but described as “the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.” If this description is accurate, then it must follow that there are “daughters” that are being identified as “harlots” and “abominations of the earth.” And did the Roman Catholic Church have “daughters?” Were there other, perhaps smaller, churches that she birthed, that “came out” from her, but maintained many of the same familial characteristics? We would have to say that, the symbolic prophecy being true, this must be the case.

In the Bible, the word “daughter” is often used to describe the thing itself, if the characteristics match. We read, for example, of Israel being called both Zion (Isa 1:27) and the “daughter of Zion.” (Isa 37:22) This applies not only to faithful nations, but apostate ones as well. We read, of Babylon itself, “O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.” (Psa 137:8)

That is a verse with particular importance to this study. We discover that organizations or entities that share familial relationships are considered one and the same for spiritual reasons. Husbands and wives are “one flesh,” for example. The apostate “sisters” of Samaria and Judah, referred to in Isaiah’s parable as “Aholah and Aholibah” undergo similar chastening, although one precedes the other into harlotry. (Ezek 23)

Another place where “sisters” are treated the same as daughters, and the same as the original “woman” herself, is here: “Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant.” (Ezek 16:61)

Similarly, and using very similar symbolism as Revelation, “Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister; therefore will I give her cup into thine hand.” (Ezek 23:31)

We read this verse describing the Seraphim, “Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.” (Ezek 1:9) The imagery is intended to convey that the wings

are set together, almost as one object, and moving in the same direction in unity. But what is translated into English as the phrase “one to another” is actually, in the Hebrew, “a woman to her sister.”

It would seem, then that the nature of Babylon fallen is not only that it identifies a specific organization, but any organization similar to that original “mother of harlots,” whether it be daughters, or, as we shall see shortly, sisters.

If we mean to speak of the “nature” of *Babylon fallen* as its characteristics, we have seen some of those already. Like Laodicea, she is “rich and increased with goods,” and not coincidentally. She is cruel to the saints of Yahweh. She is unfaithful to her first covenant (hence the title “harlot”). She is united with the kings of the earth. This is seen in the way that the kings are spoken of in relation to her, but also in the way that John sees her “riding” a beast. She is taken around by a beast. Its power has become hers, but she directs it, much as the rider of a horse directs the horse.

In plain terms, then, the “nature” of Babylon fallen is an apostate Church, fallen into pagan errors and blasphemy, directing the actions of a state power (for as we know a “beast” in prophetic symbolism refers to a governmental authority) and also being carried, or supported, by it.

Furthermore, that nature is intended to be a general description of any organization related in any way to this Mother of Harlots.

The Response to “Babylon Fallen”

How do we respond to the condition of “Babylon fallen?” The Second Angel’s message does not give any specific instructions, but those who know the Scriptures would know what to do in response.

They may have read, for example, the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, which directs, “Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, ‘Yahweh hath redeemed his servant Jacob.’” (Isa 48:20)

Some may say, “But that verse refers to Babylon, and the literal one at that. Does that mean Christians are to leave an organization as soon as it begins to teach errors?” The answer to that is “No.” It cannot possibly be thus, because we read, even from the days of the apostles, that the early Christian Church was subject to infiltration by false doctrines and misled teachers. (Acts 20:29, 30; 2Tim 3:1-8; 2Cor 11:12-15)

In Revelation, Yahshua testifies against a number of churches that have fallen into great error, but to none of these does He instruct the members, “Flee to a new church.” The fact of the matter is that, especially in the last days, Satan’s influence over a church is so subtle, so carefully plotted, that none can be sure when the point comes to “go ye forth” without the direct divine instruction from Heaven. And that instruction comes, according to the repeat of the second Angel’s message in Revelation 18, only when it has *already* fallen.

We may understand the matter thus: as members of a church, we are “covenanted” to it if we are proper members according to the Biblical pattern. (Heb 8:6) If we detect, within that Body, or within that congregation, the principles of Babylon at work, we should certainly withdraw ourselves from it. The New Testament tells us not to even so much as “eat” with those who claim to be brethren, and yet do not stand firm upon Christian principle. (1Cor 5:11) But Paul, who writes to the Christians not to keep company with he who is “called a brother” and yet commits open sins, is not telling them to depart from the Body of Christ, or seek another religion.

The response to Babylon, to confusion and error, is to depart from it, but not to violate the covenant; and that is an important distinction. We find that there is a place indeed to protest from within, to stand apart from the progress and flow of a church, but to continue to support it as the Bride of Christ, even if it happens to be an a

feeble, defective state. And of course, here we find a ditch on both sides of the road. Some stay within the broken body long after it has ceased to be the Bride of Christ, and others rush off and form independent, atomic ministries that do far more harm than good to the Gospel work.

So when Babylon unites with the world and “falls,” committing fornication openly with the kings of the earth, then we have a very different, and very clear, instruction. Then Yahweh not only calls His people out, but calls them to a new place that He has prepared for them.

In the time of Christ, Judaism was very confused. It was very “Babylon,” in that it had a number of dissimilar factions: Essenes, Zealots, Pharisees, Sadducees, and various other “independent ministries.” And yet, Yahweh did not send His Son to the earth to be born into some obscure religion separate from the Covenant He had with Israel. When Yahshua was born, He was not told, “Separate yourself from these wicked people, for their apostasy is great.”

No, Yahshua attended the Synagogues. He spoke to the Rabbis. He taught obedience to the instructions given to Israel. But when, in this state of Babylonian confusion, Israel united with Caesar and persecuted the Prince of Life, then the Divine One did a very different thing. He called people out. The first sermon, the very first sermon taught by the apostles under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit after the cross was a calling-out of the faithful Jews from Israel after the flesh and to the Body of Christ. Those who, even today, claim that literal, earthly Israel will have a place in Yahweh’s plan for the last days had best read Acts 2 with spiritual enlightenment. Peter said to Israel, even those who had not physically laid hands on the Messiah, “His blood is upon your hands. Save yourself from this untoward generation.”

And of course, there is no statute of limitations on the blood of Christ; Israel of today, just like pagans and worldlings of today (no better, no worse), need to separate themselves from the violated Covenants they may claim, and unite with the True Church, the Body, the Bride, of the Son of Yahweh. That, through the Blood of Christ, is the only way.

In this last generation, the instructions are clear and easy to understand regarding how to deal with “Babylon fallen,” with a church that, once faithful, had begun to teach errors, and then, finally, united with the civil power to become a persecuting force:

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.’

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.’” (Rev 18:1-6)

Adventism and “Babylon Fallen”

Now we come to the heart of the matter. The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, or what was formerly the true and living Adventist Church... is it Babylon, or is it not? When we bring this matter to the attention of Adventists, teaching them that Heaven has called them to withdraw themselves from a wicked and corrupt system, they reply with the standard defense, “Ellen White said that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not Babylon, and anyone who claims it is, or tries to call people out of it, has been severely misled.”

It is quite true that Ellen White said this. In her day there were individuals who, seeing things in the Church that were not to their liking, began to proclaim the Adventist Church to be “Babylon,” and to try to call people out of her membership. In suggesting this, they were wrong.

Even if they were correct that the SDA Church had become Babylon, they would still have been wrong to try to call people out... because the call to depart from Babylon only comes *after* she has “fallen [...] because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” (Rev 14:8b)

At that point in time, over a century ago, this was certainly not true of Adventism. She had not undergone any of those steps we listed earlier in this study. She had not taken on pagan characteristics. She was not guilty of blasphemy. Therefore, no, she was definitely not Babylon. And she most certainly had not united with the United States government to become a persecuting power. Does this mean, however, that these steps could never be undertaken? Does this mean that the SDA Church could never, under any circumstances, become Babylon?

Ellen White once wrote that the SDA Church, by not living up to the light it had, and by failing to cleanse itself from certain besetting sins, was in danger of becoming “a sister to fallen Babylon, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” But why, looking back over all we have discussed so far, did she say “a sister to fallen Babylon?” Why did she not say “in danger of becoming fallen Babylon?” or “another daughter of fallen Babylon” or even more simply, “another Babylon?”

She used the word “sister,” perhaps even more accurately than she intended, because that is the way it would work out. Supposing for a moment that the Adventist Church went apostate in her day, and she was responding to a present reality. Was the Adventist Church the “mother of harlots?” No, for she was not the same, nor could she ever be the same, as the Roman Catholic Church. Was she one of the harlot-daughters? No, not them either.

The origins of Adventism are relatively unique in the protestant world. Most of the Sunday-keeping Churches, and even some of the “special cases” like the Seventh-day Baptists, either came out of the Roman Catholic Church or one of those resulting churches one by one. But the origins of the Advent movement, though largely attributed to Baptist preacher William Miller, was based on a much larger occurrence that had little to do with “problems” in the teachings of the Baptist Church itself, or the dissatisfaction of any individual or group with the doctrines of a parent (mother) body. Instead, the Holy Spirit moved upon men and women in an event known as the Great Awakening, and this global phenomenon, which transcended denominational and congregational distinctions, eventually resulted in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In terms of teachings and structure, the Adventist Church is entirely distinct from other churches, to the degree that it has been stated by Roman Catholic theologians that the SDA Church is the only true “Protestant” body, in that it entirely rejects the authority of the Papacy to make any alterations to the way men may understand the Scriptures.

The origin, structure and teachings of the Adventist Church are entirely separate from that which is described in the Bible as Babylon and her daughters. Yet the warning from Mrs. White exists, and Israel itself is a perfect Biblical example of a covenanted Bride of Yahweh that, rejecting the covenant with Him, went through those steps listed in the previous section, became a fallen, persecuting power, and received a calling-out message for its members who were still faithful to the Most High.

Because the Adventist Church was neither mother nor daughter to the Babylonian harlots in Revelation, yet still capable of undergoing the same process, it would appear that “sister” is actually the best possible term. Yet as we saw from those verses earlier, a “sister” is capable of being equated with a thing itself, whether it is a city or a woman, when it takes on the characteristics of another. We also saw that if the characteristics are the same, one sister is treated exactly as another, and this is important to how we respond to the developments in Adventism in recent years.

In terms of origins, again, the SDA Church is separate from the prophecies of Babylon in Revelation. However, when John wrote the book of Revelation, he was not thinking about the Roman Catholic Church or Sunday-keeping protestants. Our understanding of symbolic prophecy must expand to meet the revelation of its fulfillment, and CSAs have a ready example of this in the idea of the “mark of the beast.”

As originally interpreted by Adventists, the Mark of the Beast was to have been a law prohibiting the free exercise of religion with regard to a point of obedience to Yahweh’s Law; specifically, the weekly Sabbath. This interpretation does fit every point and principle of what the Scriptures describe. This law, further, would serve as a way of visibly separating those who were covenanted to this world from those who were covenanted to Yahweh, because, and this is very important, it would show who would be obedient to God’s instructions despite persecution.

Due to recent developments, this can no longer possibly be the case. As we have studied in other places, prophecies are conditional. The Bible tells us so specifically, (Jer 18:7-10) and clearly mentions that Yahweh will not hold to a covenant that has been broken by His people. (Zec 11:10) We have examples from the Books of Jonah and Ezekiel that a prophet’s words can be either diverted or modified in their fulfillment if the spiritual condition of the prophecies’ targets is changed.

What John saw as an evil, most likely Gnostic or Roman, power has been applied, due to the course of human events, to the Papacy, and then to Sunday-keeping Protestantism that came forth (as a daughter) from that Papal system. But now we have a “sister,” because the warnings of Ellen White were most decidedly not heeded... we have a “sister” to fallen Babylon, and what shall we say about that?

As we read, a mother, daughter or a sister may be “equated” with the original when the characteristics are similar. As we read earlier of an apostate nation, “Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister; therefore will I give her cup into thine hand.” (Ezek 23:31) Now that is an interesting symbol. Why did Babylon fall? What was it that led directly to the fall of Babylon? In the symbolic prophecy of Revelation, it was because she shared her “cup” with the kings of the earth. They drank the “wine” of the wrath of her fornication, therefore... if a sister walks in the way of this mother of harlots, the same “cup” is given into her hand!

In forming a Trademarked Church, the mainstream Seventh-day Adventist Church formed a “marriage” with the world. The world defends her. The world protects her. The world supports her. At the same time, the world is not the one initiating the lawsuits, it is the SDA Church, directing that great power granted to her by her husband. In other words, the “woman” is both supported by, and directs the course of, the “beast.” We have a woman riding a beast, exactly as John foresaw.

The General Conference Organization of Seventh Day Adventists has “walked in the way of [her] sister.” Remember, Mrs. White was careful (whether deliberately or not) to use that specific familial relationship. And because she has walked in the way of her “sister,” “Babylon Fallen,” she has received the same cup, the same reward, and... the same designation: Babylon Fallen. There can be no doubt about this, for so say the principles of Scripture. And in addition to the cup, reward, and designation, she has also received the same divine sentence from Heaven: “O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.” (Psa 137:8) Remember, “sisters” are given to “mothers” as “daughters” when those sisters become like their elder sibling. (Ezek 16:61)

When, therefore, the message of the Second Angel is repeated by the Fourth in Revelation 18, we are specifically told that we must leave that which has become “a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” When Mrs. White warned the SDA Church against becoming “a sister to fallen Babylon,” she said that it would become exactly that: “a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” Again, this is not a coincidence.

Now among Adventists, if Ellen White was truly a channel of inspiration, we must understand that her warning was to be taken seriously. If she said, “When this thing is not done, such and such will be the reward,” we

believe that. Furthermore, as I mentioned above, my burden is to show that all we believe may be derived directly from the Scriptures themselves. And so, when the thing is not done, and the warnings go unheeded, we really have no excuse to be taken by surprise when the promised reward arrives. But now, I include Ellen White only for a specific reason. As I said, it is easy for Laodicea to see the sins and errors of other churches. It is easy for even the most worldly Christian to understand that the Religious Trademark Law, and the record of the lawsuits based thereon, is not the “trademark” of a Christian Church. I have never, in my hearing, heard anyone attempting to justify or defend the General Conference’s actions, except for Adventists themselves. Is it because Adventists have a higher degree of spiritual discernment, and can therefore see the “good” the “holiness” the “Christ-likeness” in the lawsuits that everyone else misses?

Or could it be, much more likely, that Laodicea is simply being Laodicea? Blind and wretched and naked while proclaiming itself to be rich and increased with goods? But Yahweh has said of Laodicea, “I will spue you out of my mouth.” Should they be surprised that this has now happened?

So even though the Adventist Church is a “sister” and not a “daughter” to fallen Babylon, having another origin and a separate organizational structure, and certainly a distinct set of beliefs, we need to be careful to identify things as Heaven does: “in spirit and in truth.”

In spirit, the mainstream Adventist Church is “Babylon Fallen.” It has become worldly in nature. It has taken on pagan characteristics (like reliance upon human might, and human works, to support its institutions). It has begun to speak blasphemy against the Most High by representing itself as His faithful servant while dressed in robes stained with the blood, sweat and tears of martyrs. In another sense, it has misrepresented the Godhead entirely by its come-lately acceptance of the Trinity doctrine. This also may be seen as a face of blasphemy, for it is a deception about the nature of the Father and the Son. And finally, in that corrupt and derelict state of being, it has united with the world, and is now “riding a beast” in every sense of the word that this imagery can signify. In spirit, we declare with the judgment of Heaven, and certainly not our own, that “Babylon is fallen,” and those who have become corporately guilty of these errors and sins, of fornication with the kings of the world, have but one course of safety open before them: Let them speedily withdraw themselves and touch not the unclean thing, then (that is not the end of the story) Yahweh will “receive” them unto Himself. (2Cor 6:17) Thus it is “in spirit.”

In truth, the mainstream Adventist Church is “Babylon Fallen.” Its doctrines are confused. They cannot even agree about a book called *Questions on Doctrine*. They cannot agree on the Sanctuary doctrine. They are very divided on issues like the mode and manner of worship, going to extremes ranging from the “Celebration Movement” to a mournful, funereal atmosphere in other congregations. They are not internally cohesive... independent ministries and ministers spring up, each with a wonderful and startling new truth, many with a specific date in mind for the close of probation. Some who have left have not fully left, having one foot in and one out of the church. Some have begun to keep the convocations of Yahweh, the feast days and (one or two of them) the more important New Moons. They know nothing about the Judgment of the Living. Is this not confusion? And in this confused state, did they not become a persecuting power?

And here I must add... It does not do either us or them any good to merely point out errors. That is easy enough to do. No, what we must do is present the solution in love, and in kindness. But the problem is, really, that they must first be made aware there’s a problem at all.

Adventists themselves, those not willing to take an honest look at themselves, will most likely deny (only) the last of these things I have mentioned, that the SDA Church has fallen from her “high estate” to become “a persecuting power.” She has, they may say, a “right” to defend herself. The problem is, I cannot, for any reason, picture the Bride of Christ becoming so desperate and afraid of injury that she must hide in a corner with fangs bared, ready to strike out at anyone who gets too close. Fortunately, the truth is, that is not the genuine Bride of Christ. The truth is, only Babylon Fallen acts that way: using force of human law to defend and sustain its institutions.

The Adventists who are faithful, our brethren, who either do not know about these things, or do not know what to do in response... there is hope for these poor souls. They are told, "Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon." (Zech 2:7) Daughters and sisters, once again, are exactly the same when it comes to spiritual things. The sister has become the daughter, has become the mother... and all bear that shameful banner after their fornication with the world: Babylon Fallen.

Interestingly, the word for "deliver" in Zechariah 2 is the Hebrew *malat*, which means, to "slip away" or "escape" with the connotation of speed. In 1Sam 27:1 that term is translated as "speedily escape" as David (still a poor shepherd) escaped from Saul (a military king wielding both religious and civil power) who was set in his heart to harm the young man. There was no time to delay. Consider that teaching carefully: the poor shepherd, who was about to be king, had to flee, quickly, for a time from a mighty monarch wielding the combined power of church and state. That is a most applicable parable for our day.

Conclusion: A Burden to Bear

Finally, then I will say this... In the Bible, the prophets often called their messages "burdens." (Isa 13:1, 15:1, 19:1; Ezek 12:10; Nah 1:1; Hab 1:1; Zech 9:1, etc.) The word thus translated is *massa*, which means "something lifted." That, to me, is perfect. It is something that must be lifted to be carried, and it may often be heavy. When we look at the prophets we find them frequently misunderstood, with their words often misapplied. At the same time "something lifted" gives the beautiful picture of something being offered up to Yahweh, a tribute, an offering – and the word is also translated as "tribute."

The Christian's heart is *massa*. It is sometimes heavy with the weight of glory, sorrowful for the lost and anxious for them to accept the salvation we bring to them. It is an oracle, a message to the world, for the Law of Yah is written on our hearts as a testimony against evil. It is a tribute, for we offer ourselves as "living sacrifices" upon the altar of this world. And it must be borne, carried, to all the world that it may know that Yahweh has loved us even as He has loved His own Son. These things require Victory over Sin, (or there is no testimony) Purity of Doctrine (or there is no truth) and Unity of Faith (or there is no covenant, by which Yahweh has promised to save His people). When it comes to Babylon Fallen, we have a "burden" toward this as well. And we have been, and will continue to be, misunderstood, rejected, misrepresented, even actively hated, by Laodicea who loves her comforts more than she loves a knowledge of the truth. There are none so blind as those who will not look inward. And yet, it is to these very ones that we are trying to sell eyesalve. Yes, we sell eyesalve to those who do not know they are blind. We sell clothing to those who do not know they are naked. We sell gold to those who do not know they are poor. It is hard work. We "sell" these things for a very low cost: all they must give in exchange is their life of sin, which would surely destroy them anyway, and our Father consumes that sin in everlasting fire. But though our cost is very low, because Laodicea is what it is, we often make very few sales.

And yet, for every soul that is saved, for every sheep that is returned to the fold, for every life rescued from Satan's grip, we have gained an eternity of praise for our Father. Have you ever considered that? One individual, praising Yahweh for eternity, is an infinite amount of worship! It is not about our reward, or our glory; it is about our Father's, and when we look at it from the perspective of eternity, how very valuable is a single soul? And it is to this end that we labor, standing up against Babylon Fallen, for the sake of the love of our Father in Heaven, and our fellow men, who are capable of such great things in the world to come. The task before us is often unpleasant, trying to sell to the unwilling, but as long as we speak "in spirit and in truth," calling things what they truly are, we know that there will be some to listen. Let us pray, and then let us go forth seek those who have not yet bowed their knee to Ba'al.